

# MERIDIAN LION

IMO No: 9116412 TANKER 1997 / 156880 GT

## COMPANY:

Overseas Shipholding Group,  
USA

## YARD INFORMATION:

Hyundai Heavy Industries Co Ltd  
(South Korea) 947

## DEMOLITION:



Delaware River 10/3/2000 © J. Curdy (S. Wiedner collection)

**2003:** Sold to German Dortmund shipfinance company Salamon AG (Dr. Peters) incl. back-charter to OSG for eight years.

**2006:** Renamed **OVERSEAS MERIDIAN**.

**2011:** Renamed **MERIDIAN LION**.



Singapore 22/6/2011 • S. Wiedner

Owned by German Dortmund shipfinance company Salamon AG (Dr. Peters) (technical mgrs: Columbia Shipmanagement)

**2013:** Sold to Russian Titan Shipping Lines Inc, a subsidiary of Dubai-based oil and energy shipping company TNC Gulf, which has clear Iranian links. Renamed **GRACE 1**.

**07/2019:** Detained at Gibraltar due to violation of EU sanctions imposed on oil exports to Syria.

**08/2019:** Renamed **ADRIAN DARYA 1** and reflagged from Panama to Iran (incl. establishment of single-ship entity Ocean Mark Shipping Inc., Panama).

**2020:** Renamed **ARMAN 114**.

**BASIC DATA:**

Crude Oil Tanker  
 Double Hull  
 GT: 156880  
 DWT: 273769  
 Loa: 330.26 (BB)  
 Bmd: 58.00  
 Draught: 20.62  
 Engine: 1x oil B&W 7S80MC  
 Power: 24468 kW  
 Speed: 15.2 kn

**OWNER & FLAG HISTORY:**

ARMAN 114 since 01/12/2020  
 ADRIAN DARYA 1 since 01/07/2019  
 GRACE 1 since 01/03/2013  
 MERIDIAN LION since 01/06/2011  
 OVERSEAS MERIDIAN since 01/02/2006  
 MERIDIAN LION 12-05-2000 LRF  
 Flag Date of record Source  
 Iran since 01/07/2019  
 Panama since 01/03/2013  
 Marshall Islands since 01/07/2003  
 Registered owner Date of record Source  
 OCEAN MARK SHIPPING INC since 15/07/2019  
 GRACE TANKERS LTD since 07/03/2013  
 MERIDIAN LION MBH & CO since 15/07/2003  
 SECOND UNION TANKER 01-01-1997 LRF  
 Ship manager Date of record Source  
 OCEAN MARK SHIPPING INC since 15/07/2019  
 ISHIPS MANAGEMENT PTE LTD since 23/06/2014  
 KHADIJA SHIP MANAGEMENT PVT since 20/01/2014  
 RUSSIAN TITAN SHIPPING LINES since 07/03/2013  
 COLUMBIA SHIPMANAGEMENT-GEU since 31/12/2005  
 COLUMBIA SHIPMANAGEMENT LTD since 01/07/2003  
 OSG SHIP MANAGEMENT UK LTD during 04/2001  
 OSG SHIP MANAGEMENT INC 01-11-1998 LRF

**NAME HISTORY:**

MERIDIAN LION	1997-06	Second Union Tanker Corp., Marshall Islands
OVERSEAS MERIDIAN	2006-11	SAG Unternehmensbet. MT „MERIDIAN LION“ mbH & Co. Tankschiff KG, Marshall Islands
MERIDIAN LION	2011-13	SAG Unternehmensbet. MT „MERIDIAN LION“ mbH & Co. Tankschiff KG, Marshall Islands
GRACE 1	2013-19	Grace Tankers Ltd, Panama
ADRIAN DARYA 1	2019-20	Ocean Mark Shipping Inc, Iran
ARMAN 114	2020-	Ocean Mark Shipping Inc, Iran

**GENERAL VESSEL INFORMATION:****2003:**

Overseas Shipholding Group of the US sold the VLCC MERIDIAN LION for \$60.5m to Dortmund shipfinance company Salamon AG and chartered the vessel for eight years for an average daily rate of \$26,930.

