

# U.S. Coast Guard Completes Operation Nanook 2021



The USCGC Escanaba (WMEC 907) sails by an iceberg in the Labrador Sea. The Escanaba is a 270-foot Famous-class medium endurance cutter with a crew of around 100 conducting many of the service's missions, emphasizing law enforcement and security. *U.S. COAST GUARD / Petty Officer 3rd Class Dyxan Williams*

NUUK, Greenland – Strengthening partnerships and testing interoperability, the Coast Guard cutters Escanaba (WMEC 907) and Richard Snyder (WPC 1127) participated in Operation Nanook in early to mid-August, Coast Guard Atlantic Area said Aug. 17.

Operation Nanook is the Canadian Armed Forces' signature Arctic operation, comprising a series of comprehensive, joint, interagency, and multinational activities designed to exercise the defense of Canada and security in the region and incident management response and search rescue capabilities. With commercial traffic and cruise ships increasingly visible in the Arctic, international collaborations are necessary to meet this increased traffic's potential search and rescue challenges. Nanook-Tuugaalik is the maritime component of the Nanook series of deployments and training events intended to be an Arctic naval presence operation and domain awareness of the waters in and around Baffin Bay and Davis Strait. Nanook-Tatigiit is the incident management and search and rescue exercise portion.

“We had excellent training with the crews of HMCS Harry Dewolf [AOPV 430], HMCS Goose Bay [MM 707], and Richard Snyder. The joint effort during Tuugaalik and Tatigiit included multi-ship small boat training, formation steaming, hailing and signals exercises, and more. Weather, especially in the Arctic, is a genuine consideration, and increasing sea state and fog tested

us,” said Cmdr. Ben Spector, the commanding officer of Escanaba. “The U.S. Coast Guard remains committed to conducting operations and combined maritime exercises throughout the Atlantic and the Arctic region, ensuring mission capacity and future force readiness. Training with our partners and allied nations ensure all countries are ready, relevant, and responsive in an ever-evolving maritime environment.”

This operation is also the first time the U.S. Coast Guard deployed a 154-foot Sentinel-class fast response cutter to the region, USCGC Richard Snyder. As the inventory of FRCs grows, the U.S. Coast Guard continues to test the full range of their capability, including operations in high latitude environments. While these ships are not ice-strengthened, units observed mitigations, such as the deployment time of year and carefully considering operating areas.

“The FRC has fared exceedingly well in the Arctic. Our major concerns were fuel and food, and there have been no issues with either as the cutter continues to steam through the operational area and complete all training and interactions with stellar results,” said Lt. Cmdr. Gregory Bredariol, the commanding officer of Richard Snyder. “We’ve done some once-in-a-lifetime activities including fjords transits, getting close aboard icebergs much larger than the cutter, restricted waters transits in harsh conditions and deployment to an unfamiliar but mission-critical area. Our colleagues aboard the Escanaba were critical in our deployment, assisting with logistics and operational support. I can’t express enough our appreciation as we deployed far from our normal operations area and completed mission sets that we don’t generally practice. As a cutter based in Atlantic Beach, North Carolina, we primarily focus on living marine resources and search and rescue.”

Following Nanook, both ship’s crews are conducting engagements and resupplying in Nuuk. Snyder will return home. Escanaba

will transition to support Frontier Sentinel, an annual exercise between the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Navy, and Royal Canadian Navy, ensuring the ability of the Tri-Party Staff and tactical assets to work together. This year's live exercise uses feedback from the prior year's tabletop discussion.

Participants in all exercises are observing COVID-19 protocols to mitigate exposure and comply with host nation guidelines. Exercise scenarios took into account our COVID restrictions and respective realities.

Operation Nanook is the third of four major deployments of the U.S. Coast Guard's Atlantic Arctic Season. In June, the USCGC Eagle (WIX 327) visited Iceland, where Vice Adm. Steven Poulin, the Atlantic Area commander, hosted Icelandic officials for Arctic discussions. Also, in June, the USCGC Maple (WLB 207) participated in the Danish Joint Arctic Command's annual exercise, Ex Argus, in Southern Greenland with international partners. Later this fall, the USCGC Healy (WAGB 20) will make stops along the U.S. East Coast after transiting the Northwest Passage on their circumnavigation of North America.

Operation Nanook has been held annually since its inception over a decade ago. Last year's exercise was scaled down due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While participants could not conduct port visits, the activity focused on naval readiness, ship tracking, and gunnery operations between multinational partners, including the United States, Canada, Denmark, and France. The U.S. sent the USCGC Tahoma (WMEC 908) and USCGC Campbell (WMEC 909) to participate.

