

# U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Midgett Rescues Family Missing for 7 Days in Micronesia



U.S. Coast Guard Lt. Cmdr. Stephanie Jocis, operations officer aboard Legend-class cutter USCGC Midgett (WMSL 757), observes a 23-foot single-outboard skiff vessel, carrying three members of a missing family in the waters of Chuuk State, Federated States of Micronesia, in Midgett's search light during the early hours of April 6, 2026. The crew of Midgett rescued the family after the vessel went missing on March 30 in the waters of Chuuk State. U.S. Coast Guard missions in the Indo-Pacific focus on issues directly supporting and advancing our regional partners' efforts to protect fish stocks and ensure the safety of life at sea, ensuring a secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Seaman Lauren Taber)

From U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia, April 7, 2026

SANTA RITA, Guam – A family of three was returned to Chuuk State, part of the Federated States of Micronesia, following

search and rescue operations conducted by the Legend-class cutter USCGC Midgett (WMSL 757) crew on April 6, 2026.

The Midgett crew located the missing family after receiving a report on Easter Sunday from authorities in the Federated States of Micronesia and the U.S. Embassy that the vessel was overdue.

“Our U.S. Coast Guard colleagues’ swift and courageous actions in this successful search and rescue mission not only reflect the highest standards of professionalism and humanity but also reinforce the deep and enduring partnership between the United States and the Federated States of Micronesia,” said Jennifer Johnson, U.S. Ambassador to the Federated States of Micronesia. “This mission exemplifies the spirit of cooperation and mutual support at the heart of the Compact of Free Association, underscoring how our close relations translate into real, life-saving outcomes for our people.”

At night, the crew of Midgett visually located the 23-foot single-outboard skiff carrying the missing family, two men and one woman, in the waters off the coast of Chuuk State. The family departed Fananu Island on March 30 for the short passage to Murillo Island, but never arrived due to a failure of their single outboard engine. At the height of search planning, the predicted search area exceeded 14,000 square nautical miles in rough seas with waves reaching 10 feet.

All three survivors were rescued and uninjured. They were then safely delivered to Weno in Chuuk State for further transport to Fananu Island.

“National Security Cutter crews spend most of their time executing maritime law enforcement missions, often with our international partners,” said Capt. Brian Whisler, commanding officer of Midgett. “SAR cases like this one are not routine for our platform. Our bridge watchstanders spotted the small skiff in rough seas just after midnight, and that kind of

situational awareness does not happen by accident. It is what this crew trains for, and I could not be prouder of how they performed.”

During the SAR operation, watchstanders from the U.S. Coast Guard Joint Rescue Sub-Center Guam at U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam developed the search patterns and coordinated with U.S. Coast Guard District Oceania and Air Station Barbers Point personnel to launch an HC-130 Hercules airplane and crew from Hawai'i to support the search and directed the launch of the USCGC Frederick Hatch (WPC 1143) crew from Guam. The Midgett crew, already conducting a Western Pacific patrol, diverted following a bilateral maritime law enforcement boarding with two embarked officers from the FSM in their exclusive economic zone, approximately 200 nautical miles south of Fananu Island.

“This rescue reflects the strategic value of maintaining a capable surface presence across the region’s vast maritime expanse,” said Lt. Cmdr. Derek Wallin, the U.S. Coast Guard search and rescue mission coordinator. “Without the Midgett’s proximity, coordinating a search across more than 14,000 square nautical miles of open ocean would have required significantly more time and resources. Time the three missing people may not have had.”

Throughout its current Indo-Pacific region patrol, Midgett’s crew is scheduled to engage with regional partners and participate in joint operations to enhance maritime safety and security. While deployed to the region, Midgett is assigned to Destroyer Squadron 15, the Navy’s largest DESRON and the U.S. 7th Fleet’s principal surface force. DESRON 15 regularly assumes tactical control of surface units operating in the area.

U.S. 7th Fleet, the Navy’s largest forward-deployed numbered fleet, routinely interacts and operates with allies and partners in preserving a free and open Indo-Pacific.