The double-hull tanker is travelling under the flag of the Marshall Islands and will be managed by Columbia Shipmanagement. (www.salamon-ag.de)

Top of the line was Salamon AG's enbloc purchase of the Korean built, EQUATORIAN LION 1997 built, 273,539 dwt and the MERIDIAN LION built 1997, 300,349 dwt, for a reported US\$60.5mil each unit.

It is believed that the price includes an 8 year timecharter to OSG at \$27,000 per day.

(www.cotzias.gr/reports/COTZIAS\_2003\_07\_JULY.pdf)



## Oil & Tanker Trades Outlook

**Recently Reported Tanker Sales**

Vessel Name	Date	Dwt	Hull*	Built	Builder	Price US\$m	En Bloc	Buyer
Equatorial Lion	Jul-03	300,280	DD	1997	Hyundai H.I.			German interests
Meridian Lion	Jul-03	300,580	DD	1997	Hyundai H.I.	60.50		German interests

(www.clarksons.net - July, 2003)

2013:



## **Salamon sells only VL**

The Dr Peters spin-off is selling its only VL, the 300,000-dwt **Meridian Lion** (built 1997), brokers say. A figure of \$26m has been placed on the deal...from the end of 2012. Salamon bought the **Meridian Lion** from OSG for \$60.5m in 2003 as part of a sale-and-leaseback deal. Its OSG charter ended in 2011 and

### **TANKERS**

23 Jan 2013 by **Andy Pierce**

Salamon AG also sold its only **VLCC**, the 300,000-dwt **Meridian Lion** (built 1997), for \$26m to Titan Shipping of Russia for \$26m in 2013.

2019:



Lloyd's List reported earlier this week that *Grace 1* was heading for the British overseas territory after loading a 2m-barrel cargo in Iranian waters around mid-April, according to vessel-tracking data.

The tanker used the same strategies and tactics previously used by tankers shipping Iranian crude to China and Syria. Its Automatic Identification System was turned on and off to avoid detection of its location, cargo origin and destination.

The ship sailed around the Cape of Good Hope after loading around mid-April off Iran and spending time at anchor in two different locations in waters off the United Arab Emirates.

Lloyd's List understands that the owner of the very large crude carrier is Russian Titan Shipping, a subsidiary of Dubai-based oil and energy shipping company TNC Gulf, which has clear Iranian links.

While *Grace 1* has a complex ownership chain, this is not unusual for many internationally trading vessels. Its executives listed on LinkedIn have Iranian university and technical qualifications, or list their names in Farsi, the Iranian language.

The ship's current class and insurance is unknown according to databases. Lloyd's Register withdrew class in January, 2019, as did former P&I insurers Swedish Club, at the same time as the vessel arrived to spend a month at the Bandar-e Taheri single buoy mooring area in Iranian waters, according to Lloyd's List Intelligence data.

The ship's opaque ownership and operating chain is complicated further by company websites linked to the tanker not operating.

The European Commission-operated Equasis website lists the shipmanager as Singapore-based Iships Management.

However, the website is under construction and its telephone number is not in service.

Websites for Russian Titan Shipping and TNC Gulf are also not working. LinkedIn lists Captain Asadpour as the executive managing director, saying he has also been president of the Georgia-based Russian Shipping Lines for 11 years.

(<https://lloydslist.maritimeintelligence.informa.com> - 04 Jul 2019)



GRACE 1 detained at Gibraltar 5th July / 2019

TRT WORLD

(www.trtworld.com)

Splash  
247.com

## Royal Marines storm Syria-bound VLCC

JULY 4TH, 2019

SAM CHAMBERS

At 2am this morning British military forces in Gibraltar took control of a VLCC bound for Syria, suspected of breaching EU sanctions.

