



## 02/2 Alarm Phone alerted to 5 emergency situations in the Aegean Sea, near Chios, Lesbos and Farmakonisi

In Distress

VERIFIED

03.02.2016 / 23:03 / Aegean Sea, Chios, Lesvos and Farmakonisi

### Watch The Med Alarm Phone Investigations – 2nd of February 2016

Case name: 2016\_02\_02-AEG200

Situation: Alarm Phone alerted to 5 emergency situations in the Aegean Sea

Status of WTM Investigation: Concluded

Place of Incident: Aegean Sea

*Summary of the Cases:* On Tuesday the 2nd of February 2016, the Alarm Phone was alerted to 5 distress situations in the Aegean region. Four vessels were in distress at sea in total and 2 of them were rescued to Greece and the other 2 to Turkey. One group was stranded on Farmakonisi and later transferred to Leros Island by the Greek coastguards.

The first distress case reached us a few minutes passed midnight when we received a Facebook message from a contact person who informed us about a vessel in distress, carrying 55 people, including many women and children (case 1). They were on their way to Chios Island and when we reached them at 00.15am, they were clearly in panic. We could only hear a lot of shouting before the phone connection cut. We then immediately called the Greek coastguards and passed on the GPS position of the vessel. Afterwards we were unable to reach the travellers again but the contact person confirmed later on that the group had been rescued by the Greek coastguards.

At 3.17am, we received a distress message via WhatsApp, informing us about a vessel with 9 people on board in distress off the Turkish coast (case 2). They were on their way to Lesbos when their engine broke down. Our contact person was in direct contact with the group and we advised him to tell them to call the emergency numbers 112 and 158. Already a couple of minutes later, the Turkish confirmed that they had sent out a rescue vessel. At 3.42am, the contact person confirmed the rescue of the vessel and the return of the group to Turkey.

At 6.01am a contact person alerted us to a large group that had stranded on Farmakonisi Island (case 3). We were told that there were about 138 people who had reached the island on several boats. We then reached out to the Port Authority of Leros and they were aware of the situation but thought that there were 134, not 138 people on the island. They confirmed that they would go and transfer the people off the island. Via the contact person we informed the group that they should stay together and await rescue. At 8.29am one of the people on the island reported that fifteen minutes earlier, 14 people had been taken onto a boat. It can be presumed that the Greek coastguards went several times back and forth and transferred the group off Farmakonisi.

At 10.55am our shift team received a call from a woman in the US who informed us about a boat in distress that she had been informed about via Facebook (case 4). Shortly afterwards, another contact person informed us about the same case. The vessel was on its way to Lesbos and carrying about 50 people. A few minutes later the second contact person informed us that the group had been rescued by the Greek coastguards.

At 11.42pm we received a WhatsApp message from a Syrian activist who told us about a group in distress (case 5). The distress situation was not clear and the people could not be reached. Through the contact person we learned that they wanted to be rescued either by the Turkish or Greek coastguards. They were still in Turkish waters and so we spoke to the Turkish coastguards at midnight and they confirmed that they would look into the situation. At 2.15am, our activist colleague confirmed that they had been rescued by the Turkish coastguards.

Last update: 19:02 Feb 10, 2016

### Related Reports

15:11 Jul 15, 2019 / Aegean Sea Kms

[14/07: 20 travellers rescued and brought back to Turkey.](#)

18:02 Oct 04, 2015 / Aegean Sea near Lesbos, Chios and Kos Kms

[Alarm Phone alerted to 8 distress cases in the Aegean Sea near Lesbos, Chios and Kos](#)

18:01 Aug 06, 2020 / Aegean Sea Kms

[05/08: 40 travellers pushed back to Turkey south of Lesbos](#)

19:47 Apr 14, 2018 / Aegean Sea Kms

[14/04: 35 travellers in distress in the Aegean, returned to Turkey](#)

11:19 Oct 30, 2015 / Aegean Sea Kms

[Most deadly day in the Aegean Sea with more than 50 travellers drowned](#)



