



Press Release

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After three days adrift at sea two Canadian sailors are rescued by Amver ship

NEW YORK – Two Canadian sailors were plucked from the Pacific Ocean after they were adrift in a life raft for three days approximately 100 miles off the coast of Costa Rica on Dec. 11, 2010.

The Canadians were sailing aboard their 42 foot catamaran from Costa Rica to Nicaragua when it sank and activated their Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB). The EPIRB activation alerted rescue authorities who launched a coast guard search and rescue plane and diverted the Amver participating ship Sunbelt Spirit. Coast Guard personnel from California and Victoria, Canada helped coordinate the rescue which also involved a navy aircraft.

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 Sunbelt Spirit, a Marshall Island flagged car carrier/reefer ship, was fully loaded with cars on a voyage from Japan to the United States. Captain Edmund Straszak was only 30 miles from the distress location when he turned his 212 meter ship towards the survivors.

While directing operations from the bridge, Straszak's crew lowered a ladder to the sailors and helped them board the ship. Once aboard, the crew provided food and medical attention to the two sailors who suffered sunburn and dehydration.

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The Sunbelt Spirit, owned by the Great American Lines of Roseland, N.J. enrolled in the Amver system in Dec. 2002 and earned 8 awards for participating in the global search and rescue system.

Amver personnel boarded the Sunbelt Spirit when it came into Newark, N.J. on Dec. 20, 2010 and presented a certificate of appreciation and ships flag to recognize Captain Straszak and his crew for their rescue efforts.

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 thousands of 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:

<http://flic.kr/p/93T325>

<http://flic.kr/p/93PXra>

<http://flic.kr/p/93PXnT>

<http://flic.kr/p/93PXpi>

Photos of the presentation:

<http://flic.kr/p/93T3ES>

<http://flic.kr/p/93PYoP>

Video of the rescue:

<http://youtu.be/70JDq83pDC4>

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