A detachment of Royal Marines boarded the 22-year-old [Grace 1](#), which Equasis lists as owned by Singapore-based Grace Tankers. The ship was destined for the Baniyas refinery in Syria and is believed to be carrying around 2m barrels of Iranian crude.

Sanctions have been in place against Syria since 2011.

(<https://splash247.com> - July 4th, 2019)

Splash  
247.com

## Iranian VLCC at centre of diplomatic storm with the UK set to depart Gibraltar

JULY 15TH, 2019

SAM CHAMBERS

EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST, TANKERS

Both the crew and the Iranian VLCC [arrested in Gibraltar earlier this month](#) are set to depart the British territory on the guarantee that the ship does not head to sanctions-bound Syria.

Iran had called the seizure of the [Grace 1](#) an "act of piracy" and vowed to retaliate against British shipping assets in the Arabian Gulf, a threat that saw one [BP Shipping Aframax threatened by Iranian military vessels](#) last Thursday.

Gibraltar police said on Friday that four crew members of the *Grace 1* were released on bail without charge.

Over the weekend the UK foreign minister, Jeremy Hunt, intimated that the tanker would now be free to depart Gibraltar so long as it did not sail to Syria, where the EU has imposed sanctions for the past seven years.

Meanwhile, Panama, where the *Grace 1* was registered, has claimed it will withdraw its flag from more vessels that violate sanctions and international legislation. The registry has removed about 60 ships linked to Iran and Syria in recent months.

(<https://splash247.com> - July 15th, 2019)

## Grace 1 expected to leave Gibraltar today

 AUGUST 15TH, 2019



SAM CHAMBERS



EUROPE, TANKERS

The [Grace 1](#), a VLCC that sparked huge geopolitical tension in the Middle East over the past six weeks, is being widely tipped to leave Gibraltar waters today.

It is understood that the authorities in the British territory have had assurances from the ship's master that the vessel will not head for sanctions-hit Syria, the reason why it was detained on July 4.

The ship's departure will hopefully lead to the freeing of the *Stena Impero*, a UK-flagged product tanker [held in Iran since July 19](#) in retaliation for the [Grace 1 seizure](#).

(<https://splash247.com> - • August 15th, 2019)

## US tries new legal route to bar Grace 1's departure from Gibraltar

 AUGUST 16TH, 2019



SAM CHAMBERS



EUROPE, TANKERS

Gibraltar decided yesterday to free the [Grace 1](#) VLCC, but as of Friday morning the Iranian tanker had yet to leave the UK territory. The Gibraltar decision came as the US launched a last-minute legal bid to hold the tanker.

The *Grace 1* was [seized by British armed forces on July 4](#) on suspicion of violating European Union sanctions by taking oil to Syria. In retaliation, Iran [seized a British-flagged tanker](#), *Stena Impero*, in the Strait of Hormuz on July 19.

Gibraltar's chief minister Fabian Picardo said in a statement yesterday that the owner of the cargo on the *Grace 1* has been confirmed to be the National Iranian Oil Company and the vessel has been re-flagged under the flag of Iran itself and re-insured.

As well as being reflagged, Iranian media is reporting today the ship is being renamed *Adrian Darya*.

(<https://splash247.com> - • August 16th, 2019)

## Iranian VLCC departs Gibraltar

 AUGUST 19TH, 2019



SAM CHAMBERS

The [Grace 1](#), an Iranian VLCC seize by British armed forces off Gibraltar on July 4, has left the UK sovereign territory early this morning and is now making its way east across the Mediterranean.



The *Grace 1* has been renamed *Adrian Darya 1* and reflagged to the Iranian registry. *MarineTraffic* lists the ship's destination as Kalamata in Greece, a port not associated with VLCC traffic normally. It was allowed to depart after local authorities over the weekend dismissed a late US attempt to impound it.

*TankerTrackers.com* noted in its current fully laden condition, the *Adrian Darya 1* would not be able to traverse the Suez Canal, however it would if it were to transfer about a million barrels to an empty suezmax vessel.

