

94 REFUGEES SAIL FROM HAITI TO FLORIDA KEYS

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Body

KEY WEST, Fla. - A 30-foot wooden sailboat carrying **94 refugees** has run aground off Grassy **Key**, bringing the largest number of Haitians to **Florida** since 1980. Most were taken to the Krome detention center near Miami, said Perry Rivkind, district director for the Immigration and Naturalization Service. "This is the largest number of Haitians to get here in nine years," he said. "From this point, any new illegals who enter have to be moved to other facilities. Krome is now at capacity. It's very critical." Rivkind said the center was pressed to its limits. He said Krome should have 125 employees for the 525 detainees there. Instead, 63 staff members are working 12-hour shifts. Rivkind said he has asked for \$30,000 in emergency funds to pay for employee overtime for about "a month or two." "We're going to ask for relief," he said. "We need it. The more people at Krome - the longer they have to wait in line for food and other things - the opportunity for protests, and tension grows." The Haitians landed 100 yards off Grassy **Key** about 9 a.m. Friday. Among them were 10 pregnant women and three children, Rivkind said. Three people aboard the craft were taken to a hospital in Marathon, Fla. Rivkind said one woman went into labor shortly after her arrival, one man had a heart attack and another woman fainted. Members of the group said they had left a port about 150 miles from Port-au-Prince 30 days ago, Rivkind said. They landed twice in Cuba, where they were given food and water. When they were brought to shore just north of Marathon in the **Florida Keys**, they told sheriff's deputies that they had been without food or water for 24 hours. Rivkind said the pregnant women would be turned over to sponsors, such as relatives, friends or local churches. Temporary homes will be found for the children whose parents were not aboard the boat. He said the remaining 81 men and women would be taken to Krome after immigration officials interview them. Each will go before an immigration judge in Miami this week.

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