

# Coast Guard Interdicts 4 Migrants, 2 Suspected Smugglers



A Coast Guard Cutter Paul Clark (WPC-1101) small-boat crew interdicts the 37-foot pleasure craft Bada Bing with three Brazilian migrants, one Jamaican migrant and two suspected smugglers on July 30. U.S. Coast Guard  
MIAMI – The U.S.

Coast Guard interdicted the 37-foot pleasure craft, Bada Bing, with three Brazilian migrants, one Jamaican migrant and two suspected smugglers on July 30 about 30 miles east of Hollywood, Florida, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a release.

The Coast Guard Cutter Paul Clark (WPC-1101) crew located the pleasure craft with six people aboard during a patrol and safely embarked two Brazilian adult males, one Brazilian adult female, one Jamaican adult male and two potential smugglers.

All six people were transferred to U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

“People should never trust these criminal organizations with their lives,” said Petty Officer 1st Class Nicolas Rodriguez, Coast Guard 7th District operations branch.

“Attempting to smuggle yourself into the country via the

maritime

environment is both extremely dangerous and illegal. With the consistent danger

these smuggling ventures present, our crews and partner agencies remain

persistently vigilant to protect lives and enforce federal laws.”

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# USS Michael Murphy Conducts Maritime Interdiction Operation



Senior Chief Fire Controlman Ryan Patricio, part of the USS Michael Murphy’s interceptor team, boards the ship’s rigid-hull inflatable boat for a mission to help interdict a drug-smuggling craft on July 25. (U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Justin R. Pacheco

PACIFIC

OCEAN – The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Michael Murphy aided

the U.S. Coast Guard in the interdiction of a drug-smuggling craft, the U.S.

4th Fleet said in a release.

While

conducting routine operations in the U.S. 4th Fleet area of operations, an

MH-60R Sea Hawk, assigned to the “Easyriders” of Helicopter Maritime

Strike Squadron 37, embarked aboard the Michael Murphy, sighted a low-profile

vessel on July 25.

As the helicopter approached the craft, a hatch opened on the top of the vessel and three passengers were seen jettisoning objects from the boat. Assisted by vectoring from helicopter, Michael Murphy's interceptor boat collected the jettisoned items and approached alongside the low-profile vessel.

Michael Murphy was able to communicate with the vessel, informing them to remain in sight, and remained alongside the suspicious vessel until Coast Guard Cutter Midgett arrived.

The Coast Guard boarding team determined the jettisoned material was cocaine. About 2,100 pounds of the drug – some that was jettisoned and retrieved by Michael Murphy's crew and some found aboard by the Coast Guard – was seized. The Coast Guard took the three suspected smugglers into custody.

"From our air detachment and interceptor boat team to the men and women aboard the ship, everything came together to conduct the identification, interception and approach," said Cmdr. Christopher Forch, commanding officer aboard USS Michael Murphy. "The handoff to USCGC Midgett was smooth and successful – a true team effort by two agencies."

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# Navy to Commission Littoral Combat Ship USS Billings on Aug. 3



The future USS Billings conducts acceptance trials on Lake Michigan last December. U.S. Navy/Marinette Marine

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Navy will commission its newest Freedom-variant littoral combat ship, the future USS Billings (LCS 15), during an Aug. 3 ceremony in Key West, Florida, the Navy's information office said in a release.

U.S. Sen. Jon Tester, ranking member of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, will deliver the commissioning ceremony's principal address. Tester's wife, Sharla, is the ship's sponsor. The ceremony will be highlighted by a time-honored Navy tradition when she gives the first order to "man our ship and bring her to life!"

"The future USS Billings and her crew will play an important role in the defense of our nation and maritime freedom," said Navy Secretary Richard V. Spencer, who is also performing the duties of deputy secretary of defense. "She stands as proof of what teamwork – from civilian to contractor to military – can accomplish. This fast, agile platform will deliver her motto, 'Big Sky Over Troubled Waters' worldwide thanks to their efforts."

USS Billings is launched after her christening in 2017. The ship is named in honor of Billings, the largest city in Montana, as well as the people and

military veterans of the state. The future USS Billings will be the first ship of its name in naval service.

Montana has a heritage of naval service, with 30 ships named over the years in honor of state places and people, including the Los Angeles-class fast attack submarine USS Helena (SSN 725) and the Virginia-class fast attack submarine USS Montana (SSN 794), which is under construction. The state of Montana also has one of the highest per capita populations of veterans, according to the U.S. Veterans Administration.

