

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



## Fact Sheet

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### **THE AUTOMATED MUTUAL ASSISTANCE VESSEL RESCUE SYSTEM**

#### **What is the Automated Mutual Assistance Vessel Rescue System?**

- The Automated Mutual Assistance Vessel Rescue System, sponsored by the United States Coast Guard, is a computer-based voluntary global ship reporting system used worldwide by search and rescue authorities to arrange for assistance to persons in distress at sea.
- It is commonly known as Amver.
- Amver was established in 1958.

#### **Who can participate in Amver?**

- Any commercial vessel, regardless of nation or flag, over 1,000 gross tons on voyages of 24 hours or greater is encouraged to enroll and participate in Amver.
- Other vessels such as private yachts, research vessels, and even floating production storage and offloading vessels (FPSOs) can enroll.

#### **How does Amver work?**

- Merchant ship owners or managers enter specific information about their vessels into the Amver database on what is known as a search and rescue questionnaire or SAR-Q.
- Prior to sailing, participating ships send a sail plan to the Amver computer center. Vessels then report their locations every 48 hours until arriving at their port of call.

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- Search and rescue controllers are able to predict the position of each ship at any point during its voyage.
- The position of each participating ship is displayed in an Amver surface picture or SURPIC.
- In an emergency, any rescue coordination center can request this SURPIC to determine the relative position of Amver ships near the distress location and divert the best suited ship or ships to respond.

### **Why should ships participate in Amver?**

- Amver's success is tied directly to the number of merchant vessels regularly reporting their position. The more ships on plot, the greater the chance a ship will be identified near the position of distress.
- Ships incur no additional obligation to respond than already exists under international law of the sea. Since Amver identifies the best ship or ships to respond to a distress, it releases other vessels to continue their voyage, saving fuel, time and payroll costs.
- Information sent to Amver is protected and used only in a bonafide maritime emergency.
- Amver provides an additional measure of safety by allowing rescue coordinators to compress the search area in the event a participating ship is unreported or overdue.

### **Who participates in Amver?**

- There are over 18,000 vessels enrolled in the Amver network representing 140 countries.
- On any given day there are over 3,300 vessels available to divert and assist in a distress situation.

### **How successful is Amver?**

- Amver participating ships rescued 450 lives in 2007.
- Amver ships rescued 13 crewmembers of a sinking Chinese merchant vessel 370 miles off the coast of Guam.
- An Amver ship rescued 5 crewmembers from a sunken vessel in the mouth of the Persian Gulf.
- An Amver ship rescued 19 crewmen from a sunken vessel off the coast of Yemen.

**Additional information, photographs, and video clips are available at  
[www.amver.com](http://www.amver.com)**

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