

# Navy to Commission Littoral Combat Ship USS Mobile



The future Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Mobile (LCS 26) conducts sea trials. USS Mobile is set to be commissioned on 22 May in Mobile, Alabama. *AUSTAL*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Navy will commission its newest Independence-variant littoral combat ship, the future USS Mobile (LCS 26), at 10:00 a.m. CDT, Saturday, May 22 in Mobile, Alabama, the Defense Department said in a May 21 release.

Due to public health and safety concerns related to COVID-19, the commissioning ceremony is private with a limited audience.

Mr. James “Hondo” Geurts, performing the duties of under secretary of the Navy, and Vice Adm. John Mustin, chief of Naval Reserve, will provide remarks. Rebecca Byrne, president and CEO of The Community Foundation of South Alabama and wife of former Alabama U.S. Representative Bradley Byrne, is the ship’s sponsor. The ceremony will observe a time-honored Navy tradition when Byrne gives the order to “man our ship and bring her to life!”

U.S. Sen. Tommy Tuberville of Alabama will deliver the commissioning ceremony’s principal address.

Cmdr. Christopher W. Wolff, a third-generation naval officer, is the ship’s commanding officer and leads a crew of 70 officers and enlisted Sailors.

“It has been an amazing experience to get to know our namesake city so well, while having the opportunity to live, work, and commission the ship right here in Mobile, where she was built,” said Wolff. “We have definitely felt welcomed into

the community and have created a strong connection to the area that I am confident will last. Mobile bills itself as a city that is born to celebrate and the crew has really adopted that philosophy as we celebrate our shipmates every day.”

The ship is 421 feet in length, has a beam of 103 feet, and a navigational draft of 15 feet. It is powered by two gas turbine engines, two main propulsion diesel engines, and four waterjets to speeds up to 40-plus knots.

Built by Austal USA in Mobile, Alabama, Mobile was christened Dec. 7, 2019, and delivered to the Navy on Dec. 9, 2020.

Mobile, the fifth ship to bear the name, is a fast, agile, mission-focused platform designed to operate in near-shore environments while capable of open-ocean tasking and winning against 21st-century coastal threats such as submarines, mines, and swarming small craft. LCS are capable of supporting forward presence, maritime security, sea control, and deterrence.

USS Mobile will be homeported at Naval Base San Diego, California.

The event will be live streamed at <https://allhands.navy.mil/Media/Live-Stream/> to offer viewing by the general public. The link becomes active approximately 10 minutes prior to the event (9:50 a.m. CDT).

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## **U.S. Navy Exercises Option for Second Constellation-**

# Class Guided Missile Frigate



An artist's rendering of the Constellation-class guided missile frigate. *U.S. NAVY*

WASHINGTON – The Navy awarded a contract option to Fincantieri Marinette Marine to build its second Constellation Class Guided Missile Frigate, the Program Executive Office Unmanned and Small Combatants (PEO USC) Public Affairs said in a May 20 release.

“The Navy Program Office is pleased to award the option for the USS Congress (FFG 63) to our industry partner Fincantieri Marinette Marine,” said Capt. Kevin Smith, major program manager for Constellation-Class Frigate (PMS 515). “As the second ship of the Constellation-Class Frigate Program, the USS Congress will provide a highly capable, next-generation surface combatant that our Navy and Nation needs.”

The future USS Congress (FFG 63) will be built at FMM's shipyard in Marinette, Wisc. where preparations are being made to begin construction on lead ship USS Constellation (FFG 62). Like its sister ship, FFG 63 will have multi-mission capability to conduct air warfare, anti-submarine warfare, surface warfare, electronic warfare, and information operations. Shipboard systems will include an Enterprise Air Surveillance Radar (EASR) radar, Baseline Ten (BL10) AEGIS Combat System, a Mk41 Vertical Launch System (VLS), communications systems, MK110 57mm Gun Weapon System (GWS) and added capability in the Electronic Warfare/Information Operations area with design flexibility for future growth.

The Constellation-Class Frigate will be an important part of the Navy's future Fleet. It represents the evolution of the Navy's small surface combatant force with increased lethality, survivability, and improved capability to support the National Defense Strategy across the full range of military operations.

