

Automated Mutual Assistance Vessel Rescue System
U.S. Coast Guard



Press Release

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AMVER PARTICIPATING CONTAINER SHIP RESCUES TWO SAILORS NEAR COSTA RICA

International rescue effort launched to save the crew of a disabled sail boat

NEW YORK – The Amver participating container ship Milan Express rescued two sailors from their disabled trimaran February 2, 2008 as it drifted 80 nautical miles off the coast of Costa Rica.

United States Coast Guard rescue personnel were alerted to the distress by the wife of one of the sailors. She said the crew emailed her reporting their trimaran, the Siesta Key, was adrift and had lost its sails. Rescue coordinators immediately notified Costa Rican coast guard officials and queried the Amver system to locate a merchant vessel near the disabled boat.

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.

While Costa Rican coast guard personnel coordinated their response assets, the Amver participating container ship Milan Express, owned by Hapag-Lloyd of Hamburg, Germany, was diverted by United States Coast Guard. The Bermuda flagged container ship, under the command of Captain Adil Ghadiali, steamed almost 10 hours to the distress location and commenced rescue operations.

After less than an hour on scene the Milan Express had both survivors safely onboard. The crew of the Siesta Key was surprised to learn they would have to abandon their boat. “To his credit, Captain Ghadiali with abundant sensitivity and with gentle and patient persuasion explained to us the situation which we faced” said Jack McKenney, Captain of the Siesta Key.

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He added "Captain Ghadiali, through a gentle explanation of the facts, was able to assuage our fears and blunt the impact of the loss of our boat". The trimaran was marked as a hazard to navigation and left adrift.

With Amver, rescue coordinators can identify participating ships in the area of distress and divert the best-suited ship or ships to respond. Prior to sailing, participating ships send a sail plan to the Amver computer center. Vessels then report every 48 hours 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 given day there are over 3,200 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.

High resolution photos of the rescue can be found at the following links:

Survivors disembarking the disabled boat:

<http://www.amver.com/image33.jpg>

Crew of the Milan Express posing with survivors:

<http://www.amver.com/image34.jpg>

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