



Press Release

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Amver container ship rescues 3 Canadians

NEW YORK – Three Canadians, including a nine year old boy, were rescued by the Amver participating container ship Horizon Reliance after their 38 foot sailboat Liahona sank 280 miles northeast of Hilo, Hawaii, Wednesday February 8, 2012.

The three sailors, from Edmonton, Canada, on a voyage from Puerto Vallarta, Mexico to Hilo, Hawaii, contacted the Coast Guard Cutter Kiska Tuesday afternoon after their sailboat became disabled. The crew reported damage to their top forestay and engine. After trying to rig a makeshift sail they lost the mast in extreme weather conditions.

Coast Guard Rescue Coordination Center Honolulu, using an Amver surface picture (SURPIC), contacted the 893 foot container ship and asked them to divert and assist the crew of the Liahona. The Horizon Reliance was 149 miles away from the sailboat's location.

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.

At approximately 2:00 am Wednesday morning, Captain James Kelleher and the crew of the United States flagged ship reached the sailboat. As the Horizon Reliance approached, a swell caused the sailboat to capsize and sink, throwing all three passengers in the sea. Weather conditions were poor, with southwesterly winds gusting to 40 knots and sea swells in the 20 foot range.

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The Horizon Reliance crew lowered a ladder to conduct the rescue. A 29-year-old man was rescued first, but the others, a 32-year-old man, and a 9-year-old boy, drifted away. Both were rescued shortly thereafter because they were wearing lifejackets with strobe lights attached, which enabled rescuers to keep them in sight.

All three were reportedly in good health and will remain aboard the Horizon Reliance until it arrives in Hilo, Hawaii at approximately 4:00 am local time.

The Horizon Reliance, managed by Horizon Lines of Charlotte, NC, enrolled in Amver in 1990 and has earned participation awards for 21 years.

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.

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