

Crew detained for months on cargo ship in Port Everglades



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PORT EVERGLADES, Fla. (WSVN) — A crew of 11 men have been anchored sequestered on board a cargo ship in the middle of Port Everglades since April, after U.S. Marshals seized their vessel.

The cargo ship, named the M/V Delphinus, hails from Antigua, an island in the West Indies. According to reports, the owner of the ship went into default in April, forcing U.S. Marshals to seize the ship.

Consequentially, the ship's crew members have been sequestered to the ship and cannot return home, as they are under a contract with the ship.

Now Seafarers' House, a non-profit organization, is trying to raise awareness to put an end to their detainment.

“At one point in June, things were getting a little testy on board. People were under a great deal of stress, and they requested that we board the vessel,” said Father Ron Perkins of Seafarers’ House.

The 11 men, the majority of whom are from Ukraine and the Philippines, have not been allowed to come on shore since April, and are essentially property of the ship.

Thanks to Seafarers’ House, crew members who request to go on land are able to briefly walk on shore into the Seafarers’ House Casa in Port Everglades.

On Friday, three men, who had previously requested a visit, were allowed to go to the Casa for a few hours.

However, the men are not allowed to leave the property.

“You see, seafarers who come into the United States only have 27 continuous days to be inside U.S. territory, and, unfortunately, if they were arrested in April, they have well exceeded the 27-day rule.”

On Aug. 11, there will be an auction. Once, and only if, the ship is sold, the crew members will either be allowed to go back home, or, they may re-enter into a new contract with a new company that buys the cargo ship.

For the time being, the 11 crew members remain on board the M/V Delphinus and at sea.