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# U.S. Coast Guard, NOAA partner to restore tsunami warning capability on remote FSM atoll during 29-day Operation Rematau patrol period



The crew of USCGC Oliver Henry (WPC 1140) supports a University of Hawai'i Sea Level Center technician to upgrade a regional NOAA weather monitoring station on Kapingamarangi Atoll, Federated States of Micronesia, on March 20, 2026, in

conjunction with supporting a supply delivery. Oliver Henry is the first Fast Response Cutter to make the transit. USCGC Oliver Henry (WPC 1140) returned to Guam on March 29, 2026, closing out a 29-day patrol period that restored a critical tsunami early warning station to a remote Pacific atoll, delivered humanitarian supplies to two island communities, and enforced fisheries laws across more than 4,000 nautical miles. (U.S. Coast Guard photo)

U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia, April 6, 2026

SANTA RITA, Guam – The crew of the USCGC Oliver Henry (WPC 1140) returned to Guam on March 29, closing out a 29-day patrol period that restored a critical tsunami early warning station on a remote Pacific atoll, delivered humanitarian supplies to two island communities, and enforced fisheries laws across more than 4,000 nautical miles.

The patrol under Operation Rematau covered U.S. waters in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the Federated States of Micronesia.

“The Coast Guard’s credibility in this part of the Pacific is built one port call, one boarding, one supply delivery at a time. This patrol, from the fisheries enforcement work in FSM’s EEZ to getting that NOAA technician to Kapingamarangi, is exactly how we honor the commitments the United States made to the people in this region. I’m proud of how this team delivered on that responsibility,” said Lt. Ray Cerrato, commanding officer of USCGC Oliver Henry.

The mission’s most consequential stop came at Kapingamarangi Atoll, one of FSM’s most isolated communities. The Oliver Henry crew transported a University of Hawai’i Sea Level Center technician to the atoll to upgrade a regional weather monitoring station, the first such upgrade in 12 years. Supported by the U.S. Embassy in the FSM and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the mission restored the station’s capacity to support tsunami early-warning monitoring across the Western Pacific.

The station's importance came into sharp focus days after Oliver Henry returned to Guam. On April 2, a magnitude 7.4 earthquake struck in the Molucca Sea, prompting the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center to issue a threat forecast for coastal communities across the Western Pacific, including Guam, the CNMI, Palau, and Yap. The Kapingamarangi gauge was online and transmitting when the event occurred, ready to contribute observed sea level data to the warning center's analysis.

The earthquake's distance meant tsunami generation was minimal and not detectable at the Kapingamarangi station, but the network it supports held. The PTWC team confirmed the station is one of a small number of sensors covering that stretch of the Western Pacific and that its restoration directly maintains the readiness network the warning center depends on.

The crew conducted three fisheries enforcement boardings of foreign-flagged vessels, two Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission inspections on the high seas, and one enhanced bilateral boarding of a vessel under the FSM's jurisdiction in their EEZ, directly advancing accountability under local and international laws in a region where illegal fishing is estimated to cost Pacific nations billions annually.

At Kuttu and Kapingamarangi, the crew delivered 3,000 pounds of humanitarian supplies to residents with limited access to outside goods. The crew also provided Chuuk State Government officials with high-quality imagery documenting the condition of a cargo vessel that grounded on the reef outside of Kuttu Island in the Mortlock Islands in 1998 and has been deteriorating since, supporting local government response efforts.

The patrol expanded the Coast Guard's operational reach for future missions. The crew charted previously unrecorded reefs within Greenwich Pass at Kapingamarangi, establishing a

navigable route into the atoll's lagoon for future operations. The Oliver Henry crew also transported Marine Safety Unit Saipan personnel to Tinian and Rota for inspections of port facilities, streamlining logistics, and ensuring the safe flow of goods throughout the CNMI.

During the 395 operational hours underway, the crew improved readiness by qualifying members in roles ranging from underway officer of the deck to engineering officer of the watch while also honoring nautical traditions with one member earning their permanent cutterman designation and six shellback designations during the patrol's equatorial crossing. They also completed nearly two dozen engineering, navigation, and seamanship training drills, and confirmed the cutter's weapons systems remain fully mission-capable during a live-fire exercise.

