



Truk Siren: March 29th 2015

What happened?

A fast growing typhoon, Maysak, hit Truk Lagoon on Sunday 29th March, with the eye passing directly over the lagoon itself. There were no guests on-board at the time but Truk Siren, along with several other vessels – including another well knowing diving liveaboard, sustained serious damage and were grounded in shallow water. Our crew made every effort to secure the yacht, however the severity and speed of the storm proved beyond their efforts.

In the direct aftermath of the incident massive internal damage was caused by looting both internally and externally. Throughout the entire boat, fixtures, fittings, electrical items, furniture and many other items were stolen or destroyed beyond repair. There was also wanton destruction with graffiti, smashed windows throughout the boat and much more. Sadly, almost two weeks after the incident on the night of the 11th April, while plans were being made to refloat her, the boat was again attacked and burned by looters, meaning the loss of the vessel. Had this looting and fire not occurred we fully expected that the boat would have been operational again.

What was done to try and avert the incident?

One of the downsides of operating in some of the best diving areas in the Asia Pacific region is that they are also known for occasional extreme weather conditions. As such, we have always had very clear procedures in the event of bad weather, all of which were followed during the passing of Maysak.

These included moving to safe anchorage, deploying multiple anchors while on the mooring, securing all loose items, removing covers and securing the sails with extra rope in the build up to the storm. Whilst we were in the eye and it was clear that the wind would soon come from the other direction the crew lifted anchors and motored to find shelter in the lee of another island. Unfortunately during this navigation the winds picked up to a measured 148 MPH. We, along with the 5 other vessels (including one other well know dive liveaboard) who were following the same procedures and navigation, were all pushed onto the reef.

Were any specific lessons learned in the aftermath of this incident?

As mentioned, we have always had very clear procedures for severe weather. In the first place we never leave port if a named storm is imminent, and if we are already on a cruise then we seek safe shelter immediately. We then have a documented cyclone action plan that we put into action which includes as a priority the disembarkation of all guests and non-essential crew.

The fact that these procedures are strictly adhered to has meant that both Philippine Siren and Palau Siren had previously survived Typhoon Bopha and



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Typhoon Haiyan, both of which caused huge general devastation in the Philippines, with virtually no damage.

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