Beat: News

FERRY IN FLAMES BETWEEN GREECE AND ITALY

THE NORMAN ATLANTIC STILL AT SEA

Ancona, Italy, 29.12.2014, 11:09 Time

USPA NEWS - Fire on the italian ferry Norman Atlantic which is still at sea with 121 passengers on board. After leaving the port of Patras it was expected to arrive in Ancona at 5:00 p.m. yesterday but after only thirty three nautical miles a fire burst out. The cause is still to be investigated.

At 4:30 a.m. the SOS signal was immediately sent out and the Captain of the vessel, the italian Argilio Giacomazzi ordered the abandon ship. Unfortunately the adverse wheather conditions complicated the rescue mission. Strong winds blowing over the Adriatic Sea and the waves rising over five meters made it almost impossible to put out the fire and at the same time to go anywhere close to the ship to start the passenger evacuation.

Rescue teams converged to the scene from Italy and Greece. While the Captain the the crew were fighting the flames that started in the garages and quickly spread to the rest of the ship surprising everyone in their sleep the Marina Militare Italiana with a helicopter was able to start the rescue. Meanwhile 300 passengers were desperately grasping on to their lives on the deck of the ship waiting to be pulled away from the flames. A tug-boat sent from the port of Brindisi was able to turn the ship around in order to put it "under wind" so to push the smoke and flames away from the remaning passengers. This gave the Coast Gaurd extra time to carry on the mission. At the time it is not possible to have a count of casualties.

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