It will help conduct distributed maritime operations more effectively and improve the Navy's ability to fight both in contested blue-water and littoral environments.

The acquisition process for the Navy's Constellation Class Frigate began in 2017. Since then, the Navy has worked closely with industry to balance cost and capability.

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## **Joint Force Command Norfolk Kicks off Part 1 of NATO's Steadfast Defender 2021**



Gen. David H. Berger, commandant of the Marine Corps, visited Her Majesty's Ship Queen Elizabeth at sea off the coast of Flamborough, United Kingdom, in October, 2020. The HMS Queen Elizabeth strike group is one of 20 ships participating in the NATO maritime live exercise Steadfast Defender. *U.S. MARINE CORPS*

ATLANTIC OCEAN – A dynamic NATO maritime live exercise (LIVEX) has begun off the coast of Portugal with participation from 11 allied nations from North America and Europe as a part of Steadfast Defender 2021, May 20, Joint Force Command Norfolk said in a May 20 release.

The maritime LIVEX, led by Joint Force Command Norfolk (JFCNF), focuses on the rapid reinforcement of NATO's European allies by North American forces. Over 5,000 service members and 20 ships will be participating, including the Royal Navy's Carrier Strike Group HMS Queen Elizabeth; and 40 aircraft, including F-35B Joint Strike Fighters embarked.

“This challenging mission serves to demonstrate the unity of NATO allies and our readiness to deter conflict and aggression,” said Vice Adm. Andrew Lewis, Commander, JFCNF and U.S. 2nd Fleet. “It showcases our abilities, as an alliance, to maintain freedom of navigation, rule of law, and to effectively deter adversaries around the globe.”

The size and scope of Steadfast Defender 2021 will test NATO’s capability to secure the strategic and sea lines of communication and move large numbers of troops, equipment and supplies across the Atlantic and Europe in response to the exercise scenario. The prompt deployment of forces from North America, their movement across the European Continent, and the integration of multinational troops will strengthen the readiness and deterrence posture of Allied Command Operations.

“The 21st Century transatlantic link is complex and technologically advanced,” said Royal Navy Rear Adm. Andrew Betton, deputy commander, JFCNF. “We will deter and defeat challenges to protect our economic prosperity and strategic lines of communication by keeping the arteries of commerce open on the world’s interconnected oceans. This exercise will demonstrate alliance unity and the importance of the transatlantic bond to allied security.”

There will be a serialized program over the course of two weeks that allows allied submarines, surface ships, and aircraft, to work together in a dynamic environment to prepare for challenging, high-end operations against near-peer competitors.

U.S. 2nd Fleet is acting as the Maritime Component Commander (MCC) for part one of Steadfast Defender 2021. Staff in support of the Maritime LIVEX embarked aboard the U.S. 6th Fleet command and control ship USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20).

“The USS Mount Whitney plays a pivotal role with its

communications capability,” said Rear Adm. Steve Waddell, Royal Canadian Navy and vice commander of U.S. 2nd Fleet, embarked aboard Mount Whitney as the leader of the MCC. “Second Fleet’s role as the MCC for the exercise demonstrates the United States’ ironclad commitment to NATO, and the U.S.’s dedication to further revitalize its relationship with the alliance.”

For added high-end complexity, the Iwo Jima Amphibious Ready Group will integrate into the exercise as a testament to the seamlessness of our integration. USS Iwo Jima (LHD 7) and its ready group are providing reach to the MCC for the sea lines of communication protection mission.

This exercise is also part of the maiden deployment of the United Kingdom’s newest aircraft carrier, HMS Queen Elizabeth. U.K. and U.S. F-35B Strike Fighters embarked, making it the world’s largest air group of fifth generation jets. It will also be the largest deployment of Fleet Air Arm helicopters in a decade.

Steadfast Defender 2021, NATO’s flagship exercise for 2021, is the first in a new series of long-planned NATO exercises to ensure that forces are trained, able to operate together and ready to respond to threats from any direction. This exercise will display the value of North America and Europe’s interoperability and national security during challenging environments working together to keep nations safe in a more challenging security environment.

