

logo not found or type unknown

12 Rescued from M/V Bonnie G Near St. Thomas Airport as Tropical Storm Philippe Moves Northward

Community Center / **Published On October 05, 2023 06:39 AM /**

Ernice Gilbert **October 05, 2023**

Image not found or type unknown



ST. THOMAS — The U.S. Coast Guard on Wednesday executed a swift rescue operation on Wednesday morning, saving 12 individuals from the M/V Bonnie G, a vessel that ran aground and began taking on water just south of the St. Thomas airport.

The 195-foot Vanuatu-flagged "ro-ro" cargo vessel, Bonnie G, experienced distress as Tropical Storm Philippe was moving away from the U.S. Virgin Islands. All aboard the vessel are reported safe, with no injuries.

The distress call from the Bonnie G was received by Coast Guard watchstanders in Sector San Juan at 3:41 a.m. on Wednesday. The ship communicated its dire situation, revealing water flooding into the engine room and the crew's decision to abandon ship, taking refuge in two life

rafts and a lifeboat.

In response to the emergency, an Urgent Marine Information Broadcast was transmitted by the Coast Guard watchstanders in Sector San Juan to alert nearby vessels. Crewmembers at Boat Forces Detachment St. Thomas promptly launched a Coast Guard 33-foot Special Purpose Craft to undertake the rescue mission. Upon arrival, the Coast Guard successfully embarked all 12 survivors, safely transporting them to Crown Bay Marina.

Capt. José E. Díaz, commander of Coast Guard Sector San Juan, lauded the quick and effective actions of the Coast Guard team, stating, "This vessel grounding was a very close call, and our watchstanders and boat crew deserve commendation for ensuring the safety of those aboard the Bonnie G." He further emphasized the need to probe the incident's causes and manage potential environmental threats, adding, "One of our main priorities is ensuring risks are managed properly and that potentially hazardous chemicals are removed promptly and safely to protect the pristine waters of the U.S. Virgin Islands."

Coast Guard Marine Safety Detachment and response personnel in the U.S. Virgin Islands are collaborating with Bonnie G's company to assess pollution risks. The ship reportedly holds approximately 13,000 gallons of fuel, 250 gallons of lube oil, and its cargo included six cars, a truck, a trailer, and two cargo pallets. Notifications have also been made to the National Response Center and local U.S. Virgin Islands authorities.

The incident is currently under Coast Guard investigation to determine its causes and subsequent implications.