Operation Rematau is the U.S. Coast Guard's sustained operational presence across the Freely Associated States of the Pacific, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. The operation reflects U.S. commitments under the Compacts of Free Association and advances a secure, open, and prosperous Pacific.

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**Coast Guard Cutter Waesche  
Seizes Over \$65K in  
Unreported Pollock Roe in**

# Dutch Harbor



The crew of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Waesche (WMSL 751) seized approximately 5.4 metric tons of unreported pollock roe from the catcher-processor vessel Northern Eagle approximately 17 miles north of Dutch Harbor March 28, 2026. At the request of NOAA Fisheries OLE, Waesche 's boarding team remained with the Northern Eagle as it transited to Dutch Harbor. They observed the offload and documented 11,524 boxes of pollock roe, which was 241 boxes more than the 11,283 declared in the vessel's production report. (U.S. Coast Guard courtesy photo)

From U.S. Coast Guard Arctic District, April 6, 2026

JUNEAU, Alaska – The crew of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Waesche (WMSL 751) seized approximately 5.4 metric tons of unreported pollock roe, valued at over \$65,000, after uncovering significant violations of federal fishing regulations aboard the catcher-processor vessel Northern

Eagle.

The boarding occurred approximately 15 nautical miles north of Dutch Harbor on March 26. It was initiated based on reasonable suspicion of a significant Living Marine Resources (LMR) violation, following a pre-boarding audit by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries Office of Law Enforcement (OLE), which revealed major discrepancies between the vessel's production reports and electronic logbook.

During the boarding, the Waesche's team obtained the vessel's logs. After further analysis, NOAA Fisheries OLE confirmed that the vessel recorded less catch in its logbook than the vessel's reported production weight. The production weight exceeded its reported catch weight by 1,223 metric tons.

"The integrity of fisheries data is paramount for the sustainability of our nation's living marine resources," said Capt. Tyson Scofield, commanding officer of the Waesche. "This seizure highlights the Coast Guard's commitment to enforcing federal law with our partner agencies to ensure a level playing field for all fishermen who follow the rules. I am extremely proud of the Waesche crew's dedication and perseverance to complete this multi-day operation."

The investigation also uncovered evidence from a previous voyage indicating the underreporting and offload of approximately 12.4 metric tons of pollock roe, valued at an estimated \$150,000.

"As a cooperative enforcement partner, we collaborate closely with the Coast Guard to identify and address suspected and known violations at sea," said Benjamin Cheeseman, assistant director of NOAA Fisheries Office of Law Enforcement, Alaska Division. "The Coast Guard's support was key to uncovering these violations on the water where they occurred, and our partnership remains essential to protecting our nation from

those who break the law.”

At the request of NOAA Fisheries OLE, Waesche ‘s boarding team remained with the Northern Eagle as it transited to Dutch Harbor. They observed the offload and documented 11,524 boxes of pollock roe, which was 241 boxes more than the 11,283 declared in the vessel’s production report.

Following the discovery, Rear Adm. Bob Little, the Coast Guard Arctic District commander, authorized the seizure of the unreported product. The seized pollock roe has been secured in a cold storage facility in Dutch Harbor.

The Coast Guard will work with NOAA Fisheries OLE for further investigation and potential prosecution.

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## **Vice Adm. Buzzella Assumes Command of U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Area and Defense Force West**



Adm. Kevin Lunday (left), commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard, shakes hands with Vice Adm. Joe Buzzella during an assumption of command ceremony, March 26, 2026, at Coast Guard Island, Alameda, California. The ceremony formally marked Vice Adm. Joe Buzzella as the commander of Coast Guard Pacific Area and Defense Force West. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Charlie Valor)

From U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Area, March 31, 2026

ALAMEDA, Calif. – The U.S. Coast Guard held a formal assumption of command ceremony for Vice Adm. Joe Buzzella as he assumed the duties and responsibilities of U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Area and Defense Force West Commander during an event Thursday, at Coast Guard Island in Alameda.

Adm. Kevin Lunday, commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard presided over the ceremony. Senior Coast Guard leadership and distinguished guests joined in recognizing Vice Adm. Buzzella's commitment to leading the Service.

