Beat: News

1 dead, 1 missing after Hurricane Sandy sinks tall ship off North Carolina

-, 30.10.2012, 01:51 Time

USPA News - High waves and strong winds from Hurricane Sandy sank a tall powerless ship off the coast of North Carolina on early Monday, killing at least one crew member and leaving another unaccounted-for, the U.S. Coast Guard said. Fourteen people were rescued.

The incident began at around 8:45 p.m. local time on Sunday when the U.S. Coast Guard was notified that a 180-foot, three mast tall ship, the HMS Bounty, was taking on water and without propulsion. A C-130 Hercules aircraft arrived at the scene, approximately 90 miles (145 kilometers) southeast of Hatteras, North Carolina, at around midnight. Several hours later, at 4:30 a.m. local time, the sixteen crew members on board the vessel began to abandon ship wearing survival suits and enter life rafts. It took two more hours before two Coast Guard MH-60 Jayhawk helicopters arrived at the scene and rescued fourteen of the crew members. With two people missing, the crew aboard a Jayhawk helicopter later recovered the body of 42-year-old crew member Claudene Christian. "[The crew] located Christian, who was unresponsive, hoisted her into the helicopter and took her to Albemarle Hospital in Elizabeth City," a Coast Guard statement said. The ship`s captain, 63-year-old Robin Walbridge, remained missing late Monday with little chance of survival. Emergency crews at the scene reported wind gusts of up to 40 miles (64 kilometers) per hour and waves as high as 18 foot (5.5 meters), making the conditions extremely difficult for those in the water. The HMS Bounty, which is a replica of the original vessel and was built in 1960 for the MGM movie "Mutiny on the Bounty," was located approximately 160 miles (257 kilometers) west of the eye of Hurricane Sandy when it sank. This would have been within the area affected by hurricane-force winds at the time.

Article online:
https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-132/1-dead-1-missing-after-hurricane-sandy-sinks-tall-ship-off-north-carolina.html

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Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619