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Baltimore officials confident of removing stricken Dali this week

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Explosive charges were detonated yesterday afternoon to bring down sections of the collapsed Francis Scott Key Bridge resting on the containership *Dali* with officials now hopeful that they will be able to remove the stricken vessel later this week.

The *Dali*, managed by Synergy and on charter to Maersk, lost power on March 26 and rammed into – and brought down – Baltimore’s longest bridge with six road maintenance workers losing their lives.

According to officials, the detonation went as planned. Now, crews will assess the remaining bridge pieces on the ship’s bow then ensure anything underwater is not preventing the ship from being floated and moved out of the area.

“It’s a lot like peeling back an onion,” Lieutenant General Scott Spellmon of the US Army Corps of Engineers said.

At a news conference earlier in the day, officials said they hoped to move the ship within two days.

“After we do the precision cutting, we will then go back and resurvey the channel as well as survey around the *Dali* to make sure there are no obstructions that come from that precision cutting that would interfere with traffic,” said US Coast Guard Rear Admiral Shannon Gilreath. “Then we will reopen the limited-access channel to traffic at that particular time.”

After necessary assessments and surveys, the plan is to remove ballast to make the ship buoyant on its own and then use four tugboats to pull it out into the channel and escort it to a nearby pier.

Additional wreckage and containers will be removed from the *Dali* at the pier and the ship will undergo necessary, temporary repairs before more permanent ones can be made.

“Hopefully we’re going to refloat the *Dali* in the next few days. We still anticipate to be on time to open the full channel by the end of the month,” said US Coast Guard captain David O’Connell.