Vice Adm. Buzzella formally assumed the responsibilities of commander, Coast Guard Pacific Area, overseeing all Coast Guard operations across the Pacific theater—an area encompassing more than 74 million square miles. He reaffirmed the Service’s enduring role as a vital instrument of national power responsible for ensuring maritime safety, security, and stewardship; strengthening partnerships with allies and advancing U.S. interests throughout the Indo-Pacific region.

“It is an honor to assume command of Coast Guard Pacific Area and Defense Force West,” said Vice Adm. Buzzella. “Across this vast and vital region, Coast Guardsmen stand the watch. Every day, our crews are saving lives, protecting and ensuring we control, secure and defend our nation’s borders. I am humbled by the opportunity to lead this team and remain committed to supporting the readiness, resilience, and mission excellence of the Pacific Area workforce and their families.”

As Pacific Area commander, Vice Adm. Buzzella will lead Coast Guard operations throughout the Indo-Pacific, the Polar Regions and Western Hemisphere, focusing on enhancing operational readiness, strengthening international partnerships, and advancing strategic priorities in support of national security objectives.

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## **Coast Guard Repatriates 60 Aliens to Dominican Republic Following Voyage Interdiction**



Coast Guard Cutter Thetis and a Customs and Border Protection multi-role enforcement aircraft crew interdict an unlawful migration voyage vessel in Mona Passage waters off Puerto Rico, March 27, 2026. Thetis crewmembers repatriated 60 migrants and transferred them to Dominican Republic Navy authorities in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, March 30, 2026. (U.S. Coast Guard photo)

From U.S. Coast Guard Southeast District, March 30, 2026

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Thetis repatriated 60 aliens to Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, Monday, following the interdiction of an unlawful migration vessel voyage in Mona Passage waters northwest of Aguadilla, Puerto Rico.

The repatriated aliens were transferred to Dominican Republic Navy authorities including 43 men and 11 women who claimed Haitian nationality and five other men and one woman who claimed Dominican Republic nationality. No minors were identified in this case.

The interdiction occurred Friday afternoon after a Customs and Border Protection Caribbean Air and Marine Branch Multi-Role Enforcement aircraft crew on a routine patrol detected a makeshift vessel, approximately 50 nautical miles from Aguadilla, Puerto Rico. Sector San

Juan watchstanders diverted the Coast Guard Cutter Thetis and launched an Air Station Borinquen MH-60T Jayhawk helicopter to respond. Once on-scene, Thetis deployed the cutter's Over the Horizon small boat whose crew took positive control of the suspect vessel. Following the interdiction, the Thetis crew safely embarked all the migrants.

"The swift response, effective communications and seamless coordination between Coast Guard Thetis, Sector San Juan personnel and our CBP partners led to a successful interdiction and resulted in sixty lives saved," said Cmdr. Matthew Romano, Sector San Juan chief of response. "The resolve of the Coast Guard, our Homeland Security Task Force – San Juan and of our Dominican Republic Navy partners to detect and stop these potentially deadly voyages is unwavering. To those thinking of taking part in an unlawful migration voyage, don't take to the sea! These voyages most often involve unseaworthy and grossly overloaded makeshift vessels with no lifesaving equipment. They are highly unstable and could capsize without warning killing everyone onboard. Individuals taking part in these voyages should also realize they may be subject to criminal prosecution and or repatriated to their country of origin or departure."

Once aboard a Coast Guard cutter, aliens are processed to determine their identity and are provided with food, water, shelter and basic medical attention.

The United States Coast Guard, along with its Operation Vigilant Sentry partners, maintains a continued presence with air, land, and sea assets in the Florida Straits, the Windward Passage, the Mona Passage, and the Caribbean Sea. Operation Vigilant Sentry's multi-layered approach is designed to protect the safety of life at sea while preventing unlawful maritime entry to the United States and its territories.

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# Coast Guard Cutter Stratton returns to California following 3-month deployment



The Legend-class USCGC Stratton (WMSL 752) assumed escort duties of motor tanker Sophia and escorted the vessel from an anchorage south of Puerto Rico to an at-sea transfer with Venezuela for further disposition, Jan. 27, 2026. (U.S. Coast Guard courtesy photo.)

