



Maritime Mobile Service Network

Press Release

“Where Emergency Communications is a Commitment”

Maritime Mobile Service Network

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On 6/25/20 at approximately 1635 UTC, Maritime Mobile Service Network Net Control Operator Steven Carpenter, K9UA was advised of a sailing vessel that was in need of assistance on 14.300 MHz.

The sailing vessel “Mystic Lady”, piloted by Captain Ian Cummings, KB4SG was reporting the problem.. The captain advised K9UA that he was approximately 40 miles east of the Florida coast in the Atlantic Ocean and he was attempting to get to his home port of Stuart, Florida but his engine had failed. The captain had very little wind available to sail back to port and the strong current was taking him back out to sea. He was unable to reach any station via VHF marine frequencies as he was too far from the coast to make contact with anyone. He was able to reach K9UA on 20 meters HF. K9UA was assisted by fellow MMSN Net Control operator Robert Wynoff, K5HUT .

Captain Cummings reported that the vessel was drifting north-westerly towards the South Carolina Coast. He had one additional passenger on board and they were concerned that they might not be able make it back to land. A major concern was that the vessel was heading directly towards a Lee shore. Lee shores are shallow dangerous areas which are a hazard to watercraft. Vessels could be pushed into the shallow area by the wind, possibly running aground and breaking up the vessel.

K9UA contacted Captain Cumming's family who already contacted the Sea Tow emergency towing service. He relayed vital information as to the coordinates of the vessel and continued to maintain contact with the Captain for several hours. Sea Tow advised K9UA to relay to the captain that the vessel should continue to get closer to shore by sailing west if possible. K9UA advised the Captain that if he could not get close to shore that he would declare an emergency and notify the US Coast Guard to respond. The US Coast Guard was already monitoring the situation. The “Mystic Lady” was able to make some headway but it was very slow.

Members of the MMSN made additional calls via land line to the Captain's family as to the ongoing status of those on board. The family was concerned but were so relieved that communications was established and that all were well.

Some hours later the Captain was finally able to advise that he was now making progress as the wind picked up allowing him to head close enough to shore for Sea Tow to finally reach the vessel for the long ride back to port.

Late into the night, the Pacific Seafarers Net continued to communicate with the vessel while he was safely under tow. The PacSea Net monitors 14.300 Mhz from the West Coast after the Maritime Mobile Service Net secures at 0200 UTC.

Tired and thankful, Captain Cummings wrote “A million thanks to everyone last night who helped rescue us on 14.300. Everyone chipped in as we drifted north in the gulf stream 60 miles headed to a Lee shore. The MMSN net control and several others stayed with us for hours, phoned people and were immensely helpful. The situation on board was dangerous. We are now safely under tow home. You folks are amazing!”

K9UA when asked about the incident advised that “it was no big deal. It's just what we do”

The MMSN monitors 14.300 MHz to assist maritime vessels and other stations who are in need of assistance 70 hours per week, 365 days a year since 1968.

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