



NEWS From -

Conference of Professional Operators for Response Towing

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AFRAS (Association For Rescue At Sea) Honors C-PORT Member with Lifesaving Award



C-PORT (Conference of Professional Operators for Response Towing) and AFRAS (Association For Rescue At Sea) celebrated and presented its distinguished lifesaving award at the 29th C-PORT Conference held on January 11 – January 13, 2016 at Jupiter, FL. Presenting the award on behalf of AFRAS was Mr. Dana Goward, SES, USCG (retired), to Captain Anne Allard, Sea Tow US Virgin Islands.

Tina Cardone, executive director of C-PORT commented, “The association is thrilled to have one of its members receive this high honor.” Cardone explained that AFRAS established this program, in cooperation with C-PORT, to annually

recognize a deserving member of C-PORT that has shown exceptional skill and determination to save lives during a rescue incident in the maritime environment.

On November 24, 2014, at approximately 1215 local time, Sea Tow Virgin Island’s owner, Captain Alan Wentworth, received a distress call for a boat on the rocks in St. John, VI, and immediately called Captain Allard to assist in the rescue. Wentworth rendezvoused with Captain Allard at 1230, and together they made way towards Chocolate Hole aboard a 33 foot vessel. Additional company assets were dispatched and responded to the scene as well. The sea conditions in the area were dangerous: periodic rain squalls, steady 15-20+ knot winds out of the ENE with higher gusts, and 6-8 foot seas wrapping around the island with larger sets at irregular intervals. Shortly after 1300, the towing vessels arrived on scene to find the 48 foot sailboat “Aurora,” on the rocks with 6 people onboard huddled in the cockpit being pummeled by large waves. The steep cliffs and jagged rocks made a landward rescue impossible. Wentworth positioned his vessel as close as possible to the sailboat, while Allard entered the water and swam over to the “Aurora.” Once aboard the sailboat, Allard quickly evaluated both the passengers and the boat. Her professional demeanor kept the passengers calm during rapidly deteriorating conditions.

A Coast Guard boat arrived approximately 10 minutes later and immediately called for a helicopter to extract the passengers. The helicopter arrived on scene approximately 15 minutes later and deployed a rescue swimmer, who was unable to board the “Aurora” due to the treacherous surf conditions. Allard made the decision to get the passengers to the edge of the boat one at a time, helped them time the waves, and transitioned them into the water where the rescue swimmer helped swim them over to the awaiting rescue basket. Allard safely transferred all 6 passengers off of the “Aurora” as the waves continued to grow and batter the crippled sailboat. Once all passengers were safely removed from the sailboat, Allard was able to free the dinghy from the sailboat and navigate it through the surf break, back to the awaiting towing vessels for transport back to shore. All safely returned to the dock at approximately 1800.

There is no doubt that Captain Allard’s action, amidst such dangerous conditions, directly contributed to the saving of six lives.



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“C-PORT congratulates Captain Anne Allard for her heroic efforts in saving these lives,” stated Terry Hill, C-PORT chairman. “Assisting boaters is what we do and it’s great to have C-PORT members recognized with such a prestigious award.

C-PORT was founded in 1986 to act as a liaison between the marine assistance industry and public agencies and organizations involved with boating safety, marine assistance, marine salvage and other marine-related operations. Our members are dedicated to providing prompt, professional and timely assistance to all boaters and to actively partner and cooperate with local law enforcement and U.S. Coast Guard. They are professionals, dedicated to the growth and development of their respective businesses and committed to furthering the advancement of our waterways and the boating community. For more information, contact C-PORT at (954) 261-2012 or visit www.cport.us.