U.S. Department of
Homeland Security

United States
Coast Guard

MARINE BOARD OF INVESTIGATION

UPDATE: Coast Guard searching for missing container ship caught in Hurricane Joaquin

News Release
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MIAMI — The Coast Guard continues to search for a missing container ship with 33 crewmembers aboard reported to be caught in Hurricane Joaquin, near Crooked Island, Bahamas.

The crew consists of 28 U.S. citizens and five Polish nationals.

Coast Guard search crews have covered approximately 850 square nautical miles in the search for the El Faro crew.

Coast Guard assets involved in Fridays search include:
Coast Guard Cutter Northland.
HC-130 Hercules airplanes from Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater, Florida.
MH-60 Jayhawk rescue helicopter crew forward deployed in Great Inagua, Bahamas.

The El Faro, a 735-foot ro-ro cargo ship, was en route to San Juan, Puerto Rico, from Jacksonville, Florida. At approximately 7:30 a.m. Thursday, watchstanders at the Coast Guard Atlantic Area command center in Portsmouth, Virginia, received an Inmarsat satellite notification stating the El Faro was beset by Hurricane Joaquin, had lost propulsion and had a 15-degree list. The crew reported the ship had previously taken on water, but that all flooding had been contained.

Watchstanders at the Coast Guard 7th District command center in Miami launched an HC-130 aircrew out of Clearwater, Florida, to search for the El Faro. At this time Coast Guard watchstanders and rescue crews have been unable to reestablish communications with the El Faro crew.

Two Hurricane Hunter aircrews attempted to locate and reestablish communications with the El Faro unsuccessfully Friday. Coast Guard crews have temporarily suspended their search for friday at sundown but will continue searching at first light Saturday morning.

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