AMVER

Press Release

Date: June 23, 2009

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AMVER PARTICIPATING CONTAINER SHIP RESCUES ITALIAN SAILOR

67 year old yachtsman rescued by Maersk Missouri

NEW YORK – The Amver participating container ship Maersk Missouri rescued an Italian yachtsman 300 miles off the coast of Halifax on Fathers Day, June 21, 2009. The sailor, Gianfranco Tortolani, was sailing in the Original Single Handed Trans-Atlantic Race from the United Kingdom to Newport, Rhode Island when his sailboat capsized and was demasted.

Tortolani, aboard the sailboat Cittia Di Salerno, activated his emergency beacon which started an international rescue effort involving aircraft from Canada, the United States Coast Guard, and commercial ships.

United States Coast Guard authorities, using Amver search and rescue data, diverted the U.S. flagged container ship Maersk Missouri, which was only a few miles from the distress, to assist.

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.

The Maersk Missouri, managed by Maersk Line Limited of Virginia Beach, VA, quickly changed course and, despite winds in excess of 20 knots and swells of 16 feet, hoisted the yachtsman aboard the ship.

"We have him safely on board." was the brief email sent by the master of the Maersk Missouri to Coast Guard rescue authorities after the 67 year old sailor was rescued. The sailboat was left adrift.

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Tortolani was taken to the Missouri's next port call, New Jersey, and is now on his way to Newport to celebrate the end of the race.

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 3,600 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.

Photos of the rescue operation:
http://www.flickr.com/photos/amver/3653066903/in/set-72157620361227546/

http://www.flickr.com/photos/amver/3653863324/in/set-72157620361227546/

http://www.flickr.com/photos/amver/3653863294/in/set-72157620361227546/

Please credit all photos to the crew of the Maersk Missouri.

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