



09/03: Alarm Phone alerted to 12 distress cases in the Aegean Sea, near Lesbos, Pasas, Chios, Agathonisi and Samos

In Distress

VERIFIED

10.03.2016 / 12:14 / Aegean Sea

b>Watch The Med Alarm Phone Investigations – 9th of March 2016

Case name: 2016_03_09-AEG229

Situation: Alarm Phone alerted to 12 distress cases in the Aegean Sea, near Lesbos, Pasas, Chios, Agathonisi and Samos

Status of WTM Investigation: Concluded

Place of Incident: Aegean Sea

Summary of the Cases: On Wednesday the 9th of March 2016, we were alerted to 12 distress cases in the Aegean Sea near Lesbos, Pasas, Chios, Agathonisi and Samos. We were active in 8 of the cases. Out of these four were distress cases at land and four at sea. Three groups stranded on the Greek island of Pasas and one group on Samos. They were all picked up, and in the Pasas cases transferred to Chios. One boat in distress with about 85 travellers headed to Lemnos, but still close to the Turkish Coast was picked up, but we could not find out by whom and where they were brought. Another boat in distress on the way to Chios was rescued by the Greek Coastguard and safely arrived in Greece. In one case, in which the engine had stopped working, travellers on another boat came to assist by pulling the boat with the broken engine. In the 4 cases, in which we did not become active, the safe arrival of all travellers was confirmed to us.

Case1: The first alert reached us at half past midnight. Contact persons informed us about 85 travellers in distress at sea, because of engine problems. They were on their way to Lemnos, but still close to the Turkish coast. We provided our contact persons with information on how to restart an engine and they passed on this information to the travellers. At 1.24am we received an updated position - the boat seemed to be moving again. At 4:07am, we reached out to our contact persons again to check on the case. At 4.20am our contact persons said that the boat was about to be picked up most probably by the Greek Coastguard. At 2.40pm we received another confirmation by a contact person that the 85 travellers were in safety.

Case 2: At 1.12am, a contact person alerted us to a group of 50 travellers stranded on Pasas. According to the position we were given, the group was close to the church on the island. We tried to reach out to the group, but could not reach them. We then called the Chios Port Authorities, who said that they knew already about the case. The officer on duty promised to send a boat to pick them up in the morning. We also sent an e-mail to the authorities. At 11:28am, we attempted to call the group on Pasas again, but their phone was still not reachable. At 1:12pm our contact person sent us a picture via WhatsApp of the travellers and a confirmation that 51 persons had been transferred to Chios.

Case3: At 3.57am we received an alert via WhatsApp about a group of 30 travellers, among them many children, who were on their way to Chios and were not reachable anymore. At 4.18am we informed the Greek Coastguard about the case. A few minutes later, our contact person sent us another message saying that the boat was sinking. We immediately passed on the information to the Coastguard. They promise to send a boat to the area in question. At 4.52am the person who had first alerted us to the case confirmed that the boat had been rescued to Chios.

Case 4: At 5.23am, a contact person informed us about 50 travellers southeast of Lesbos, who could not move on, because their engine had stopped working. We sent him information on how to restart an engine to forward to the travellers. At 5.49am we checked with our contact person about the situation of the travellers. He explained that another boat had come to assist them by pulling the boat.

Case 5: At 8:32am, a contact person told us about a boat in distress on the way to Lesbos in between Turkish and Greek territorial waters. We tried to reach the travellers

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08:37 Mar 06, 2021 / Aegean Sea Kms

[05/03: A group of six young people, including a mother and baby, stranded in the South of Lesbos, taken to Kara Tepe camp](#)

12:56 Nov 22, 2014 / Plomari, Lesbos Isl. Kms

[A refugee boat capsized near Plomari, Lesbos Isl. - 4 people missing](#)

13:06 Oct 01, 2015 / Aegean Sea near Lesbos, Samos, Chios, Farmakonisi Kms

[Alarm Phone alerted to 12 distress cases in the Aegean Sea near Lesbos, Samos, Chios, Farmakonisi](#)


17:20 Feb 04, 2016 / Aegean Sea, Lesbos and Farmakonisi Kms

[03/2 Alarm Phone alerted to 4 emergency situations in the Aegean Sea, near Lesbos and Farmakonisi](#)

13:57 Jun 16, 2017 / Aegean Sea Kms

[15/06: Boat headed to Mytilene, probably intercepted and brought back to Turkey](#)





but they did not receive our message and when we called them their phone did not ring. We continued to call the travellers throughout the morning and the day, but without success. On Wednesday evening at 6pm, our contact person told us that he had called both the Greek and the Turkish Coastguards. The Turkish Coastguard had searched the boat with binoculars, but had not seen a boat in the area. Later he confirmed that the boat had reached Greece.

Case 6 and 7: At 8:58am, we received a distress call via Viber from travellers stranded on Pasas island. The person on the phone told us that they were about 30 persons with 10 children and that they had arrived the day before on the island. He said that they were without food and water and in desperate need of help. We asked him for their GPS position, which he sent us via WhatsApp. At 9.04 we called the Chios Port Authority. The officer on duty told us that they had already sent a boat to pick up the group. We passed on this information to the travellers.

At 10.35am we received a WhatsApp message from a contact person about a second group of about 50 persons (37 adults and 14 children) who had stranded on the other side of Pasas. The contact person said that the group could see a Coastguard boat arriving. At 10.45am, the contact person from the first group on Pasas called us to say that they had still not been picked up. We called the Port Authorities again to explain to them that there were two groups on Pasas - one on the Western and the other on the Eastern side of the island. At eleven, our contact from the first group and at 11:21am the person who had contacted us about the second group confirmed that the Chios Port Police had picked up all stranded travellers from Pasas and brought them to Chios.

Case 8: At 9:39 pm, we received a message on Facebook saying that 35 persons had stranded on Samos, that the weather conditions were bad, and that they were in need of help. We reached out to the group on the island. The person we talked to explained that they were 29 people in total with one elderly person and six children among them. As it was raining, they had sought shelter in a church. They told us that they were not in an urgent distress situation. At 10:30 pm the Coastguard had found them.

Throughout Wednesday, we were alerted to 4 other cases (near Pasas, Agathonisi and Chios), in which, however we did not become active. In two cases the Greek Coastguard rescued the boats, in one case the boat made it to Greece without any assistance and in the last case, we received a confirmation that the travellers had arrived safely, but we couldn't find out where and how.