

# THE ASSOCIATION FOR RESCUE AT SEA

## CLIA Award

2020

### Presented to:

Captain David Galloway, First Officer Christian Biasia

and Seaman Muhammad Kholik

while serving aboard *Island Princess*

At approximately 11:40 a.m. on January 2, 2019, while on underway in the Caribbean Sea proceeding enroute from Ocho Rios, Jamaica to Cartagena, Columbia, passenger ship *Island Princess* under command of Captain **David Galloway** received a mayday call from offshore supply ship *Water Spirit*, which had been disabled and adrift without power for 22 days and was now taking on water in position 14° 30' N and 075° 57' W with six persons on board.

Captain **Galloway** immediately diverted *Island Princess* and once on scene with *Water Spirit* encountered challenging weather conditions including winds at 50 knots from east-northeast and swells at 4- to 5-meter height.

Captain **Galloway** thoroughly assessed the situation and in light of the on scene weather conditions determined that it would be very difficult to launch a boat to conduct the rescue, thus it was necessary first to manoeuvre the 294 metre long *Island Princess* into a position upwind of the 47 metre long *Water Spirit* and hold position to create a stable lee for the *Island Princess* fast rescue boat during all three phases of launch, rescue and recovery. This was particularly difficult for Captain **Galloway** given strong winds which were causing vastly different drift rates between the two ships; the challenge being for the larger *Island Princess* to be close enough to create a lee, but to avoid drifting down on to the smaller *Water Spirit*.

Once in position, Captain **Galloway** launched the *Island Princess* fast rescue boat having a boat crew comprised of First Officer **Christian Biasia** and Seaman **Muhammad Kholik**. Although the *Water Spirit* inflatable liferaft had been successfully launched, the six seafarers were unable to control the survival craft as their disabled ship was experiencing heaving rolls thus, they were unable to embark the liferaft. It therefore became necessary for First Officer **Biasia** and Seaman **Kholik** in the *Island Princess* fast rescue boat to conduct the rescue directly from *Water Spirit* while Captain **Galloway** provided a lee.

At risk to their own lives, despite very difficult conditions including large rises and falls of the disabled ship, First Officer **Biasia** and Seaman **Kholik** manoeuvred their fast rescue boat alongside *Water Spirit* and, as Captain **Galloway** provided an essential lee, successfully embarked all six seafarers and brought them safely back to *Island Princess*.

After security, the six survivors were examined by the *Island Princess* medical team and apart from some minor scrapes and bruises were found to be suffering from dehydration but were otherwise in good health. Having showered and rested, the six survivors were treated to a steak dinner and were disembarked from *Island Princess* on arrival in Cartagena, Colombia.

Under command of Captain **David Galloway**, the *Island Princess* fast rescue boat crew of First Officer **Christian Biasia** and Seaman **Muhammad Kholik** displayed outstanding courage at sea and extraordinary seamanship skills in very difficult conditions on January 2, 2019, in the Caribbean Sea, in saving the lives of six fellow seafarers in distress from offshore supply ship *Water Spirit*. - 3 -

Following rescue, the captain of *Water Spirit* stated that he and the other five seafarers had joined the ship at sea on December 12, 2018, and were due to be relieved on January 4, 2019. However, shortly after taking over the ship, they experienced problems, lost power and had been drifting at sea ever since. Although ship's battery power had been available for a short period of time, after experiencing a complete loss of ship's battery power the crew used a hand-held

radio to contact the ship's owner who indicated that another ship would soon be dispatched to assist *Water Spirit*. However, the assist ship never arrived.

*Water Spirit* had been disabled and adrift for 22 days without power or means of communications. On January 1, 2019, after the ship's mechanic connected a lifeboat battery to the ship's communication system, the crew were able to communicate with a passing cargo ship which contacted Curaçao who then contacted Cartagena to arrange for a ship to assist *Water Spirit*. However, the ship from Cartagena also never arrived.

On January 2, 2019, at approximately 1115 hours, as the ship was taking on water due to storm/swell conditions and had no mechanical capacity to dewater, the captain of *Water Spirit* broadcasted a mayday which was received and acknowledged by *Island Princess*.