USCGC Escanaba is a 270-foot Famous-class medium endurance cutter with a crew of about 100 operating for the U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area. USCGC Richard Snyder is a Fifth Coast Guard District 154-foot Sentinel-class fast response cutter with a crew of about 24 also operating for U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area. The Atlantic Area commander and staff oversee

all Coast Guard domestic operations east of the Rocky Mountains, including the Arctic, Caribbean and Southern Atlantic and Coast Guard out-of-hemisphere operations in Europe, Africa and Southwest Asia.

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## Oshkosh Defense Demonstrates ROGUE Fires Against Target at Sea



ROGUE Fires was demonstrated at SINKEX in Hawaii, Oshkosh Defense said Aug. 18. *U.S. MARINE CORPS / Maj. Nicholas Mannweiler*

OSHKOSH, Wis. – Oshkosh Defense successfully demonstrated the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle-based Remotely Operated Ground Unit for Expeditionary (ROGUE) Fires at the Sink at Sea Live Fire Training Exercises in Hawaii, the company said Aug. 18.

As part of the demonstration, a Navy Marine Expeditionary Ship Interdiction System (NMESIS) launcher, based on a ROGUE Fires chassis, successfully launched a Naval Strike Missile (NSM) and scored a direct hit on a target at sea, said the company, a wholly owned subsidiary of Oshkosh Corp.

The exercise, known as SINKEX, is a component of the U.S. Navy's Large-Scale Exercise 2021, a global event in which Sailors and Marines test and validate the Navy and Marine Corps' operating concepts.

ROGUE Fires is an unmanned ground vehicle that leverages the Joint Light Tactical Vehicles' extreme off-road mobility and payload capacity and Oshkosh's advanced autonomous vehicle

technologies to support Ground-Based Anti-Ship Missile operations. The unmanned technology associated with ROGUE Fires allows the vehicle to operate in teleoperator or leader-follower modes, which protect warfighters from threats by removing them from the vehicle entirely.

“ROGUE Fires was purpose-built and leverages next-generation capabilities from several proven Oshkosh Defense vehicle platforms and technologies,” said Pat Williams, vice president and general manager of U.S. Army and Marine Corps Programs.

“Much like the JLTV itself, ROGUE Fires is tailorable to the mission at hand. The flexible design allows for the integration of scalable weapon system payloads to offer the combatant commanders flexibility based on the mission’s requirements.”

Since receiving the JLTV production contract in 2015, Oshkosh Defense has worked closely with leading weapon system manufacturers to integrate and test various weapon system payloads and levels of firepower onto the platform.

“The successful LSE demonstration validates the maturity of ROGUE Fires as a weapons platform and highlights its ability to add significant firepower and capability into the light tactical wheeled vehicle fleet,” Williams said.

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## **Navy, Coast Guard Units Rush to Aid Haitian Earthquake**

# Victims



Canadian Medical Assistant Team Cristina Coams alongside with Petty Officer 1st Class Rob Updike and Hero Client Rescue paramedic Nadia Van der Heyden evaluate an injured female Aug. 15, 2021. *U.S. COAST GUARD / Petty Officer 3rd Class Erik Villa-Rodriguez*

ARLINGTON, Va. – Under the direction of U.S. Southern Command, U.S. Navy and Coast Guard units have been deployed to provide disaster relief to the victims of the Aug. 14 earthquake that struck southern Haiti. More than 1,400 people are confirmed dead from the 7.2-magnitude earthquake, according to press reports.

U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) has established a joint task force on Aug. 15 to handle the relief efforts. The command also established a Special Operations Command South (SOCSOUTH) Situational Awareness Team in the Haitian capital, Port-Au-Prince, to help coordinate the relief efforts.

The U.S. Coast Guard responded Aug. 15 with several helicopters and maritime patrol aircraft to help evacuate injured people.

“On August 15, at the request of the Haitian Government, the Coast Guard surged aircraft and personnel to help critically injured patients from impacted areas to Port au Prince where they may obtain higher levels of care,” said Coast Guard Seventh District Commander, Rear Adm. Brendan C. McPherson. “Additionally, we are coordinating with USAID and U.S. Southern Command to move urban search and rescue responders, medical personnel and supplies to impacted areas. Our crews are trained and empowered to use sound on-scene initiative to judge the risks as they respond to the most urgent requests for help. Our people have a true bias for action and know how to lead through a crisis.”