The future USS Billings is a platform designed for operation in near-shore environments yet capable of open-ocean operation. It is designed to defeat asymmetric "anti-access" threats such as mines, quiet diesel submarines and fast surface craft. The ship will be homeported in Mayport, Florida.

The LCS class consists of two variants, the Freedom variant and the Independence variant, designed and built by two industry teams. The Freedom-variant team is led by Lockheed Martin of Marinette, Wisconsin (the odd-numbered hulls) while the Independence-variant team is led by Austal USA of Mobile, Alabama (for LCS 6 and the subsequent even-numbered hulls).

The ceremony, using hashtag #USSBillings, can be viewed [here](#) on the Navy live blog starting at 10 a.m. on Aug. 3.

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# Oregon-Based Cutter Back Home After \$311 Million Cocaine Seizure



A crew member of the Coast Guard Cutter Steadfast oversees the offload of narcotics in San Diego on July 26. The crew seized more than 26,000 pounds of cocaine while patrolling the eastern Pacific Ocean. U.S. Coast Guard/Petty Officer 2nd Class Jordan Akiyama

ASTORIA, Ore.

– The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Steadfast (WMEC-632) returned home July 30 following a 56-day counternarcotic patrol to the eastern Pacific Ocean, the Coast Guard Pacific Area said in a release.

The crew interdicted five suspected smuggling vessels, including three pangas, a fishing vessel and a sailboat, and the crew recovered floating bales of contraband yielding more than 23,000 pounds of cocaine.

The Steadfast crew offloaded more than 26,000 pounds of seized cocaine in San Diego on July 26, which was a result of the cutter's five interdictions, bale recovery and an interdiction case by the Coast Guard Cutter Robert Ward (WPC-1130).

The cocaine,

worth an estimated \$350 million, was seized by the crews while the cutters were patrolling international waters off the coasts of Mexico and Central and South America from late June to mid-July.

“This was 26,000 pounds of cocaine that will not make it to the main streets of the USA, and it also gives us the opportunity to make sure we can continue to combat transnational criminal organizations who transport this cocaine deep in the Pacific every single day,” said Rear Adm. Peter Gautier, the 11th Coast Guard District’s commander. “Because we know that with a supply chain of illegal narcotics, at every single step there’s violence, instability and despair.”

Steadfast’s seizure of more than 23,000 pounds of cocaine marks the largest amount of cocaine seized by crews aboard a 210-foot Reliance-class medium-endurance cutter during a single counternarcotic deployment in Coast Guard history.

Many of the medium-endurance cutters in service today are more than 50 years old. The Coast Guard’s medium-endurance cutters represent 70% of the service’s counter-drug interdiction fleet. These cutters are approaching the end of their service life.

Replacing this aging fleet with the offshore patrol cutter is one of the Coast Guard's top priorities. Even though medium-endurance cutters are still highly effective, as shown by the narcotics interdictions, the ships can be difficult and expensive to maintain and operate.

As these cartels become more advanced in their methods at sea, the Coast Guard is recapitalizing the fleet with modern assets equipped to detect, interdict and disrupt the growing flow of illegal drugs, weapons and people in the eastern Pacific.

The offshore patrol cutter will provide a critical capability bridge between national security cutters like the Coast Guard Cutter Munro (WMSL-755), which offloaded 39,000 pounds of cocaine earlier this month, and fast response cutters like the Robert Ward, which seized more than 3,000 pounds of the cocaine offloaded July 26. The Robert Ward's interdiction was the first cocaine seizure made by a fast response cutter in the Eastern Pacific.

"There are few closer relationships than those among the members of a ship's crew performing a dangerous, important mission," said Cmdr. Dan Ursino, the Steadfast's commanding officer. "Steadfast's crew has worked as a remarkable, dedicated team with a strong common goal – protecting their nation from the deadly, destructive effects of illegal drugs."

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# State Department Approves Possible Tech Support to Egyptian Navy

WASHINGTON

– The State Department has approved a possible Foreign Military Sale (FMS) to Egypt of technical support for various Egyptian navy ships for an estimated cost of \$554 million, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) said in a release.

Egypt's government has requested a possible sale of technical support that provides for material and labor services in support of Oliver Hazard Perry-class frigates (FFG 7 class ships), fast missile craft, mine hunter coastal ships, coastal mine hunter ships and 25-meter and 28-meter fast patrol craft.

Egypt intends to use this technical maintenance and service support to ensure that its navy is operationally capable of providing coastal defense and security. The proposed sale will increase the Egyptian navy's material and operational readiness.

The prime contractor for engineering services support will be VSE Corp., and U.S. Government activities will provide the technical support to Egypt.

