

Critical fire on new ULCC Maersk Honam; four crew are missing



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A serious fire was reported in one of the cargo holds of ULCC Maersk Honam (IMO 9784271) during the afternoon of Tuesday March 6th. Although 23 crew members were successfully evacuated to the nearby ALS Ceres that evening, a search and rescue operation continued for four crew members currently reported missing.



Maersk Honam was en route from Singapore towards Suez, and is currently positioned about 900nm southeast of Salalah, Oman.

Maersk said that the fire onboard continued and the situation of the vessel was "very critical".

Chief Operating Officer and AP Moller-Maersk executive board member Søren Toft said that "we've received the news of Maersk Honam and the four missing crew members with the deepest regret and are now doing our outmost to continue the ongoing search and rescue operations. This by rerouting our own vessels, with assistance of vessels in the area – most notably ALS Ceres that thankfully acted promptly upon our distress call – and the local authorities."

Container vessels MSC Lauren, Edith Mærsk and Gerd Mærsk, all en route in the Arabian Sea, diverted their routes and arrived early morning Wednesday March 7th local time. Weather conditions in the area were fair.

Maersk said that the evacuated crew members were obviously distressed, with two crew members needing first aid onboard the ALS Ceres. Maersk added that it would be offering crisis counselling for the seafarers signing-off and returning to their families. Toft said that Maersk would offer all the support it could to the families of the missing crew members "in this very difficult situation".

The nationalities of the 27 crew members are: India (13), Philippines (9), Romania (1), South Africa (1), Thailand (2) and UK (1).

All impacted customers will be contacted directly.

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The cause of the fire was not yet known, said Maersk Line, adding that it would be investigating the matter thoroughly in cooperation with all relevant authorities.

2017-built, Singapore-flagged, 153,153 gt 15,262 teu Maersk Honam was carrying 7,860 containers at the time of the incident. It is owned by Moller Singapore AP Pte Ltd of Singapore and managed by Maersk Line AS of Copenhagen, Denmark. It is entered with Standard Club (Europe division) on behalf of AP Moller Singapore Pte Ltd.