Steadfast Defender is comprised of three parts, made up of a series of linked exercises, taking place across the Atlantic and Europe. Part one is the maritime LIVEX focused on Transatlantic Reinforcement. Part two focuses on the enablement of Supreme Allied Commander Europe Area of Responsibility, Military Mobility and the Deployment of the NATO Response Force; and part three is when allies and partner nations will participate in various national exercises,

including redeployment operations back to their home stations.

JFCNF is the only operational-level NATO command in North America and its establishment and location in Norfolk, Virginia, embodies the enduring trans-Atlantic commitment to collective security and defense of our allies and partners.

Participating units in the Maritime Live Exercise include: USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20) as the command and control platform, with the embarked U.S. 2nd Fleet Staff; the Royal Navy's HMS Queen Elizabeth carrier strike group with embarked U.S. Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 211, and cooperative deployers, the Dutch HNLMS Evertsen (F805), USS The Sullivans (DDG 68); the Iwo Jima Amphibious Ready Group; Standing NATO Marine Groups 1 and 2; as well as surface ships and aircraft from Portugal, Spain, France, Canada, Turkey, Germany and Italy.

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## **USS Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group Departs Yokosuka for Spring Patrol**



Sailors man the rails on the flight deck of the U.S. Navy's only forward-deployed aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) as it departs Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka, Japan. Ronald Reagan, the flagship of Carrier Strike Group 5, provides a combat-ready force that protects and defends the United States, as well as the collective maritime interests of its allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific region. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Apprentice Dallas Snider*

YOKOSUKA, Japan – The U.S. Navy's only forward-deployed

aircraft carrier, USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) and its strike group, departed Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) May 19 to support security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region, the ship's public affairs office said in a May 19 release.

During this routine at-sea period, Ronald Reagan, its strike group ships and the embarked Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5 are expected to work with allies and partners, promote adherence to a rules-based international order, as well as maintain presence and flexibility to meet the needs of the U.S. Department of Defense.

Ronald Reagan successfully completed sea trials in preparation for deployment on May 13.

"Ronald Reagan's flexible presence is a key element in helping assure our regional allies and partners that the United States remains committed to ensuring freedom of the seas," said Capt. Fred Goldhammer, commanding officer of Ronald Reagan. "Across the globe, the crew aboard Ronald Reagan seeks to preserve 'peace through strength' and is ready to answer the call."

Sailors manned the rails in summer white uniforms as the ship pulled away from the pier.

"The Ronald Reagan carrier strike group is excited to deploy and assume the watch during a time of unprecedented activity throughout the region," said Rear Adm. Will Pennington, commander, Task Force 70, Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 5. "Our team has worked hard to prepare for this moment. Alongside our regional allies and partners, we are ready to respond to any contingency in any location to demonstrate our shared commitment to regional stability and adherence to international norms."

The Ronald Reagan Strike Group also includes the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Halsey (DDG 97) and

the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Shiloh (CG 67).

The Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group is forward-deployed to the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific region. U.S. 7th Fleet is the largest numbered fleet in the world, and with the help of 35 other maritime-nation allies and partners, the U.S. Navy has operated in the Indo-Pacific region for more than 70 years, providing credible, ready forces to help preserve peace and prevent conflict.

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## **U.S. Coast Guard Academy Graduates 240 New Officers**



President Joseph R. Biden Jr. delivered the keynote address at the Coast Guard Academy during the 140th Commencement Exercises May 19, 2021. The Coast Guard Academy graduated 240 new officers along with seven international students. *U.S. COAST GUARD / Petty Officer 3rd Class Matthew Thieme*

NEW LONDON, Conn. – The U.S. Coast Guard Academy graduated 240 new officers along with seven international students with keynote speaker President Joseph R. Biden Jr. in attendance, May 19, 2021, the academy said.

The Class of 2021 consists of 34 percent women and 34 percent from underrepresented minority groups.

The class includes 22 African Americans who walked the stage, which marks the largest number of African American graduates to do so in academy history. This year also marked the second highest number of Asian American and Pacific Islanders in a

single graduating class.

Next month, the new officers will begin to serve as leaders in a variety of operational roles throughout the Coast Guard, mostly in cutters.

Seven graduating international cadets from the countries of the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Georgia and will serve in their respective countries of origin.

“The Class of 2021 has led the corps during a very challenging time,” said Academy Superintendent Rear Adm. Bill Kelly. “I am confident they are fully prepared to graduate and serve our nation as officers in the U.S. Coast Guard.”

