

Maritime Attorney Brett Rivkind Expresses Shock Over Costa Concordia Deadly Crash

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[Brett Rivkind](#) has been handling maritime cases for almost 30 years and thought he had seen it all. "I am shocked a modern day cruise liner like this can strike rocks in shallow waters and then almost sink. I have handled many major cases involving maritime disasters, including a fire aboard a cruise ship that killed 159 people, the disappearance of a cruise ship during a hurricane, as well as sinking of ships. I never thought, although I have feared, we would ever see another disaster anything like the Titanic." The Costa Concordia is now completely on its side, having tilted 90 degrees to the starboard side, submerged in water. Passengers have said the incident reminded them of the Titanic disaster, without the water.

According to CNN.com, the Costa Concordia crashed into a solid rock which caused immediate water intrusion and tilting of the ship. The end result, described by passengers, was another Titanic! Three people are reported dead, and another 79 reported missing, although this number has varied in the reports. Eighty American citizens are reported to have been passengers on this 950 foot luxury cruise ship, which had approximately 3,200 passengers aboard and another 1,000 crewmembers.

It has just been reported by CNN.com that the Italian captain of the Costa Concordia was arrested and is being investigated for abandoning ship and manslaughter.

CNN.com reported the ship struck rock 18 miles off the coast of Tuscany. The captain decided to try to navigate the ship to shallower waters before starting an evacuation. Passengers were told it was an electrical problem. The ship then tilted to 90 degrees to the starboard side, resulting in the ship being almost totally submerged. The delay in starting emergency evacuations resulted in the inability to lower many of the life boats because the ship was tilted so much. Passengers described the situation as chaotic, and were critical of the failure to promptly start evacuation procedures.

Brett Rivkind spoke with his client, a cruise ship captain for his comments about the incident. The captain said he was surprised at the delay in communicating accurate information to the passengers and the delay in starting evacuation, which cost critical time. The captain said this incident, like the Titanic, shows the vulnerability of ships, even these massive cruise ships. The Titanic disaster was an example, and the captain said this incident is another painful reminder, but an important reminder, that ships are vulnerable. Rivkind's client believes the captain needed to assess the situation immediately to determine how much water was entering the ship as the stability of the ship can rapidly be affected. According to Rivkind's interview with his client, "The captain of the Costa Concordia was apparently trying to beach the ship where he could get passengers off, but there was no time. The captain didn't assess the situation properly." As to why the ship would be in such shallow waters where it could strike a rock like this, the captain stated he can only speculate at this time, but it might have been a result of several different reasons, including avoiding increased traffic in the area resulting in coming off the intended course line, distractions on the bridge, failure to observe the equipment onboard providing depth findings, and the possibility this was an uncharted reef. However, this ship was a frequent visitor to this area. The captain

was also surprised more information was not coming from Costa cruise lines, and said there will be heavy criticism of the cruise lines after this disaster. "This disaster clearly is a result of human error, stated Rivkind's client.

Brett Rivkind has appeared in Congress as a maritime expert during congressional hearings addressing cruise ship safety. He has appeared on numerous television shows including Larry King Live. He handled cases on behalf of cruise lines for the first few years of his maritime career and has since focused on helping those harmed at sea for more than 25 years. For more information, visit <http://www.rivkindlaw.com/>.

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