

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Four U.S. Citizens Rescued By Coast Guard In Vieques Waters Brought To Safety On St. Croix

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A Coast Guard Air Station Borinquen helicopter aircrew and a Royal Netherlands Navy helicopter aircrew rescued 4 men from a capsized vessel Sunday, approximately 45 nautical miles south of Vieques, Puerto Rico, the Coast Guard [made known](#) via release.

Rescued are four U.S. citizens from Vieques, Puerto Rico.

"Today's rescue reinforced the importance of being prepared on the water," said Lt. Carl Luxhoj, Air Station Borinquen MH-65 Dolphin aircraft commander. "The survivors had life vests on and flares to signal the helicopter. We thank our international partners from the Royal Netherlands Navy who heard the distress call and responded. Their assistance

helped expedite the rescue and reduced the time the survivors were in the water clinging on to their vessel.”

Coast Guard watchstanders in Sector San Juan received a call at 7:50 a.m. Sunday from Vieques Emergency Management personnel, who relayed a report of the distress from a friend of one of the rescued men.

Coast Guard watchstanders launched a Coast Guard MH-65 Dolphin helicopter from Air Station Borinquen and broadcasted an Urgent Marine Information Broadcast notifying marine traffic in the area to be on the lookout for the boaters. A Royal Netherlands Navy helicopter, flying in the vicinity, also responded to render rescue assistance.

The Coast Guard MH-65 Dolphin helicopter crew located the capsized vessel with two men clinging on to the boat and two others sitting on top of the vessel. The Coast Guard aircrew deployed their rescue swimmer who used the aircraft rescue basket to hoist three of the boaters aboard, while the Royal Netherlands Navy helicopter rescued the remaining boater and recovered the Coast Guard rescue swimmer.

The rescued boaters were transported to St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, where they were received by Customs and Border Protection authorities.