From U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Area, March 29, 2026

ALAMEDA, Calif. – The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Stratton (WMSL 752) returned to their home port in Alameda, Monday after sailing more than 16,000 nautical miles and completing a 79-day patrol in the Caribbean.

Stratton departed Alameda Jan. 4 and transited through the Panama Canal to support ongoing operations in the Caribbean, preventing the illicit trade of crude oil in violation of international sanctions. On Jan. 25, Stratton assumed escort duties of motor tanker Sophia and escorted the vessel from anchorage south of Puerto Rico to an at-sea transfer with Venezuela for further disposition.

Additionally, while transiting in the Eastern Pacific, Stratton's crew operated in support of Joint Interagency Task Force-South to detect, monitor, and intercept illicit narcotics. Stratton's crew interdicted one fishing vessel at sea, exercising the North American Maritime Security Initiative (NAMSI) standard operating procedures. Enacting NAMSI and boarding the vessel at sea allowed for the transfer of the vessel to the Mexican Navy for further disposition.

During the patrol, Stratton conducted a fueling-at-sea evolution with USNS Supply (T-AOE 6) and helicopter vertical replenishments with Coast Guard Air Station Borinquen crews to resupply the cutter while deployed in the Caribbean. Additionally, the crew exercised helicopter deck landing operations with an MH-60 aircrew from the USS Lake Erie (CG 70) and Coast Guard Air Station Ventura, displaying Stratton's interoperability across different agencies and platforms.

"The Stratton crew looks forward to returning to Alameda to reunite with our friends and family," said Capt. Dorothy Hernaez, Stratton's commanding officer. "This was a demanding and dynamic patrol that tested our resilience and capabilities across a wide spectrum of operations. This patrol demonstrated Stratton's essential role as a multi-mission platform capable of adapting to an evolving operational environment."

Commissioned in 2012, Stratton is one of ten Legend-

class national security cutters, and one of four 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 of 28 knots, a range of 12,000 nautical miles, and can hold a crew of up to 170. National security cutters routinely conduct operations throughout the world, where their unmatched combination of range, speed, and ability to operate in extreme weather provides the mission flexibility necessary to conduct vital strategic missions.

The namesake of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Stratton is Capt. Dorothy Stratton, who led the service's all-female reserve force during World War II. Dorothy Stratton was the first female commissioned officer in the Coast Guard and commanded more than 10,000 personnel. The ship's motto is "We Can't Afford Not To."

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**U.S. Coast Guard, CNMI partners strengthen maritime security presence in Saipan's waters**



Members of the U.S. Coast Guard Sector Boarding Team conduct a joint patrol with the CNMI Department of Public Safety – Marine Unit personnel on March 20, 2026, in Saipan. From March 18-22, conducted joint underway and shoreside operations alongside the CNMI Department of Public Safety, Saipan Marine Unit, and Saipan Customs and Biosecurity, reinforcing direct lines of communication and cooperation that strengthen maritime domain awareness across the CNMI’s waters and surrounding exclusive economic zone. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Chris Farrell)

From U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia, March 26, 2026

SAIPAN, CNMI – Federal and local maritime law enforcement agencies patrolled Saipan’s waters and port together in mid-March, boarding six small vessels and launching new coordination channels that expand the CNMI’s ability to monitor and respond to threats in its surrounding waters.

From March 18-22, the U.S. Coast Guard Sector Boarding Team conducted joint underway and shoreside operations alongside

the CNMI Department of Public Safety Saipan Marine Unit and CNMI Customs and Biosecurity. Teams engaged 12 vessel contacts and completed six small vessel security boardings, while a joint patrol of the Port of Saipan marked the first combined shoreside operation between the U.S. Coast Guard and Customs and Biosecurity.

The operation also brought together key agency leaders for the first time. SBT members met with an ICE Homeland Security Investigations representative, the assistant director of the CNMI Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the newly appointed chief of the DPS's Saipan Marine Unit – reinforcing direct lines of communication and cooperation that strengthen maritime domain awareness across the CNMI's waters and surrounding exclusive economic zone.

“The Marianas sit at the center of Western Pacific maritime activity: commercial traffic, fishing, small vessels moving between islands,” said Lt. j.g. Thomas Forames-Su, supervisor of the SBT. “These operations are about more than boardings. We're strengthening the relationships and shared awareness that let us and our partners act faster and more cohesively.”