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# Fleet Enterprise Support Team Services Contract Awarded to Falconwood

ARLINGTON, Va. – Falconwood Inc. recently won a contract from the U.S. Navy to support the commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command's Fleet Enterprise Support Team (FEST), the company announced in a release.

The FEST performs all analytical, technical and customer service functions in support of USFF commands with about 60,000 seats and more than 100,000 users in the Navy Marine Corps Intranet (NMCI) Enterprise Network. The contract is valued at \$19 million and consists of one base year contract with four one-year option periods. The contract effective date is Sept. 30.

"Falconwood has a long-standing commitment to the Department of Defense to provide superior support, with integrity and agility, to the warfighter," said Allie Lawaetz, president of Falconwood. "We are pleased to continue our efforts with the Fleet Enterprise Support Team."

Falconwood

is also the prime contract holder for the \$175 million contract supporting the Navy Program Executive Office for Enterprise Information Systems (PEO-EIS) and its associated Program Management Offices (PMOs) This contract provides professional and technical Engineering and Logistics support services. Through this contract, Falconwood is providing support in areas such as logistics, asset management, training, cyber, information assurance, engineering and acquisition.

In addition, the Falconwood Cloud Integrated Product Team (IPT) provides DoD customers with a support model consistent with today's cloud service providers, allowing the customers with plug and pay access to Cleared Subject Matter Expertise across IaaS, PaaS and SaaS service models in government, hybrid and commercial cloud environments. This model helps streamline resources required to support agile design, deploy, accreditation and support with the right skill as needed without over staffing.

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## **Coast Guard, FURA Interdict**

# 11 Dominican Migrants

SAN JUAN,

Puerto Rico – The Coast Guard and Puerto Rico United Forces of Rapid Action

(FURA) interdicted 11 Dominican migrants July 24 about 2 miles west of Puerto

Rico, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a release.

Coast Guard

Sector San Juan watchstanders received a report from FURA stating they

interdicted a 20-foot yola with 11 people aboard about 2 miles west of Puerto

Rico. The Coast Guard Cutter Resolute (WMEC-620) crew safely embarked the

migrants from the Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Doyle (WPC-1133), transferred four

of them to U.S. Customs and Border Protection custody and repatriated the other

seven to their home of origin.

“Attempting

these at-sea migrant voyages is illegal, dangerous and unsafe, putting migrants

at serious risk of potentially losing their lives, and we highly discourage

these voyages from taking place,” said Lt. C. Chaffer, Sector San Juan command

duty officer. “Those who are interdicted at sea attempting to illegally

immigrate will be repatriated to their country in accordance with existing U.S.

immigration policy. We want reinforce that taking to the sea in these

ill-equipped crafts, which are often used for these types of voyages, can end

in disaster, because the maritime domain can be unforgiving with changing weather and sea conditions.”

A total of 1,531 Dominican migrants have attempted to illegally enter the U.S. via the maritime environment in fiscal year 2019 compared to 829 Dominican migrants in fiscal 2018.

These numbers represent the total number of at-sea interdictions, landings and disruptions in the Florida Straits, the Caribbean and Atlantic.

Once aboard a Coast Guard cutter, all migrants receive food, water, shelter, and basic medical attention.

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## **Navy Secretary Names Newest Towing, Salvage, Rescue Ship**



An artist rendering of the future USNS Saginaw Ojibwe Anishinabek. U.S. Navy

WASHINGTON

– Navy Secretary Richard V. Spencer has announced that the newest towing, salvage and rescue ship (T-ATS 8) will be named Saginaw Ojibwe Anishinabek in honor of the history, service and contributions of the Saginaw Chippewa tribe of Michigan, Spencer’s public affairs office said July 26.

The

Saginaw Chippewa people are made up of Saginaw, Black River and Swan Creek bands. Ojibwe is also referred to as Chippewa and Anishinabek means "original people."

"I am

deeply honored to announce that the history of the Saginaw Chippewa people will once again be part of Navy and Marine Corps history," Spencer said. "The future USNS Saginaw Ojibwe Anishinabek honors the original people of modern-day Michigan, with their original name, and will carry the proud Ojibwe legacy for decades to come."

This is

the first ship to bear the name Saginaw Ojibwe Anishinabek, and the fifth U.S. ship to be named in honor of the Saginaw Chippewa people.

"It's a

great honor to have the name and language of our people on a Navy ship," said Ronald Ekdahl, chief of the Saginaw Chippewa tribe of Michigan. "We hold our veterans in high regard, and we have a proud tradition of having many of our men and women provide service to our country. 'Chi Miigwetch' (thank you) to the U.S. Navy for recognizing the culture in such a distinct way."