(<https://splash247.com> - August 19th, 2019)



## US warns Greece over inbound Iranian VLCC

AUGUST 20TH, 2019

SAM CHAMBERS

AMERICAS, EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST, TANKERS

0 COMMENTS

The Iranian [Adrian Darya 1](#) VLCC, formerly known as *Grace 1*, continues to head east through the Mediterranean, bound for the port of Kalamata in Greece, having been [allowed to leave Gibraltar yesterday](#) after being detained for seven weeks. The Greek port commenced ship-to-ship operations earlier this year, which the fully laden tanker will need to carry out if, as presumed, it intends to transit the Suez Canal.

Nevertheless, the ship's destination remains shrouded in mystery. As of last night Greek media was reporting that port authorities in Kalamata had received no formal request from the owner of the tanker to dock at Kalamata.

The United States yesterday warned Greek and other Mediterranean ports that providing assistance to the ship would be interpreted as providing material support to Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), which Washington considers a foreign terrorist organisation. Facilitating the tanker carries potential immigration and criminal consequences, a US State Department official warned.

(<https://splash247.com> - August 20th, 2019)



## Controversial Iranian VLCC enters Turkish waters

AUGUST 29TH, 2019

SAM CHAMBERS

EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST, TANKERS

The Iranian VLCC [Adrian Darya 1](#), formerly known as *Grace 1*, entered Turkish territorial waters this morning and appears to be on course for the port of Mersin.

The ship has been at the centre of a diplomatic storm for the past eight weeks. It was [detained on July 4 in Gibraltar](#), accused of heading towards sanctions-hit Syria with a cargo of Iranian crude. The vessel was [eventually released last week](#) and has been sailing east through the Mediterranean while US diplomatic forces have rallied, and demanded no country should allow it to dock, as Washington maintains the ship has links to Iran's Revolutionary Guard, which the US says is a terrorist organisation.

The fully laden ship must offload part of its cargo in order to transit the Suez Canal.

(<https://splash247.com> - August 29th, 2019)

## Blacklisted Adrian Darya 1 waits for tanker assistance

SEPTEMBER 2ND, 2019

 SAM CHAMBERS

EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST, TANKERS

 0 COMMENTS

After a weekend circling the eastern Mediterranean the Iranian VLCC, [Adrian Darya 1](#), has stopped 45 nautical miles west of Tripoli, Lebanon in international waters, likely waiting for another tanker to come alongside to offload some of its 2.1m barrels of crude so it can then transit the Suez Canal.

The ship has been carrying the same cargo since April on a circuitous route that has seen it pass the Cape of Good Hope, enter the Mediterranean where [it was detained on July 4](#) over claims it was bound for sanctions-hit Syria.

On Friday, the US Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) blacklisted the tanker and its master, claiming the cargo of crude stood to ultimately benefit Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force (IRGC-QF), which Washington deems to be a terrorist organisation.

"Vessels like the *Adrian Darya 1* enable the IRGC-QF to ship and transfer large volumes of oil, which they attempt to mask and sell illicitly to fund the regime's malign activities and propagate terrorism," said Sigal Mandelker, under secretary for terrorism and financial intelligence. "Anyone providing support to the *Adrian Darya 1* risks being sanctioned. The path to relief is to change course and not allow the IRGC-QF to profit from illicit oil sales."

(<https://splash247.com> - September 2nd, 2019)

### THE TIMES OF ISRAEL

## Satellite images show Iran oil tanker sought by US off Syrian coast



Adrian Darya-1 Oil Tanker | Offshore Tartus, Syria | September 6, 2019 | Maxar WorldView-2 Satellite Image

An Iranian oil tanker pursued by the US has arrived at the Syrian port of Tartus, US National Security Adviser John Bolton said on Friday.

Images obtained by the Associated Press from the US space technology company Maxar Technologies early Saturday also showed the vessel near Tartus.

The ship switched off its Automatic Identification System beacon on Monday, according to the ship-tracking website MarineTraffic.com. It was some 45 nautical miles (83 kilometers) off the coast of Lebanon and Syria, heading north at its last report.