Founded in 1876, the Coast Guard Academy is one of the five U.S. service academies and is ranked among the nation’s most prestigious and selective institutions of higher learning. For more information, visit [www.uscga.edu](http://www.uscga.edu).

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## **Collins Aerospace Begins Shipping Components for Navy’s E-2D NP2000 Propellers**



Collins Aerospace has begun shipping parts under a contract to supply Northrop Grumman with NP2000 propeller systems for 39 E-2D Advanced Hawkeye aircraft. *COLLINS AEROSPACE*

WINDSOR LOCKS, Conn. – Collins Aerospace, a unit of Raytheon Technologies, has begun shipping parts under a second multi-year contract received in November to supply Northrop Grumman with NP2000 propeller systems for 39 E-2D aircraft, Collins said in a May 19 release.

With its advanced NP2000 propeller and digital Electronic Propeller Control System, Collins Aerospace continues to provide E-2D Advanced Hawkeye operators with reduced maintenance time and cost, and enhanced crew comfort and safety.

NP2000 offers operators the ability to replace individual blades on-wing for reduced maintenance time and increased aircraft availability. By improving speed holding and blade synchronization, NP2000's digital Electronic Propeller Control System also enhances crew comfort and safety by reducing vibration and noise inside the cockpit.

"The E-2D plays a critical part in battle management command and control," said Quinlan Lyte, senior director, Propeller Systems for Collins Aerospace. "Through the multiple benefits it provides, our intelligent, innovative NP2000 helps support the E-2D mission by increasing operational efficiency, maximizing performance and boosting readiness."

NP2000 has been in service with the U.S. Navy and international customers on the Northrop Grumman E-2 and C-2 since 2004, and with the U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force on Lockheed Martin C-130 variants since 2008. Over that time, the NP2000 has accumulated more than 1 million flight hours.

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## **Huntington Ingalls Industries Debuts Proteus Unmanned Surface Test Vessel**



The Proteus USV, which will be used to develop and test

autonomy capabilities. *HUNTINGTON INGALLS INDUSTRIES*

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – Huntington Ingalls Industries announced on May 20 the debut of the Proteus unmanned surface vessel (USV) for testing and development of autonomy capabilities. The 27-foot Proteus USV was outfitted with Sea Machines Robotics' SM300 autonomy system and completed a successful demonstration on May 14 off the coast of Panama City, Florida.

"We are thrilled to launch our Proteus USV. The vessel performed exactly as expected with the SM300 system's proven and safe autonomous capability," said Duane Fotheringham, president of the Unmanned Systems business group in HII's Technical Solutions division. "This marks a significant milestone in our commitment to advancing our unmanned systems capabilities and our continued partnership with Sea Machines to further develop USV solutions for our customers."

For the demonstration, HII's Proteus USV was equipped with commercial perception sensors, including GPS, automatic identification system, depth transducer, radar and a camera enabling a 360-degree field of view. HII deployed a separate 51-foot dive boat during the demonstration to illustrate SM300 system's off-the-shelf solution including its obstacle avoidance capability and adherence to the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea.

"Our autonomy systems are built around core principles of capability, reliability and ease of use," said Michael G. Johnson, Sea Machines CEO. "This initial Proteus USV demonstration proved the SM300 system performs as promised, and we look forward to our continued partnership with HII – supporting current and coming 21st century operational requirements on water."

The Proteus USV will enable HII's continued development of autonomy capabilities and sensor fusion to support the evolving needs of both government and commercial customers.

HII announced its minority share investment in Sea Machines in July 2020. Sea Machines' SM300 system can be outfitted to ocean capable vessels to enable scalable autonomy, from remotely controlled to fully autonomous vessel operations.

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## Cutter Offloads \$220 Million in Interdicted Illicit Drugs in San Diego



Rear Adm. Brian Penoyer, the Eleventh Coast Guard District commander; speaks to the crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Active (WMEC 618) during a drug offload in San Diego, Wednesday. The drugs, worth an estimated \$220 million, were seized in international waters of the Eastern Pacific Ocean during April and May. *COAST GUARD / Petty Officer 3rd Class Alex Gray*

SAN DIEGO – The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Active (WMEC 618) offloaded approximately 11,500 pounds of seized cocaine in San Diego, May 19, the Coast Guard 11th District said in a release.