Gulf

Island Shipyards was awarded a \$64.8 million contract option for the detail design and construction of the new ship, which will be based

on existing

commercial towing offshore vessel designs and will replace the current T-ATF

166 and T-ARS 50 class ships in service with the U.S. Military Sealift Command.

The future USNS Cherokee Nation is the second ship in the new class of towing, salvage and rescue Ships and will be designated T-ATS 7.

The

contract includes options for potentially six additional vessels, and each

additional ship will be named in honor of prominent Native Americans or Native American tribes.

The T-ATS will serve as

open ocean towing vessels and will support salvage operations and submarine

rescue missions. The ship will be built at the company's shipyard in Houma,

Louisiana, and is expected to be completed in July 2021.

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## **BAE Garner's Order for Payload Tubes of Virginia-Class Submarines**



Sailors aboard the Virginia-class fast-attack submarine USS New Hampshire haul in mooring lines to dock the 7,800-ton submarine at Naval Station Norfolk on July 16. The Navy is adding significant capability to the latest Virginia-class

boats by increasing the firepower and payload capacity of the Block V submarines. U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Alfred A. Coffield

LOUISVILLE,

Ky. – BAE Systems has received a follow-on contract to produce 28 more payload

tubes for the U.S. Navy's Block V Virginia-class attack submarines, the company said in a July 25 release.

Under the

contract with General Dynamics Electric Boat, a builder of the Virginia class,

BAE Systems will deliver seven sets of four tubes each for the Virginia Payload Modules (VPM).

The Navy

is adding significant capability to the latest Virginia-class boats by

increasing the firepower and payload capacity of the Block V submarines. The

VPM extends the length of Block V subs over previous versions of the Virginia

class by adding a midbody section to create more payload space. Each

large-diameter payload tube can store and launch up to seven Tomahawk and

future guided cruise missiles.

"The VPM

is critical to the Virginia class because it offers not only additional strike

capacity, but the flexibility to integrate future payload types, such as

unmanned systems and next-generation weapons, as threats evolve," said Joe

Senftle, vice president and general manager of weapon systems

at BAE Systems.

“We’ve invested heavily in the people, processes and tools required to successfully deliver these payload tubes to Electric Boat and to help ensure the Navy’s undersea fleet remains a dominant global force.”

BAE Systems is also providing nine payload tubes under previously awarded VPM contracts. As the leading provider of propulsors and other submarine systems, the company has a long history of supporting the Navy’s submarine fleet. In addition to payload tubes, BAE Systems is also providing propulsors, spare hardware and tailcones for Block IV Virginia-class vessels and is prepared to do the same for Block V.

Work under this contract will be performed at the company’s facility in Louisville, Kentucky, with deliveries scheduled to begin in 2021.

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**Navy Announces Commissioning  
Date for Future USS**

# Cincinnati



The future USS Cincinnati during its acceptance trials. U.S. Navy

CINCINNATI

– The U.S. Navy has approved the commissioning date for the future littoral

combat ship USS Cincinnati (LCS 20), the commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S.

Pacific Fleet, said in a July 25 release.

The Navy

will commission Cincinnati on Oct. 5 in Gulfport, Mississippi.

The

commissioning ceremony signifies the acceptance for service and the entrance of

a ship into the active fleet of the U. S. Navy.

Former

U.S. Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker is the ship's sponsor.

As the sponsor,

Pritzker leads the time-honored Navy tradition of giving the order during the

ceremony to "man our ship and bring her to life!" At that moment, the

commissioning pennant is hoisted, and Cincinnati becomes a ship of the fleet.

An Indianapolis

native, Cmdr. Kurt Braeckel, is the commanding officer of Cincinnati.

Former Navy

Secretary Ray Mabus announced LCS 20 would be named for Cincinnati at the

Cincinnati Reds baseball game on July 19, 2015.

LCS 20

will be the fifth ship in naval history to be named Cincinnati. The first played an integral part in the Civil War; the second enforced neutrality laws during the Cuban Revolution and saw service during the Spanish-American War; the third acted as a patrol and flagship during World War II; and the fourth, a Los Angeles-class submarine, was commissioned in 1978 and served during the Cold War.

LCS is a highly maneuverable, lethal and adaptable ship designed to support focused mine countermeasures, anti-submarine warfare and surface warfare missions. The LCS class consists of two variants, the Freedom variant and the Independence variant. Cincinnati is a Freedom variant.

The future Cincinnati will be homeported at Naval Base San Diego.