# Cruise Ship Rescues 22 Stranded People From a Raft After Their Engine Breaks

An accidental search and rescue occurred when a cruise ship found and saved 22 people floating through the ocean on a raft and brought them on board to safety.

The Royal Caribbean Symphony of the Seas cruise ship was headed for the Bahamas last week when passengers spotted a raft floating on rough seas somewhere between Key West, Florida, and Cuba.

Witnesses from the ship said that the captain announced they saw a small vessel that appeared to be signaling for distress.

In a video shared by passenger Elizabeth Guice with *WKRG News 5,* the cruise ship's small yellow rescue boat can be seen bringing two distressed raft passengers safely to the main ship.

The crew later discovered that the group of migrants had encountered a broken engine and had been floating in the water for an estimated six days before they were rescued.

The passengers were brought to safety aboard the ship before ultimately being picked up by the U.S. Coast Guard after about an hour.

"This captain was pretty transparent, to be honest with you, because he came back on, he told us that he got clearance from the U.S. Coast Guard to go ahead and approach the vessel and start removing the people that were on there," passenger Rich King told *Fox10 News*. "The whole crew and all 5,000 passengers

that were up top watching this unfold were all cheering and were just kind of happy to see people being rescued.”

The Coast Guard confirmed that they had received a call for help about a stray raft around 4:30 p.m. on December 15 and noted that this type of incident “isn’t uncommon” in the area.

Royal Caribbean did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

A similar incident occurred earlier this year when a Virgin Voyages cruise ship rescued eight refugees fleeing Cuba in September on a makeshift raft just outside the country. The passengers were also turned over to the Coast Guard upon their rescue.

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