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Drifting Hungarian sailor towed in

Monday, November 12, 2007

A Hungarian sailor was rescued by locals at the weekend after engine problems caused his yacht to drift for 10 hours while entering Fiji waters.

Aron Meder, 27, of Budapest began his trip on his yacht Karina from Koper in Slovenia, Europe in September last year.

The grateful sailor said little did he know his 19- foot vessel would have engine problems while entering Fiji.

Assistant police spokesman Corporal Josaia Weicavu said the yacht was drifting 20 miles from Lautoka at 7.35pm on Saturday.

Corporal Weicavu said Mr Meder was rescued by the Seashell Momi Resort rescue team.

The yacht was towed to the harbour and later to the resort.

"The owner who was alone on board is in good health at the Seashell Momi," he said.

"Police wish to acknowledge the assistance rendered by the resort's management and their rescue team."

Mr Meder said he realised he had engine trouble when he was entering the passage to Fiji from Tonga at around 1pm on Saturday.

He tried calling nearby radios using a high-frequency phone. "But none could read me," he said.

So he called a friend and his father who then contacted the local authorities.

SeashellMomi Resort manager Rohinesh Prasad said they were called by the Marine Department and decided to go and help.

"It was not something that we are to decide on, but we have to do it," he said.

"There was a life at risk and all we can do is to try and go and rescue him."

Mr Prasad commended his staff.

Mr Meder said he would repair the engine as well as wait for the cyclone season to be over before leaving for his next port in New Zealand.



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