Kirby said the Navy was sending the San Antonio-class amphibious platform dock ship USS Arlington to Haiti. The ship is carrying two MH-60 helicopters and one landing craft.

Also en route is the USNS Burlington, a Spearhead-class expeditionary fast transport operated by the Military Sealift Command, which is carrying ScanEagle surveillance unmanned aerial vehicles.

Two P-8A maritime patrol aircraft deployed to El Salvador have been staged near Haiti to provide support for the relief efforts with imagery of damaged areas of the country.

Two UH-60 and two CH-47 helicopters from Joint Task Force-Bravo are also en route to Haiti, where they will provide critical airlift support to ongoing relief efforts.

Kirby also said that four field hospitals also were being dispatched to Haiti.

The Coast Guard 7th District said its efforts from Aug. 15-16 included more than 38 Coast Guard members deployed, 34 aviation evolutions, 51 people saved and 12 people assisted.

Seventy-two Fairfax County Fire Department's urban search and rescue crews, USAID Disaster Assistance Response Teams, medical personnel and first responders transported 5,500 pounds of medical supplies.

Coast Guard assets deployed for the relief efforts include two Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter aircrews, a Coast Guard Air Station Borinquen MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter aircrew, a Coast Guard Air Station Miami HC-144 Ocean Sentry aircrew, a Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater HC-130 Hercules aircrew and the Coast Guard Cutters Reliance, Winslow Griesser and Margaret Norvell.

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# Navy Awards Austal USA Contract for LCS Maintenance, Modernization



USS Indianapolis (LCS 17), shown here at its 2019 commissioning ceremony, is one of the LCS homeported in Mayport, Florida. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Timothy Haggerty*

MOBILE, Ala. – Austal USA was awarded a sustainment execution contract (SEC) by the U.S. Navy Aug. 13 for repair, maintenance, and modernization for all littoral combat ships (LCS) homeported in Mayport, Florida, the company said in an Aug. 16 release.

The SEC East contract is the second major service contract for Austal USA this month following the SEC West award Aug. 5. As a result, Austal USA is now positioned to support the entire LCS fleet worldwide. This award also marks a milestone in Austal USA's expansion to the east coast.

“Austal USA is committed to the success of the LCS program and the growth of our services business. This award enables us to support both variants anywhere in the world,” Austal USA interim president Rusty Murdaugh said. “The SEC West and SEC East awards are a direct reflection of the growth of our services capabilities and the confidence the U.S. Navy has in Austal to provide critical services to the fleet regardless of location.”

The SEC East award is yet another building block to Austal's continued investment in its service business. Following continued investment in its service centers in Mobile, San

Diego and Singapore, Austal USA was awarded an SEC West contract Aug. 5 to support all LCS homeported in San Diego. Additionally, In September 2020, the company invested in its U.S. Gulf Coast service operation, expanding its Mobile service center by purchasing 15 acres of waterfront property along the Mobile River. The purchase included 100,000 square feet of covered repair facilities and a 20,000-ton Panamax-class floating dry dock and supports both government and commercial service and repair.

“We’re excited to add service capabilities in Mayport to support the U.S. Navy’s Southeast Regional Maintenance Center and grow our involvement in the Jacksonville community,” Murdaugh said. “We continue to invest in our service business to ensure our customers have the very best service and support available to them anytime, anywhere.”

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## **Coast Guard Cutter Steelhead Shifts Homeport to Fort Macon, NC**



The Coast Guard Cutter Steelhead (WPB 87324) officially arrived at its new homeport in Fort Macon, Aug. 6, 2021. The 87-foot coastal patrol boat is a capable multi-mission platform designed for search and rescue, law enforcement, and fisheries patrols, as well as drug interdiction and illegal alien interdiction duties up to 200 miles off shore. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

FORT MACON, N.C. – The Coast Guard Cutter Steelhead (WPB 87324) officially arrived at its new homeport in Fort Macon, North Carolina, Aug. 6, 2021, the Coast Guard 5th District

said in an Aug. 17 release.

The Steelhead is a coastal patrol boat with a crew of 11 men and women whose area of operations ranges from the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay near Cape Charles and Cape Henry, Virginia, to the South Carolina border.

Steelhead joins Coast Guard Cutters Maple, Bayberry, Smilax, Richard Snyder, and the Nathan Bruckenthal in Fort Macon.

