

Surveying Wrecks around Estonia



As a part of its mission to ensure safe navigation, the Estonian Maritime Administration identifies possible navigational hazards in Estonian waters, including potentially dangerous wrecks. Some of these wrecks, especially those lost during WWII, pose a potential environmental threat because of their cargo and fuel. High-resolution multibeam sonar systems help find and identify such wrecks. Read on for some examples of wrecks surveyed using a Teledyne RESON SeaBat 7125.

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Dago

The steamship *Dago* was built in England in 1912 as a cargo ship. The ship was taken into use by the Russian navy during WWI, and was rebuilt as an armed minesweeper carrying the bow number 4. [Dago was anchored West of Osmussaar island](#) on 23 October 1915 due to bad weather, when she was attacked by the German submarine U-9. The torpedo was shot from a short distance and hit the minesweeper right in the center. The vessel foundered immediately. Seven crew members were killed.

Myrtle

The [gunnery ship-minesweeper Myrtle](#) was built in England in 1915. The ship arrived to Estonia during the days of the War of Independence as part of the British squadron. The ship was sweeping the German mine barriers from the sea routes. *Myrtle* was lost on a German minefield near Harilaiu islet on 15 July 1919. The ship was severely damaged in the course of several mine explosions. There were casualties.

Krimulda

Latvian steamer, built in England in 1899. [Hit a mine on 30 June 1941](#) and foundered. Five people lost their lives.

Aid

The brig *Aid*, captained by Richard Errington was on her way from Sunderland to Kronstadt when she [hit a reef near Hiiumaa](#) in the evening of 9 August 1863. The crew of eight men were forced to leave the ship and head towards land in boats. The ship repeatedly rammed the seabed and obtained a huge leak. The rudder of the ship broke and the attempt to steer the ship to shore failed. There was a risk that the vessel would drift further from the shore and so the 8-membered crew abandoned ship and headed towards land in boats early morning on 10 August. Before heading towards land, the light of Kõpu lighthouse could be seen 10-12 miles S by E from the accident site. 15 minutes later the ship sank.

RS-5271 Jastreb

The seiner *Jastreb* was lost in a storm on 23 November 1973 near Saaremaa island.

Vega

The tugboat *Vega* was being tugged by another tugboat *Zubr* and was lost on 06 February 2016 possibly due to bad weather. *Vega* didn't have any crew or fuel on board.

Unknown wreck

An unknown wreck is... well, unknown. It's one of the many wrecks still waiting to be identified.

The Estonian Maritime Administration Hydrographic Department

The Hydrographic Department of the Estonian Maritime administration was founded in 1993. Its primary purpose is to conduct hydrographic surveys in Estonian waters, including inland waterways.

There are thirteen surveyors at work in the Hydrographic Department. The survey season is usually from May until November, whilst the data processing is mostly done during the winter. All of the collected and processed data enters the hydrography information database - HIS. Data layers from this database are then available in the web application Nutimeri (Smart Sea) -

To this day, the Hydrographic Department has charted 47% of Estonia's maritime areas and the long-term objective is to chart 100%, which is stated in the maritime policy of the state.

Estonian Survey Fleet

The Estonian Maritime Administration Hydrographic Department operates four survey vessels, three of which are equipped with Teledyne RESON SeaBat sonar systems.

Jakob Prei is a 26m long SWATH type vessel for open-sea surveys. The vessel is equipped with flush-mounted Seabat 7125 SV.

EVA-320 is an 18m catamaran type vessel soon to be equipped with a SeaBat T50-R. She generally conducts surveys in shallower areas of the Baltic Sea, such as the Väänameri Sea - a sub-bay between the Western Estonian Archipelago and the Estonian mainland.

Kaja (meaning "Echo" in English) is a catamaran launch type, with shallow draught of 0.5m that enables surveying in Estonian inland waters and shallow coastal sea areas. Kaja is equipped with pole-mounted SeaBat T20-P.

The examples highlighted some of the wrecks that the department has surveyed. The surveys have been conducted using a SeaBat 7125 SV onboard the *Jakob Prei*.