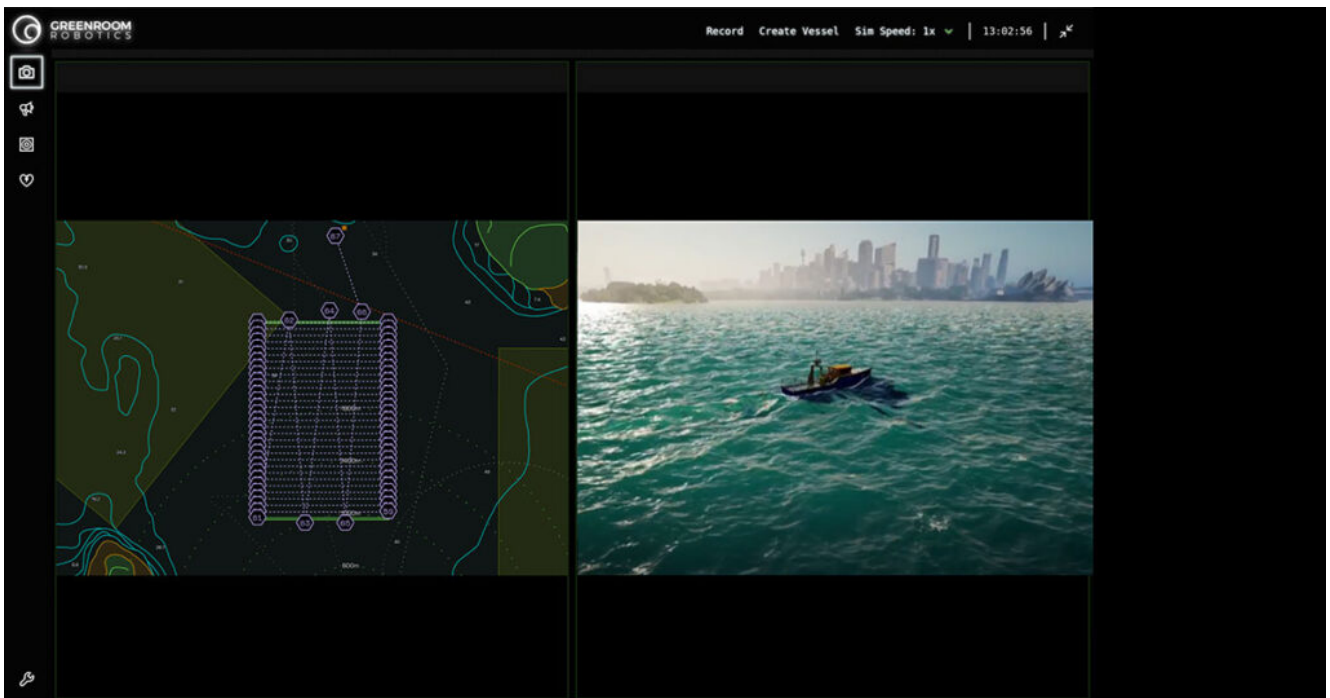
Maritime domain awareness is a shared responsibility across federal, local, and community stakeholders. The CNMI's economy depends heavily on the free flow of maritime commerce, fishing, and tourism, all of which require safe and well-monitored waters. Joint operations, like this one, strengthen the network of agencies and protect those interests every day.

Building on the momentum from this week's operations, the U.S. Coast Guard and CNMI partners are planning additional joint patrols, dockside security boardings, and coordinated cutter operations, like the USCGC Frederick Hatch's recent patrol, in the waters around Saipan and to the north. Agencies are also working to deepen communication protocols and formalize interagency coordination agreements to expand joint response

capabilities across the region.

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# Seabed 2030, Greenroom Robotics Announce Partnership to Support Global Ocean Mapping



Autonomous survey mission planning in Greenroom Robotics' MIS-SIM simulation environment, enabling efficient, scalable ocean data collection.