The drugs, worth an estimated \$220 million, were seized in the international waters of the Eastern Pacific Ocean during April and May. They represent four suspected drug smuggling vessel interdictions off the coasts of Mexico, Central, and South America by the following Coast Guard ships:

The Coast Guard Cutter Active (WMEC 618) crew was responsible for two interdictions seizing approximately 5,650 pounds of cocaine.

The Coast Guard Cutter Steadfast (WMEC 623) crew was responsible for one interdiction seizing approximately 2,250

pounds of cocaine.

The Coast Guard Cutter Tahoma (WMEC 908) crew was responsible for one interdiction seizing approximately 3,660 pounds of cocaine.

Speakers at the event included Cmdr. James M. O'Mara IV, Coast Guard Cutter Active commanding officer; Rear Adm. Brian Penoyer, Eleventh Coast Guard District commander; Brandon Tucker, Customs and Border Protection Deputy Director of Air Operations for the San Diego Air and Marine Branch; and Randy Grossman, the acting U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of California.

"This is the end state result of teamwork across multiple inner agencies. This is what we train for; we are manned, trained, and equipped to come down here and do a mission," O'Mara said. "The competition of this mission is a testament to this crew's resolve and their persistence to get out there and get it done."

On April 1, U.S. Southern Command increased counter-narcotics operations in the Western Hemisphere to disrupt the flow of drugs. Numerous U.S. agencies from the Departments of Defense, Justice, and Homeland Security cooperated in the effort to combat transnational organized crime. The Coast Guard, Navy, Customs and Border Protection, FBI, Drug Enforcement Administration, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, along with allied and international partner agencies, play a role in counter-drug operations.

The fight against drug cartels in the Eastern Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea requires unity of effort in all phases from detection, monitoring, and interdictions, to criminal prosecutions for these interdictions by United States Attorney's Offices from the Middle District of Florida, the Southern District of Florida and the Southern District of California. The law enforcement phase of counter-smuggling

operations in the Eastern Pacific Ocean is conducted under the authority of the 11th Coast Guard District, headquartered in Alameda. The interdictions, including the actual boardings, are led and conducted by members of the U.S. Coast Guard.

“Seizing 11,500 pounds of cocaine is no small feat. Of the 11,500 pounds you see here, the Active seized 5,600 pounds. And that is quite an accomplishment when you consider that Active and the other ships of her class have been in service for more than 50 years,” Penoyer said. “I would like to congratulate Cmdr. O’Mara and the crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Active for their hard work, dedication, and sacrifice.”

The Active is a 210-foot medium-endurance cutter, commissioned in 1966 and homeported in Port Angeles, Washington. The Steadfast is a 210-foot medium endurance cutter, commissioned in 1968 and homeported in Astoria, Oregon. The Tahoma is a 270-foot medium endurance cutter, commissioned in 1988 and homeported in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

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## **Navy Declares IOC for Joint Precision Approach and Landing System**



An F-35C Lightning II from Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 147 lands on the flight deck of the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70). Carl Vinson is currently underway in the Pacific Ocean conducting routine operations in the U.S 3rd Fleet. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Aaron T. Smith*

PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – The U.S. Navy declared initial operational capability for the Joint Precision Approach and Landing System (JPALS) on May 4, signaling the system is ready to provide precision approach and landing capabilities to tactical carrier aircraft at sea in support of naval aviation operations worldwide, the Naval Air Systems Command said in a May 18 release.

JPALS is a global positioning system-based system that integrates with shipboard air traffic control and landing system architectures to guide fixed-wing tactical carrier aircraft with pinpoint approach and landings on nuclear aircraft carriers (CVN) and amphibious assault ships (LHA/LHD) in all weather and sea surface conditions.

“JPALS has reached a historic milestone, which supports our requirement to deliver, operate and maintain a Navy with a focus on our core roles of sea control and power projection,” said Cmdr. Jeff “Doogie” Dugard, director of the Naval Airspace and Air Traffic Control Standards and Evaluation Agency. Dugard worked closely with the Naval Air Traffic Management Systems Program Office (PMA)-213 to ensure all requirements were met to demonstrate that JPALS will safely and effectively support U.S. Navy and Marine Corps aviation at sea.