([www.timesofisrael.com](http://www.timesofisrael.com) - 9/9/2019)



## Iran says hunted VLCC has offloaded crude cargo

The controversial Iranian tanker **Adrian Darya 1** has offloaded its crude cargo, Iran has said. Foreign ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said on Sunday that the 301,000-dwt VLCC (built 1997) discharged at a Mediterranean port, the official IRNA news agency reported.

### TANKERS

12 hours old by **Gary Dixon**

([www.tradewindsnews.com](http://www.tradewindsnews.com))

## ASHARQ AL-AWSAT

### Adrian Darya 1 Seen Off Syrian Port Tartus

Iranian and Syrian officials have not acknowledged the vessel's presence near Syria. There was no immediate report in Iranian state media about the ship, though authorities earlier said the 2.1 million barrels of crude oil on board had been sold to an unnamed buyer.

The oil on board would be worth about \$130 million on the global market, but it remains unclear who would buy the oil as they'd face the threat of US sanctions.

(<https://aawsat.com> - 8 September, 2019)



## End game in sight as controversial Iranian VLCC prepares to head home

 SEPTEMBER 9TH, 2019

 SAM CHAMBERS

 MIDDLE EAST, TANKERS

Having taken five months to deliver its cargo of crude, the end game is finally in sight for the Iranian VLCC [Adrian Darya 1](#), with the tanker now in Syrian waters and its oil in the process of being offloaded having found a buyer.

The ship has been carrying the same cargo since April on a circuitous route that has seen it pass the Cape of Good Hope, enter the Mediterranean where it was [detained on July 4](#) over claims it was bound for sanctions-hit Syria.

With the controversial ship expected to head through the Suez and back home to Iran,



(<https://splash247.com> - September 9nd, 2019)

2021:



**Tanker attacked off Syria.** Last weekend saw a fire break out on an unidentified tanker off the coast of Syria. According to initial reports, the tanker was highly likely to be carrying oil of Iranian origin considering that Iran has been Syria's only fuel supplier for the last several years. Initial reports suggest that the fire resulted from an Israeli drone strike, that three crew members were killed in the blast and that the fire had been extinguished. There continues to be uncertainty as to which tanker was 'attacked' with various news outlets identifying it as either the 1999-built, 46,000 Dwt Wisdom or the Iranian VLCC Adrian Darya 1 (now reported to be named Arman 114) both of which were allegedly engaged in a ship-to-ship transfer at the time of the fire.

(Source: Alphasatanker Weekly Newsletter 29 April 2021)

## THE JERUSALEM POST

"The tanker seen burning today off the coast of Baniyas is not an Iranian vessel, but a Beirut-registered tanker called *WISDOM*," TankerTrackers.com, which tracks tankers around the world, reported. "She has assisted the Iranian VLCC supertanker *ARMAN 114* (ex. *ADRIAN DARYA-1*) by offloading 300-350K barrels at a time due to depth restrictions."

([www.jpost.com](http://www.jpost.com) - APRIL 25, 2021)

2023:

DAILY COLLECTION OF MARITIME PRESS CLIPPINGS 2023– 256

## Sticky Case of Indonesia, Seized Iranian Oil Tanker, and Legal Jurisdiction



The two giant freighters floated "dark" in the open ocean not far from Indonesia. Their positioning transponders switched off, neither tanker displayed a national flag – but one ship was known to have claimed Iranian registration, the other to have made at least eight visits to Venezuela in recent years. And between them pumped thousands of barrels of oil.

In July this year, Indonesian authorities intervened in this ship-to-ship oil transfer being carried out within Indonesia's exclusive economic zone (EEZ). With assistance from Malaysia, one ship was seized, **ARMAN 114**, a tanker claiming Iranian flag registration. However, the tanker known as **S TINOS**, also

referred to as Lilu, and found to be Cameroon-flagged, managed to escape. Neither tanker had submitted a ship-to-ship oil transfer plan to the Indonesian authorities, as required by Indonesian law and the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution by Ships (MARPOL).

