



AMERICAN SALVAGE ASSOCIATION NEWS RELEASE
801 North Quincy Street, Suite 200
Arlington, VA 22203

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 6, 2004

Contact: Debra Colbert,
American Salvage Association,
301/565-5329; dacomm@aol.com

AMERICAN SALVAGE ASSOCIATION MEMBERS RESPOND TO
MARINE DISASTERS
COMPETING COMPANIES WORK TOGETHER TO RAISE MV STELLAMARE

Washington, DC - Members of the American Salvage Association (ASA) quickly responded to the *MV Stellamare*, a specialist heavy lift vessel that capsized on December 9, 2003 during cargo loading operations in the port of Albany, NY. The *Stellamare*, lying on her portside on the riverbed adjacent to her former berth, was declared a Constructive Total Loss (CTL). Eighteen Russian crewmembers were onboard the ship at the time of the casualty; tragically only 15 were rescued from the water and the vessel.

Four ASA member companies responded on speculation to assist with this marine emergency. In the end, one ASA member company was awarded a contract to upright the vessel and then engaged two other member companies to assist in the refloating operation. Operations began on December 15, and the *MV Stellamare* was refloated ahead of schedule on January 4, 2004.

"When there is a marine emergency, the professional salvage community responds quickly and acts to protect against further human injury and/or loss of life, as well as to protect the marine environment, and mitigate damage to the ship, her cargo and other property. By planning, organizing, and then responding to the unique challenges of marine salvage and wreck removal, our members can expect to attain the highest levels of project success. Still, it is critically important that the U.S. Coast Guard promulgate its new and long awaited salvage and firefighting regulations to assure that all responses to casualties in American waters can be as successful as that in the case of the *MV Stellamare*," said ASA President Dick Fairbanks.

The American Salvage Association is a trade association promoting professionalism and improving marine casualty response in American coastal and inland waters.

-30-

PHOTO ATTACHED