

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



Press Release

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Polish Amver ship rescues 2 yachtsman from sunken sailboat

NEW YORK – A Florida yachtsman and his Peruvian partner are back on dry land after being rescued from their sunken sailboat Saturday December 5, 2009 by a Polish cargo ship.

The sailors, on a journey from Mexico to Costa Rica, abandoned their sailboat approximately 150 miles west of Costa Rica and activated their emergency beacon. Costa Rican and United States Coast Guard rescue authorities began an intensive search effort including diverting several Amver ships.

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 cargo ship Kociewie, managed by the Polish shipping company Polska Zegluga Morska, located the survivors about 5 miles away from the sinking sailboat. The Kociewie, an Amver participant, was sailing from Korea to Balboa, Panama when they were requested to divert. The tankers Singapore Star and Chembulk Minneapolis, along with the cargo ship Hanjin Atlanta, were also diverted to assist.

According to rescue authorities the winds at the scene were over 20 knots and waves were between 8 and 10 feet when the master of the 38,000 dwt Kociewie hoisted the two sailors from their raft. “The survivors were uninjured and safe,” reported the crew of the Bahamian flagged cargo ship as they steamed towards Panama.

The survivors were met by Panamanian authorities when they arrived in Balboa on December 7, 2009 and the Kociewie continued on to Barcelona, Spain.

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The Kociewie enrolled in the Amver program on November 10, 2009. This is the first time it has been requested by the United States Coast Guard to perform search and rescue operations.

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 M/V Kociewie: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/amver/4171240029/>
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