

Statement regarding the MH65 response to the M/V Captain Alex

- Crew initially received report of a 31' shrimping vessel taking on water. Upon arriving on scene, the vessel looked to be 80' or more.
- Crew brought a P1 pump to the scene
- Initial comms on coded frequencies were ineffective. Crew requested all comms to be moved to 23A to keep responding small boat, sector, and helicopter on the same frequency. This did not delay the response as the change occurred enroute to the vessel in distress. Some comms were being done on ch. 16 until the distressed vessel attempted passing their location over ch. 16. At which point responding crews attempted to copy the transmission. But it came in broken and difficult to read.
- Initial position given to the aircrew for the vessel was updated enroute. Upon arriving to that location the vessel was not there. The aircraft then went to the original position unsuccessfully. After that, the crew flew towards Galveston Bay looking for vessels that might be in distress. During this time the crew of the distressed vessel attempted passing their location over ch. 16. Sector was able to use the rescue 21 system to locate the vessel. The aircraft arrived at a vessel with crew aboard waving and using a strobe light for attention as this updated location was passed, confirming that it was the vessel in distress. The aircrew then vectored the small boat to the location of the distressed vessel.
- Upon arriving on scene, the small boat passed their pump over to the distressed vessels crew. Approximately 10-15 minutes later they sent 2 crew members over to the distressed vessel. 5-10 minutes later, the decision to evacuate all members from the distressed vessel was made.
- Initially on scene the vessel was moving with the sea state. After the small boat arrived, the distressed vessel went dead in the water and her heading slowly drifted 90 degrees until the vessel was beam-to the sea state.
- When the decision was made to evacuate the crew, the small boat stated that they were not able to dewater the vessel due to the excessive oily water.
- From the left seat of the aircraft, the stability was not evaluated later on in the response. Initially, I would have considered sending the RS to the vessel if the small boat was not in the area.
- During the response, if asked to send the aircrafts p1 pump, I most likely would have elected to send it to the small boat directly due to the hazards and gear all around the shrimping vessel.

LT

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