

## Ship's Crew Stranded For Months Off Port Everglades

July 29, 2016 4:32 PM By Gary Nelson  
Filed Under: Coast Guard, Gary Nelson, Port Everglades



Port Everglades (Source: sunny.org)

BROWARD (CBSMiami) – The MV Delphinus unloaded her cargo at Port Everglades April 12th and was promptly seized by the government.

The ship was taken from its German owners by a federal judge – collateral against debts owed to a host of creditors.

As the ship has languished at anchor, so have its 11 Filipino, Polish, Ukrainian and Russian crew members. Conditions are miserable on the ship as it vibrates – engines running 24/7.

“They’re continually cooped up in basically a steel box, with very little recreational availability, no shore leave capability,” said Father Ronald Perkins of the humanitarian group Seafarers’ House at the port. “The ship is moving – it’s anchored but it’s moving all the time,” Perkins said.

Three crew members were finally allowed to come ashore Friday, another three yesterday, but only for a few hours and confined to the Seafarer's House, under guard.

A variety of immigration, civil and maritime laws have kept the crewmembers essentially hostage on the big ship in cramped living space for nearly four months.

The Coast Guard demands the minimum crew of 11.

"They have specific requirements they have placed on the ship while it remains at anchor to ensure that it remains safe," said Port Everglades Assistant Director Glenn Wiltshire.

The crew members allowed to come ashore briefly Friday were asked by the ship's interim operators not to speak to the media, but one seaman spoke briefly.

"Oh, my God. For me, it's first time I have situation like this. So, for me it's new situation. I don't know now," said seaman Sebastian Blazial, referring to not knowing what the future holds.

Those trying to help the crew members know their goal.

"We want the ship, the legal action, settled, the ship sold, or whatever they're going to do with the ship, so these guys can go home," said Father Perkins.

It appears freedom could be on the distant horizon.

A court-ordered auction will be held on August 11th. The hope is the ship will be sold to a responsible company, and the long stranded crew members will be allowed to eventually sail on or, if they choose, go home.