The initial operational capability (IOC) was declared by Rear Adm. Gregory Harris, director, Air Warfare Division, N98, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, following the successful installation, integration and flight certification of the first JPALS production unit aboard USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) in December 2020. After the flight certification, the JPALS team continued working with the Navy’s operational test community to demonstrate that the F-35C could effectively conduct at-sea precision approaches to the flight deck, and that adequate manning, training and sustainment infrastructure were in place to support and sustain JPALS operations while

globally deployed.

The JPALS IOC declaration is the culmination of many years of system development and testing activities that began in 2008. The JPALS team has successfully provided a critical combat capability to the U.S. Naval Fleet, delivering the IOC capability nearly a year ahead of the planned threshold while overcoming many challenges including delivering, installing, testing and certifying systems during a persistent global pandemic.

“The achievement of JPALS IOC is a positive reflection on the hard work, innovation and resilience from a dedicated team of government and industry professionals who have developed and fielded this critical capability to the Warfighters,” said Capt. Kevin Watkins, PMA-213 program manager.

JPALS has been supporting F-35B deployments on LH-class amphibious assault ships with an early operational capability since 2016, and will now provide the all-weather, precision navigation, approach and landing capability for all F-35C deployments on CVNs as well. JPALS will also support future operations with the Navy’s unmanned MQ-25A Stingray aboard CVNs.

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## **Coast Guard Repatriates 66 Migrants to the Dominican Republic**



The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Donald Horsley repatriates

66 migrants to a Dominican Republic Navy patrol boat just off Punta Cana, Dominican Republic May 18, 2021, following the interdiction of two illegal voyages in Mona Passage waters off Puerto Rico. The interdictions are the result of ongoing efforts by Caribbean Border Interagency Group partner agencies in their common goal of securing the borders of Puerto Rico against illegal migrant and drug smuggling. *U.S. COAST GUARD*  
SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The Coast Guard Cutter Donald Horsley crew repatriated 66 migrants to the Dominican Republic May 18, following the interdiction of two illegal voyages in Mona Passage waters off Puerto Rico.

The interdicted migrants consisted of 55 men and 11 women claiming to be Dominican Republic nationals.

The interdictions are the result of ongoing efforts by Caribbean Border Interagency Group (CBIG) partner agencies to combat illegal migrant smuggling.

The aircrew of a U.S. Customs and Border Protection maritime patrol aircraft detected the first illegal voyage May 17, approximately 47 nautical miles northwest of Aguadilla, Puerto Rico. The Coast Guard Cutter Donald Horsley responded to the sighting and interdicted the suspect vessel with the assistance of the cutter's small boat. The cutter's crew safely embarked the migrants, 44 men and 10 women, from a grossly overloaded 28-foot makeshift vessel that was riding low and taking on water.

The crew of a Puerto Rico Police Joint Force of Rapid Action marine unit interdicted the second illegal voyage May 18, approximately three nautical miles off the coast of Aguadilla, Puerto Rico. The Coast Guard Cutter Winslow Griesser arrived on scene shortly thereafter and embarked the migrants, 11 men and a woman, from the 20-foot makeshift vessel. The migrant group later embarked aboard the Coast Guard Cutter Donald Horsley for their repatriation.

Prior to embarking, the Coast Guard crews provided the

migrants with lifejackets. Once aboard a Coast Guard cutter, they receive food, water and basic medical attention.

“Illegal migrant voyages in the Mona Passage are incredibly dangerous,” said Lt. Christopher Martin, cutter Donald Horsley commanding officer. “The vessels utilized in these ventures are often unseaworthy, lack basic safety equipment, and are grossly overloaded putting each person on the voyage at risk. We are fortunate we were able to locate these vessels before the situation worsened, safely removing all 66 persons and repatriating them to the Dominican Republic.”

The cutter Donald Horsley rendezvoused with a Dominican Republic Navy vessel just off Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, where the crew transferred and completed the repatriation of the migrants to Dominican Republic Navy authorities.

Cutters Donald Horsley and Winslow Griesser are 154-foot fast response cutters homeported in San Juan, Puerto Rico.