



LAYERS

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## 30/10: Four cases: two groups rescued to Greece; two groups returned to Turkey

In Distress  Interception  Push-Back  Boza VERIFIED

31.10.2019 / 13:25 / Aegean Sea

### Watch The Med Alarm Phone Investigations – 30th of October 2019

Case name: 2019\_10\_30-AEG608

**Situation:** Two people swimming, rescued to Kos; one group run onto the rocks at shore of Samos, brought to Kos or Samos; two groups returned to Turkey, one of them a possible push-back/ pull-back.

**Status of WTM Investigation:** Concluded

**Place of Incident:** Aegean Sea

#### Summary of the Cases:

On 30 October 2019, the Alarm Phone was alerted to four situations of distress:

The first alert came in at 00:56am CET informing the Alarm Phone about two travelers swimming towards Kos island. Their rescue by the Greek coastguard was confirmed at 01:53am, probably they were brought to Kos.

The second alert came in at 06:50am from a boat at the western shore of Samos. We could not re-establish the contact and the possible rescue of the travelers to Kos or Samos was confirmed by the Greek coastguard at 08:20am.

The third call reached us at 06:55am from Turkish water close to Chios island. Shortly after this, we received the information that the travelers had been returned to Turkey by the Turkish Coastguard.

The fourth alert reached the Alarm Phone at 08:20am via a person whose family was in distress in Greek waters close to Samothraki island. Finally, the travelers were returned to Turkey and it remains to be investigated if it was a push-back/pull-back.

#### Case1:

At 00:56am CET the Alarm Phone received a call from a person telling us about two persons swimming towards Kos island, Greece. The GPS location they sent us showed them in Greek waters. At 01:12am we got trough to the travelers but could hear nothing but background noises. At 01:24am we informed the Greek coastguard's central office in Piraeus who were already aware of the case and had sent a rescue vessel and confirmed we were talking about the same GPS location. We agreed to call back later for a confirmation. At 01:27am we established a contact to the swimming persons. They reported to see a boat far away and were making light with their phones to draw attention to them. At 01:53am the person that had called us initially, informed us that the two travelers were rescued by the Greek coastguard. At 06:52am the coastguard also confirmed the rescue but were not sure where the people had been brought to, probably to Kos.

#### Case 2:

At 06:50am CET we received a WhatsApp message telling about a boat in distress in the rocks of the western shore of Samos island, Greece. We could not establish a contact to the travelers to find out more about the situation. At 08:20am we asked the Greek Coastguard if the had information about the case and they informed us about a rescue at the indicated location. According to them the people had been taken to Kos island, but after our research according to the recorded landings on Samos island it is also possible that the people have been brought there.

#### Case 3:

At 06:55am a relative informed us about a boat in distress in Turkish water close to Chios island. Shortly after this, we received the information from the same person that the travelers had been returned to Turkey by the Turkish coastguard. Later the Turkish coastguard confirmed the rescue.

#### Case 4:

At 08:20am CET our shift team was alerted by a relative about their family in a boat, taking in water, heading towards Samothraki. It took until 08:43am to receive a GPS location. It was in Greek waters. Meanwhile we could not establish a direct contact to

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[Alarm Phone alerted to 6 distress cases near Chios, Lesvos, Samos, and Symi](#)

14:45 Nov 22, 2019 / Aegean Sea Kms

[21/11: 54 people travelling to Chios returned to Turkey](#)

16:05 Oct 19, 2015 / Aegean Sea Kms

[8 boats in distress near the Greek islands of Farmakonisi, Chios and Lesvos. 2 groups stranded on Agathonisi and Glaros](#)


00:42 Jan 06, 2020 / Aegean Sea Kms

[05/01: 2 Cases - 36 people arrived to Mytilene, Lesvos // 35 people rescued to Samos](#)

14:41 Feb 22, 2016 / Aegean Sea Kms

[21/02: Alarm Phone alerted to 5 distress cases in the Aegean Sea, near Chios, Farmakonisi and Lesvos](#)





location, it was in Greek waters. Meanwhile we could not establish a direct contact to the travelers. The relative had already alerted the Greek coastguard. When we managed to establish a connection to the boat, the communication was very difficult because of language barriers, but we understood the travelers were on the way back towards Turkey, but we did not understand why. At 10:26h the relative confirmed that his family had been taken back to Turkey by Turkish authorities. It remains to be investigated if this was a push-back by the Greek or a pull-back by the Turkish coastguard, as the first location of the boat that we received was clearly in Greek waters.

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