“We are pleased to announce the Coast Guard Cutter Steelhead has relocated to Fort Macon, North Carolina,” said Capt. Matt Baer, commanding officer of Coast Guard Sector North Carolina. “As a multi-mission, maritime service with vast responsibilities and limited resources, we are constantly seeking ways to be more efficient and effective. Cutter Steelhead will conduct both law enforcement and search and rescue operations spanning the entire North Carolina coastline, providing an outstanding addition to the Coast Guard’s layered response strategy of shore-based boats, aircraft, and cutters. The change of homeport will ensure critical mission support functions for cutter maintenance and personnel needs are met, while improving offshore response capabilities from the Outer Banks throughout the Crystal Coast and across southeastern North Carolina. The crew and families of the cutter Steelhead are excited to join the long-standing heritage of lifesavers who call the Coast Guard community of Currituck County their home.”

The 87-foot coastal patrol boat is a capable multi-mission platform designed for search and rescue, law enforcement, and fisheries patrols, as well as drug interdiction and illegal alien interdiction duties up to 200 miles offshore.

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# Navy Orders Construction of \$1.7 Billion Dry Dock at Portsmouth Shipyard



USS Virginia (SSN 774) successfully exits dry dock at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Maine on June 22, 2021. Virginia is at the shipyard for a scheduled maintenance period. *U.S. NAVY / Jim Cleveland*

ARLINGTON, Va. – As a major step in its 20-year plan to upgrade and modernize its shipyard capacity and capability, the Navy has awarded a major construction contract for a multi-mission dry dock at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard (PNSY) in Kittery, Maine.

The Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command, Mid-Atlantic, Norfolk, Virginia, awarded 381 Constructors of Omaha, Nebraska, a \$1.73 billion firm-fixed-price contract for construction of the dry dock, an Aug. 13 Defense Department contract announcement said. The funds will be disbursed in increments over a seven-year period. Work is expected to be completed by June 2028.

PNSY is a Navy-owned shipyard which specializes in the repair, modification, and overhaul of nuclear-powered attack submarines. The upgrades are part of the Navy's Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program (SIOP), a 20-year plan to modernize the Navy's four shipyards. The other three shipyards are Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, Virginia; Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, Bremerton, Washington; and Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard, Hawaii.

"Our naval shipyards need these major modernization efforts to sustain our ability to maintain our nuclear submarine fleet," said Vice Adm. William Galinis, commander, Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA), in an Aug. 16 release. "The Navy needs

combat-ready ships and submarines to go where they're needed, when they're needed, and these major upgrades and reconfigurations at our naval shipyards will enable the fleet to meet its future missions."

The seven-year project will construct an addition to Dry Dock 1 within the existing flood basin area, as well as new concrete floors, walls, pump systems, caissons, and other mechanical and electrical utilities, enhancing the 221-year-old shipyard's ability to handle multiple Los Angeles-class and Virginia-class submarines, the Navy said.

SIOP is a joint effort between Naval Sea Systems Command, Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command and Navy Installations Command "to recapitalize and modernize the infrastructure at the Navy's four public shipyards, including repairing and modernizing dry docks, restoring shipyard facilities and optimizing their placement, and replacing aging and deteriorating capital equipment," the Naval Facilities Systems Command said.

"We look forward to getting this critical construction mega-project underway," said Rear Adm. John Korka, commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command, and Navy chief of Civil Engineers. "This project – and other work being planned at all four of our naval shipyards – is one of the most significant and direct contributions that our systems command team can make to enable our Navy's lethality and maximize its readiness for many years to come."

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## **FRCSW Completes Final Major**

# Maintenance of E-2C Hawkeye



Test line and support staff are pictured Aug. 3 in front of the last E-2C Hawkeye to complete PMI-2 at FRCSW. The aircraft was delivered to Carrier Airborne Early Squadron 116 (VAW-116) stationed at Naval Base Ventura County. *U.S NAVY*

NAVAL AIR STATION NORTH ISLAND, Calif. – The last E-2C Hawkeye to complete the planned maintenance interval two (PMI-2) procedure at Fleet Readiness Center Southwest (FRCSW) departed the command's test line Aug. 3 to Carrier Airborne Early Squadron 116 (VAW-116) stationed at Naval Base Ventura County, the center said in an Aug. 12 release.

The aircraft was inducted Sept. 21, 2020, from VAW-123.

Developed by the Grumman Aircraft Co. in the mid-1960s, the twin turbo-propeller E-2 Hawkeye and its sister airframe, the C-2A Greyhound transport, still serve aboard naval aircraft carriers.

