

Alcor



On November 9, 1999, the M/V *Alcor*, a Maltese cargo ship carrying 23,693 metric tonnes of clinker (a basic cement component), ran aground 2.25 nautical miles from île d'Orléans. It was heavily damaged with major breaches in the hull and deck. The ship's stern was lodged against the seabed, while the bow was floating at the mercy of the tides.

Out of the six bids tendered to refloat the vessel, Transport Desgagnés' proposal was selected. The technical nature of the bid was a key factor in the M/V *Alcor*'s insurer's decision to grant Transport Desgagnés the contract.



Transport Desgagnés had to negotiate a special arrangement with the M/V *Alcor*'s insurer because the ship was in very poor condition.

The first step was to go to the site to inspect the ship and assess its condition. Secondly, measures were taken to reduce the risk of pollution, including pumping pollutants from the ship's holds into vessel's tanks.



Third, the ship was ballasted to prevent it from moving on the seabed and to start the preliminary unloading of hold No. 4, which contained a mixture of water and clinker. At the same time, plates were welded to the ship at different locations to reinforce it and prevent it from splitting in two.

Thirteen thousand tonnes of clinker were then unloaded onto two ships—the M/V *Jacques Desgagnés* and M/V *Amélia Desgagnés*—to reach the draft needed to refloat the ship. Refloating was complete once the ship was deballasted, and four tugboats then removed it from its precarious position.



Finally, in March 2001, after analyzing various projects, market trends, and the ship's condition, Transport Desgagnés announced that it would sell the M/V *Alcor* to a company specialized in scrap metal recovery.