

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



Press Release

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Amver—better, stronger, faster

NEW YORK – This isn't your father's Amver! What started as a computerized search and rescue system using vacuum tubes and punch cards has evolved into a 21st Century vessel tracking system using new Blade server technology.

Amver, a global search and rescue system, was facing obsolescence due to aging technology. Doug Horton, the Amver Team Project Control Specialist at the United States Coast Guard Operations Systems Center summed it up best when he challenged his team. “Team, we can rebuild it. We have the technology. We have the capability to improve the world’s best search and rescue system. Amver will be better then it was before. Better, stronger, faster,” he stated.

Over the last eighteen months the Amver team replaced aging Hewlett Packard 9000 series equipment with state of the art Blade technology. “With the number of enrolled Amver vessels doubling in the last decade to over 22,000 and a tripling in daily messages sent to Amver at over 10,000 per day, it is imperative to keep this system in line with technological advances and continue to take advantage of the opportunity to improve performance for our customers,” stated Delfina Tomaini the Amver Project Officer.

The Amver team worked over 18 months to install new hardware running on a more efficient operating system. A new middleware infrastructure product called the Enterprise Service Bus is now incorporated into the system.

This technology, coupled with Extensible Markup Language, makes processing of message traffic and documents faster, requiring less manual involvement for incomplete information.

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A new spatially infused database processes the calculations necessary to produce more accurate vessel positions providing higher quality surface pictures. What does all that mean? It means more lives can be saved more quickly.

The project also provides a direct link between the Amver surface picture capability and the U.S. Coast Guard Search and Rescue Optimal Planning System, or SAROPS. The team successfully kept the legacy Amver system running while implementing the modernization. During the process Amver averaged 3,700 vessels on plot each day, added over 3,000 ships to the system, produced over 2,100 surface pictures, and saved over 300 lives.

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. 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 3,700 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.

Photo of the Amver team:

<http://flic.kr/p/8EtzAN>

Photo of the Amver server:

<http://flic.kr/p/8Eqqw6>

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