

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



Press Release

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Amver cruise ship rescues 2

New York—The Amver participating cruise ship, Norwegian Star, rescued two sailors from their disabled sailboat 55 miles northwest of Pinar Del Rio, Cuba on Saturday, March 3, 2012.

U.S. Coast Guard rescue authorities in Miami received an Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) alert for the 38 foot sailboat Hokulani, launched a Coast Guard Ocean Sentry patrol aircraft, and diverted the Norwegian Star. Using an Amver surface picture, rescue authorities determined the Norwegian Star was only 30 miles away from the distress 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.

The sailboat was severely damaged by rough seas and the crew was worried they would not make it to port. “We have been dragging our rogue [anchor] for 18 hours,” a survivor reported to the Coast Guard, “I don’t know we can make it.”

The 965 foot cruise ship arrived on scene and launched a small boat to recover the two sailors. Waves were 2 to 4 feet with winds gusting approximately 20 knots as the rescue boat came alongside the sailboat.

Within four hours of the initial distress notification the sailors were safely aboard the Bahamian flagged cruise ship and headed to its next port, Tampa, Fla. The sailboat was marked as a hazard to navigation and left adrift. The sailors were uninjured.

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The Norwegian Star enrolled in the Amver system on July 28, 2004 and has earned seven awards for participation. This was not the cruise ship's first rescue. In 2009 the Norwegian Star rescued a sailor from a damaged sail boat near Cabo San Lucas, Mexico.

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.

Photos available at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/amver/sets/72157629181545646/>

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