Production of the airborne early warning system (AEWS) E-2C variant began in 1973. With its detachable 24-foot diameter rotodome radar system, the Hawkeye's ability to guard against airborne threats remains the standard for protection of naval carrier battle groups to this day.

FRCSW performs two levels of scheduled maintenance on the airframe: PMI-1, or a light maintenance interval at FRCSW's Site Pt Mugu and FRC Mid-Atlantic, and PMI-2, or a heavy maintenance which is handled at FRCSW's Building 460 onboard Naval Air Station North Island (NASNI).

During PMI-1, artisans assess the attachment points of the flight control surfaces on the body of the aircraft, the engines, and other areas identified in the maintenance specification. Sheet metal repairs are made and worn parts replaced.

FRCSW is the Navy's sole provider of PMI-2 events to the airframe, and employs approximately 120 artisans and 53 indirect support personnel. Though not a complete overhaul, PMI-2 is a substantial disassembly of the aircraft down to the fuselage. Artisans remove the aircraft's wings, engines, landing gear and tail.

By using chemical or physical means, the aircraft's corrosion preventive paint is removed and an in-depth metal assessment is performed to locate surface anomalies like cracks, corrosion, exfoliation and missing fasteners.

PMI-2 procedures are completed under a project management method called the Critical Chain Project Management (CCPM) program. CCPM designates resources – like people and equipment – needed to complete a task in a specific amount of time. A software program called "Concerto" is used to manage the aircraft's throughput as well as multiple CCPM projects.

The E-2 CCPM throughput is divided into four procedures: induction, repair, assembly and test line. Each step has a targeted completion time for a total of about 220 days, depending on material availability.

During fiscal 2020, FRCSW inducted five of the aircraft for PMI-2 and one for PMI-1. Approximately 29 E-2Cs remain in service. The command will continue to support the maintenance requirements of the airframe as the Navy transitions to the technologically advanced E-2D, the fourth variant that will replace the E-2C.

FRCSW delivered its first E-2D Hawkeye to complete PMI-2 last January.

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# Coast Guard Responds to Haiti for Humanitarian Aid following 7.2 Earthquake



A Coast Guard air crew member helps transport a critically injured child from the helicopter to awaiting emergency medical services at Port au Prince, Haiti, Aug. 15, 2021. U.S. Coast Guard forward deployed Jayhawk helicopter crews are from Air Station Clearwater, Florida. *U.S. COAST GUARD / Lt. David Steele*

MIAMI – Haitian’s government requested Coast Guard assistance following a magnitude 7.2 earthquake, the Coast Guard 7<sup>th</sup> District said in an Aug. 15 release. The Coast Guard has committed numbers of air and surface assets to help in transporting medical personnel and supplies and transporting critically injured citizens to facilities needing a higher level of care in Port au Prince, Haiti.

“On behalf of the United States Coast Guard I express our deepest sympathies to the people of Haiti,” said Coast Guard District Seven Commander, Adm. Brendan McPherson. “Our hearts go out to our Haitian diaspora here in Miami and to those tragically impacted in Haiti. We are supporting USAID humanitarian relief efforts, U.S. Southern Command’s Enduring Promise, and coordinating closely with Ambassador Sison and her country-team to assist in every way that we can. Our helicopters and aircrews are transporting medical personnel and evacuating those requiring higher levels of care. Our cutters remain offshore and on standby to assist the citizens of Haiti and to support agency response locally. Our unity of effort, our commitment to our neighbors, and our ability to lead through crisis will help see us all through this tragic event.”

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# Cutter Munro Arrives in Western Pacific for Months-Long Deployment



Coast Guard Maritime Security Response Team-West members fast-rope of an MH-60J Jayhawk onto the Coast Guard Cutter Munro during flight operations off the coast of San Diego, California, July 23, 2021. The Coast Guard Cutter Munro conducted flight operation training with the U.S. Navy and Maritime Security Response Team-West to maintain operational proficiencies. *U.S. MARINE CORPS / Sgt. Kevin G. Rivas*

ALAMEDA, Calif. – The Legend-class cutter Munro (WMSL 755) arrived in the Western Pacific Aug. 15 from its homeport in Alameda for a months-long deployment to the region, the Coast Guard Pacific Area said in an Aug. 13 release.

The crew is operating in support of United States Indo-Pacific Command, which oversees military operations in the region.

Operating under the tactical control of commander, 7th Fleet, the cutter crew plans to engage in professional exchanges and capacity-building exercises with partners and allies and will patrol and operate as directed.

