

## For Life Saving Efforts – Capt. Anne Allard

Sea Tow Virgin Island's Captain Anne Allard is cited "For Life Saving Efforts," for her performance on November 24, 2014. At approximately 1215 local time, Sea Tow Virgin Island's owner, Captain Alan Wentworth, received a distress call for a boat on the rocks in St. John, VI, and immediately called Captain Allard to assist in the rescue. Wentworth rendezvoused with Captain Allard at 1230, and together they made way towards Chocolate Hole aboard a 33 foot vessel. At the same time, Sea Tow Virgin Island's Captains Daniel Brin and Christian Greaux responded aboard a 27 vessel. The sea conditions in the area were dangerous: periodic rain squalls, steady 15-20+ knot winds out of the ENE with higher gusts, and 6-8 foot seas wrapping around the island with larger sets at irregular intervals. Shortly after 1300, the Sea Tow vessels arrived on scene to find the 48 foot sailboat "Aurora," on the rocks with 6 people onboard huddled in the cockpit being pummeled by large waves. The steep cliffs and jagged rocks made a landward rescue impossible. Wentworth positioned his vessel as close as possible to the sailboat, while Allard entered the water and swam over to the "Aurora." Once aboard the sailboat, Allard quickly evaluated both the passengers and the boat. Her professional demeanor kept the passengers calm during rapidly deteriorating conditions. A Coast Guard boat arrived approximately 10 minutes later and immediately called for a helicopter to extract the passengers. The helicopter arrived on scene approximately 15 minutes later and deployed a rescue swimmer, who was unable to board the "Aurora" due to the treacherous surf conditions. Allard made the decision to get the passengers to the edge of the boat one at a time, helped them time the waves, and transitioned them into the water where the rescue swimmer helped swim them over to the awaiting rescue basket. Allard safely transferred all 6 passengers off of the "Aurora" as the waves continued to grow and batter the crippled sailboat. Once all passengers were safely removed from the sailboat, Allard was able to free the dinghy from the sailboat and navigate it through the surf break, back to the awaiting Sea Tow vessels for transport back to shore. All Sea Tow Captains and vessels safely returned to the dock at approximately 1800. There is no doubt that Captain Allard's actions, amidst such dangerous conditions, directly contributed to the saving of six lives.