

Beat: Business

21 rescued after fishing boat catches fire in the South Pacific

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USPA News - Twenty-one people from the island nation of Kiribati have been rescued in the Pacific Ocean after their fishing boat caught fire far south of Hawaii, U.S. officials said on Sunday. There were no reports of injuries.

The incident was first reported at 2 a.m. Hawaii time on Saturday when watchstanders at the Joint Rescue Coordination Center (JRCC) in Honolulu received an alert from an Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB). The alert originated from a vessel about 230 miles (370 kilometers) south of Jarvis Island, which is a small, uninhabited island that is part of the United States. The U.S. Coast Guard said it determined that the EPIRB belonged to the Kiribati-flagged, 140-foot (42.6-meter) fishing vessel Betty C. and issued a safety net broadcast to vessels in the region near Jarvis Island. The U.S.-flagged fishing vessel Cape Ferrat responded to the call and found the Betty C. on fire when it arrived at the scene at 9:30 a.m. Hawaii time. All 21 crew members of the fishing boat had already abandoned ship before the Cape Ferrat arrived and were awaiting rescue on a small skiff. "Cape Ferrat safely rescued all 21 passengers from the skiff and will transfer them to American Samoa," a spokesperson for the 14th Coast Guard District said, adding that there were no reports of injuries and that the cause of the fire remained unknown. The vessel's owner is working to develop a plan to salvage the vessel.

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