“Forward-deployed Naval Forces routinely and seamlessly integrate as one maritime force with a proud heritage of serving and fighting together,” said Vice Adm. Karl Thomas, commander, U.S. 7th Fleet. “It is a fitting nod to that heritage that Munro joins us following the U.S. Coast Guard celebration of its 231st birthday on Aug. 4.”

The Coast Guard’s deployment to the Indo-Pacific theater aligns with the integrated all-domain naval power of the naval

service and increases the traditional influence of sea power regionally.

“The U.S. Coast Guard’s unique authorities, capabilities, and missions position us to collaborate on maritime safety and security with partners around the world,” said Vice Adm. Michael F. McAllister, commander, Coast Guard Pacific Area. “An increased presence throughout the Indo-Pacific strengthens our alliances and partnerships through improved interoperability, which will enhance regional stability, promote rules-based order, and improve maritime governance and security in the region and globally.”

Coast Guard forces provide expertise within the mission sets of search and rescue; illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing; maritime environmental response; maritime security; and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. Deployable Coast Guard cutters, port security units, and advanced interdiction teams are also highly capable in augmenting naval operations in theater.

As both a federal law enforcement agency and an armed force, the Coast Guard is uniquely positioned to conduct defense operations and security cooperation in support of combatant commanders on all seven continents. The service routinely provides forces in joint military operations worldwide, including the deployment of cutters, boats, aircraft and deployable specialized forces.

The U.S. Coast Guard has a 150-year enduring role in the Indo-Pacific. The service’s ongoing deployment of resources to the region directly supports U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives in the Indo-Pacific Strategy and the National Security Strategy.

Commissioned in 2017, Munro is one of four Coast Guard legend class national security cutters homeported in Alameda. National security cutters are 418-feet long, 54-feet wide, and

have a 4,600 long-ton displacement. They have a top speed in excess of 28 knots, a range of 12,000 nautical miles, endurance of up to 90 days and can hold a crew of up to 170. Munro is the second cutter named for Signalman First Class Douglas A. Munro, the only Coast Guardsman awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

National security cutters feature advanced command and control capabilities, aviation support facilities, stern cutter boat launch and increased endurance for long-range patrols to disrupt threats to national security further offshore.

Since 2018, three other Coast Guard Cutters – Bertholf, Stratton and Woesche – have deployed to the Western Pacific.

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## **Cutter James returns Home from 82-day Patrol in Eastern Pacific Ocean**



U.S. Coast Guard Ensign Arthur Wicke, a law enforcement officer aboard the Coast Guard Cutter James, wraps a pallet of illegal narcotics in Port Everglades, Florida, Aug. 5, 2021. The James is homeported in Charleston, South Carolina, and returned there Aug. 14. *U.S. COAST GUARD / Petty Officer 3rd Class Ryan Estrada*

CHARLESTON, S.C. – The Coast Guard Cutter James (WMSL- 754) and crew returned to Charleston, Aug. 14, following an 82-day counter-drug patrol in the Eastern Pacific Ocean, the Coast Guard 7th District said in an Aug. 16 release.

The James crew offloaded nearly 51,000 pounds of cocaine and marijuana worth an estimated \$1.4 billion, Aug. 5, 2021, at

Port Everglades, Florida.

Working alongside other Coast Guard cutters, U.S. Navy ships and international allies, the James patrol efforts were in direct support of drug interdiction efforts in the Caribbean Sea and Eastern Pacific Ocean to put increased pressure on the drug trafficking organizations operating in Central and South America.

During their patrol, the James crew, augmented by an embarked armed helicopter aircrew from the Coast Guard's Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron (HITRON), successfully interdicted 11 drug smuggling vessels and seized or disrupted nearly 13,608 kilograms of cocaine. The James crew also successfully executed two search and rescue cases off the coast of Florida, saving eight distressed mariners over Memorial Day weekend.

"This patrol highlights our crew's continued commitment to protecting the maritime border from our adversaries. Amid the Covid-19 pandemic," said Capt. Todd Vance, James commanding officer. "The James crew demonstrated supreme resilience and the results of their exceptional performance are being showcased today."

The Coast Guard Cutter James is one of three 418-foot National Security Cutters (NSC) homeported in North Charleston, South Carolina. With its robust command, control, communication, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance equipment, the NSC is the most technologically advanced ship in the Coast Guard's fleet. NSCs are equipped with three state-of-the-art small boats, a stern boat launch system, dual aviation facilities, and serve as an afloat command and control platform for complex law enforcement and national security missions involving the Coast Guard and numerous partner agencies.