

## **Official: Possibility of unregistered passengers aboard crashed cruiser**

GIGLIO, Italy (AP) — Unregistered passengers might have been aboard the stricken cruise liner that capsized off this Tuscan island, a top rescue official said yesterday, raising the possibility that the number of missing might be higher than previously announced.

Divers, meanwhile, pulled out a woman's body from the capsized Costa Concordia yesterday, raising to 13 the number of people dead in the January 13 accident.

Civil protection official Francesca Maffini told reporters the victim was wearing a life vest and was found in the rear of a submerged portion of the ship by a team of fire department divers. The unidentified body was being removed from the ship.

Earlier, Italian authorities raised the possibility that the real number of the missing was unknown because some unregistered passengers might have been aboard. As of yesterday, 19 people are listed as missing, but that number could be higher.

"There could have been X persons who we don't know about who were inside, who were clandestine" passengers aboard the ship, Franco Gabrielli, the national civil protection official in charge of the rescue effort, told reporters at a briefing on the island of Giglio, where the ship, with 4,200 people aboard rammed a reef and sliced open its hull on January 13 before turning over on its side.

Gabrielli said that relatives of a Hungarian woman have told Italian authorities that she had telephoned them from aboard the ship and that they haven't heard from her since the accident. He said it was possible that a woman's body pulled from the wreckage by divers on Saturday might be that of the unregistered passenger.

Authorities are trying to identify five corpses who are badly decomposed after spending a long time in the water.

Gabrielli said they have identified the other eight bodies: four French, an Italian, a Hungarian, a German and a Spanish national.

The missing include an elderly American couple, a Peruvian crewwoman and an Indian crewman and an Italian father and his five-year-old daughter. Some of their relatives were briefed by rescuers yesterday.

The search had been halted for several hours early yesterday, after instrument readings indicated that the Concordia has shifted a bit on its precarious perch on a seabed just outside Giglio's port. A few metres away, the sea bottom drops off suddenly, by some 20-30 metres (65-100 feet), and if the Concordia should abruptly roll off its ledge, rescuers could be trapped inside.

When instrument data indicated the vessel had stabilised again, rescuers went back in, but only explored the above-water section and evacuation staging areas where survivors have indicated that people who did not make it into lifeboats during the chaotic evacuation could have remained.

Passengers were dining at a gala supper when the Concordia sailed close to Giglio and struck the reef, which is indicated on maritime and even tourist maps.

There are also fears that the Concordia's double-bottom fuel tanks could rupture in case of sudden shifting, spilling 2,200 metric tons (almost 500,000 million gallons) of heavy fuel into

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pristine sea around Giglio, which is part of a seven-island archipelago in some of the Mediterranean's most pristine waters and a prized fishing area.

But Gabrielli said pollutants found near the ship have been detergents and other substances, including chlorine, apparently from the wreck of the ship, which carried some 3,200 passengers and a crew of 1,000. Any fuel traces found were "compatible with what you find in a port", he said.



GIGLIO, Italy — Sara Kim Heil (2nd left), daughter of Barbara and Gerald Heil of White Bear Lake, Minnesota, both missing in the cruise ship Costa Concordia accident, talks to Italian authorities in the port of Tuscan island of Giglio yesterday. Rescuers resumed searching the above-water section of the capsized cruise liner yesterday, but choppy seas kept divers from exploring the submerged part, where officials have said there could be bodies. (Photo: AP)