



## **Holland America Line Receives Association for Rescue at Sea AMVER Award for ms Veendam's 2015 Rescue of Airplane Pilot from Pacific Ocean**

October 21, 2016

***Sponsored by the Association for Rescue at Sea, the AFRAS AMVER Award ceremony was held at the U.S. Capitol***

Seattle, Wash., Oct. 21, 2016 – The captain and crew of Holland America Line's *ms Veendam* were honored by the Association for Rescue at Sea with a prestigious AFRAS AMVER Award for the 2015 rescue of a pilot who ditched his aircraft in the Pacific Ocean near Hawaii. The Automated Mutual Assistance Vessel Rescue System was implemented by the U.S. Coast Guard in 1958, and the AMVER Awards were created in 1971 to recognize vessels that participate in the program.

Holland America Line received the award at the annual Coast Guard Award Ceremony Sept. 21, 2016, at the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C. *Veendam's* Captain Eric van der Wal accepted the honor on behalf of the cruise line.

"The pilot rescue in the Pacific Ocean is a proud moment in our company history, and we are honored to receive the AFRAS AMVER Award from the Association for Rescue at Sea," said Orlando Ashford, Holland America Line's president. "We are proud to support the AMVER motto, 'No Call for Help Goes Unanswered,' and on behalf of *Veendam's* captain and crew we thank you for the recognition."

The AMVER awards honor the heroism of those who take extraordinary measures to effect a successful rescue at sea. On Jan. 25, 2015, *Veendam* rescued a pilot 225 miles off the coast of Maui, Hawaii, who had to ditch his single-engine aircraft after a malfunction with the fuel system. The plane had a parachute system, and the pilot was able to safely escape into a life raft from which he was retrieved by *Veendam*.

The ceremony was hosted by California Rep. Duncan Hunter, chairman of the House Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Marine Transportation, with additional members of Congress and the Vice Commandant, Adm. Charles D. Michel, of the United States Coast Guard and his senior staff also in attendance.

The AFRAS AMVER Award was inaugurated in 1996 by the nonprofit, charitable-status Association for Rescue at Sea, which is devoted to supporting services concerned with saving lives at sea and promoting the importance of safety in concert with other maritime and aviation organizations. Selection criteria for the award include seamanship, ship handling, degree of effort involved in the rescue and the ship's initiative in responding.

The Automated Mutual Assistance Vessel Rescue System, or AMVER, which is sponsored by the

U.S. Coast Guard, is a computer-based voluntary global ship reporting system used worldwide by search and rescue authorities to arrange for assistance to persons in distress at sea.

This was the third rescue at sea by a Holland America Line ship in 2015. On Jan. 3, *ms Zuiderdam* rescued eight crew members from a sinking vessel in the Caribbean, and on Jan. 4 *ms Zaandam* came to the aid of seven stranded crew members at the Arctowski Polish research station at King George Island in Antarctica.

**Editor's note:** Photos are available at <https://www.cruiseimagelibrary.com/c/f3bfpsw5>.

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**About Holland America Line [a division of Carnival Corporation and plc (NYSE: CCL and CUK)]**

Holland America Line's fleet of 14 ships offers more than 500 cruises to more than 400 ports in 98 countries, territories or dependencies around the world. From shorter getaways to 115-day itineraries, the company's cruises visit all seven continents with highlights including Antarctica explorations, South America circumnavigations and exotic Australia/New Zealand and Asia voyages; four annual Grand Voyages; and popular sailings to the Caribbean, Alaska, Mexico, Canada/New England, Bermuda, Europe and the Panama Canal. The line currently has a new 2,650-guest ship, *ms Koningsdam*, delivered in April 2016, as well as a second Pinnacle Class ship, *ms Nieuw Statendam*, due for delivery in November 2018.

The company recently announced \$300 million in brand enhancements to secure its position as the leader in premium cruising. Fleetwide, the ships feature innovative initiatives and a diverse range of enriching experiences focused on destination immersion and personalized travel. Guests can expand their knowledge on board at an America's Test Kitchen shipboard culinary show, Explorations Café, powered by The New York Times, and Digital Workshop powered by Windows. Outstanding entertainment fills each evening at venues including Lincoln Center Stage, Billboard Onboard and B.B. King's Blues Club. The dining experience can be savored at a variety of restaurants with menus that feature selections from Holland America Line's esteemed Culinary Council that comprises world-famous chefs who design dishes exclusively for guests.

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