This scenario presents a classic case of "dark ships" used in schemes to circumvent rules or sanctions. While the act of ships going "dark" by disabling their Automatic Identification Systems constitutes a direct breach of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), it does not necessarily confer enforcement power upon coastal states, as the flag state maintains exclusive jurisdiction and control over the safety features of the vessels. So, the case raises a fascinating question about whether Indonesia, in its capacity as the coastal state in this case, had the jurisdiction to seize the tankers? The incident under scrutiny involves a "ship-to-ship transfer", which refers to the transfer of cargo between two seagoing vessels, as opposed to "offshore bunkering", which entails refuelling another vessel's fuel bunkers to power its engines. Unlike offshore bunkering, a ship-to-ship transfer within an EEZ is arguably an activity in relation to which the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) does not explicitly allocate rights or jurisdiction to either the coastal state or other states (Article 59 of UNCLOS).

If both tankers had been flying a flag, the assessment would centre around establishing which state holds jurisdiction over the EEZ ship-to-ship oil transfer: the flag state or the coastal state. Yet, this scenario was irrelevant. This is because both tankers can be assimilated to vessels without a nationality (stateless vessels) due to their failure to display a national flag. This stateless classification applies not only to vessels that fly no flag, but also to those bearing fraudulent or multiple registries.

Any penalties imposed by Indonesia would be confined to monetary penalties (Article 230(1) of UNCLOS). Finally, despite reports that Arman 114 left Iran's Qeshm and Larak Islands in June 2023, carrying around 1.9 million barrels of crude oil following multiple ship-to-ship (STS) operations, Iran's oil ministry has denied any connection between this cargo and Iran. While Iran disclaims ownership of the cargo, some might argue that Iran has not explicitly denied Arman 114's registration under the Iranian flag.

In a scenario where Iran does not contest Arman 114's Iranian flag status, the fact that both Iran and Indonesia are parties to Annex I of MARPOL becomes pivotal. This annex pertains to the prevention of oil pollution, both from operational measures and accidental discharges from ships, including those occurring during ship-to-ship transfers of oil cargo between oil tankers at sea. Under MARPOL, state parties are obliged to prohibit violations and establish appropriate penalties for any MARPOL violations occurring within their jurisdiction (Article 4(2) of MARPOL). In accordance with MARPOL, Indonesian law requires oil tankers seeking to conduct ship-to-ship operations in Indonesia's EEZ to provide advance notification. While MARPOL requires 48 hours' notice (Regulation 42 of MARPOL Annex I), Indonesia mandates a shorter 24-hour notice (Article 6(8) of Transport Minister Regulation No. PM 29 of 2014). Additionally, Indonesian law requires that oil tankers engaged in ship-to-ship operations must carry an approved plan detailing the procedures, which must be endorsed by the country's Transport Ministry (Directorate General of Sea Transportation). Moreover, these vessels are also obligated to document and maintain records of each ship-to-ship operation for a three-year period onboard (Regulation 41(1) of MARPOL Annex I; Article 6(8) of Transport Minister Regulation No. PM 29 of 2014). Indonesia may retain the option to initiate legal proceedings against the tanker by asserting that the oil spill resulting from the ship-to-ship operations poses a "threat of major damage" to Indonesia's interests and fisheries resources (Article 220(6) of UNCLOS and Article 2 of MARPOL). If this argument falls short, the enforcement power would remain with the flag state. It means that Iran could institute proceedings within a six-month window to address the violations of its tanker (Article 228 of UNCLOS), and Indonesia would be required to provide Iran with pertinent information and evidence regarding the tanker's violations of MARPOL (Article 4(2) of MARPOL). If Iran refrains from exercising its enforcement jurisdiction, Indonesia as the coastal state can pursue legal action against the tanker. This course of action would come with the obligation of notifying both Iran and the International Maritime Organisation about any measures or proceedings taken in response to the tanker's MARPOL violations. **Source : MAREX**

Last update:11/9/2023