



Press Release

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Amver ship sinks, sparking second largest search and rescue mission in Amver's 53 year history

NEW YORK – The sinking of the Vietnamese ship [Vinalines Queen](#) on Christmas Day, 2011 started a large scale international search and rescue effort not seen since the sinking of the [Salvador Allende in 1994](#).

“We received a distress alert message from the Vinalines Queen at midnight on December 25, 2011,” said Mr. Nguyen Anh Vu, General Director of the Vietnam Rescue Coordination Center. “We have carried out search and rescue operations with Taiwan Rescue Coordination Center, Philippine Coast Guard, Japanese Coast Guard, and U.S. Coast Guard rescue authorities in Hawaii,” Vu added. The U.S. Coast Guard provided Amver information to Vietnam to assist in the search. The Vinalines Queen was carrying nickel ore from Morowali, Indonesia to China with a crew of 22 when it sank.

“This is the largest search effort since 32 ships were diverted to assist the Ukrainian cargo ship Salvador Allende which sank on December 10, 1994 850 miles northeast of Bermuda,” said Benjamin Strong, Director of the U.S. Coast Guard [Amver Center](#) in New York City. “Amver takes its history from the Titanic sinking 100 years ago,” Strong added, “We are proud that so many ships agreed to divert, ensuring no call for help goes unanswered.”

On December 30, 2011, the aptly named Amver participant [London Courage](#) found a drifting life raft and rescued Da Ngoc Hung, the only survivor from the Vinalines Queen. An additional 20 Amver ships from 12 different nations participated in the search for the remaining crewmembers. [Vietnamese news reports](#) Hung is unhurt and has returned home.

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Amver, sponsored by the United States Coast Guard, is a unique, computer-based, and voluntary global ship reporting system used worldwide by search and rescue authorities to arrange for assistance to persons in distress at sea.

Amver participants from Japan, Monaco, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Norway, Greece, Germany, United States of America, Great Britain, Malta, and Hong Kong have searched unsuccessfully for the remaining 22 crewmen.

With Amver, rescue coordinators can identify participating ships in the area of distress and divert the best-suited ship or ships to respond. Vessels send periodic position reports to the Amver center until arriving at their port of call. This data is able to project the position of each ship at any point during its voyage. In an emergency, any rescue coordination center can request this data to determine the relative position of Amver ships near the distress location. On any day there are over 5,000 ships available to carry out search and rescue services. Visit <http://www.amver.com> to learn more about this unique worldwide search and rescue system or [read more on our blog](#).

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