LONDON, 24 March 2026 – The Nippon Foundation-GEBCO Seabed 2030 Project is pleased to announce a new partnership with Australian maritime AI and autonomy innovator, Greenroom Robotics. Greenroom Robotics specialises in artificial intelligence-enabled perception and autonomy software that support safer, more efficient and environmentally responsible maritime operations.

Through this collaboration, Seabed 2030 and Greenroom Robotics will explore opportunities to support the efficient collection, processing and sharing of bathymetric data, contributing to the mission of delivering a complete map of the world's ocean floor.

Greenroom Robotics software modernises maritime operations through enhanced autonomy, situational awareness and digital workflows. Its hardware-agnostic solutions support uncrewed and optimally crewed vessel operations, helping to enable more persistent and scalable ocean data collection.

Seabed 2030 is a collaborative project between The Nippon Foundation and the General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans (GEBCO), which seeks to inspire the complete mapping of the world's ocean, and to compile all the data into the freely available GEBCO Ocean Map.

The Project is formally endorsed as a Decade Action of the UN Ocean Decade. GEBCO is a joint programme of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), and is the only organisation with a mandate to map the entire ocean floor.

Advances in autonomous and digitally integrated maritime systems are increasingly supporting hydrographic surveying and ocean mapping activities. By enabling vessels to operate more efficiently and collect high-quality data at scale, such technologies can help expand and expedite mapping coverage in both coastal and remote ocean regions.

For example, advanced autonomy systems can enable survey operations using smaller vessels and reduced crew while maintaining data quality. In real world operations this approach has delivered a [94% reduction in diesel consumption](#) compared to the same crewed survey task, demonstrating the potential for more environmentally

efficient ocean mapping operations.

Commenting on the new partnership, Seabed 2030 Director Jamie McMichael-Phillips said: “Achieving the ambitious goal of mapping the entire ocean floor requires continued innovation in the technologies used to collect and process bathymetric data. Partnerships with organisations such as Greenroom Robotics help advance the capabilities needed to make ocean mapping more efficient, scalable and accessible.”

James Keane, Chief Executive Officer of Greenroom Robotics, commented: “We are proud to partner with Seabed 2030 in support of the global effort to map the ocean floor. By modernising maritime operations with autonomous and digitally integrated technologies, we can help make ocean mapping safer, cleaner and more efficient. We’re looking forward to supporting the collection of high-quality data that contributes to this important global initiative and helps safeguard our oceans for the future.”

All data collected and shared with the Seabed 2030 project is included in the free and publicly available GEBCO global grid.

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## **Coast Guard Interdicts 12 Aliens off San Diego**

[U.S. Coast Guard Southwest District](#)

SAN DIEGO – A Coast Guard boarding team interdicted 12

suspected aliens Monday offshore San Diego.

At 6:09 a.m., watchstanders detected a panga-style vessel transiting north into U.S. waters. A boarding team from a Coast Guard Maritime Safety and Security Team deployed to intercept.

The boarding team issued commands for the vessel to stop, but the operator failed to comply and attempted to flee. The crew employed graduated use of force, which resulted in disabling fire.

Boarding team members identified 12 suspected aliens aboard, all claiming Mexican nationality.

All 12 aliens were transferred to U.S. Border Patrol personnel at Ballast Point in Imperial Beach.

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## **Coast Guard Offloads Over \$49.3 Million in Illicit Drugs Interdicted in Eastern Pacific Ocean**



USCGC Forward's (WMEC-911) crew offload illicit drugs valued at more than \$49.3 million at Port Everglades, Florida March 19, 2026. This offload was a result of two interdictions in the international waters of the Eastern Pacific Ocean by the crews of USCGC Spencer (WMEC-905) and Forward interdicting approximately 6,750 pounds of cocaine. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Seaman Christopher Moret)

From U.S. Coast Guard Southeast District, March 19, 2026

MIAMI – U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Forward's crew offloaded approximately 6,570 pounds of cocaine worth more than \$49.3 million at Port Everglades, Thursday.

The seized contraband was the result of two interdictions in the international waters of the Eastern Pacific Ocean.

On Feb. 7, a maritime patrol aircraft located a suspicious vessel, and Coast Guard Cutter Spencer's embarked Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron aircrew employed airborne use-of-force tactics to disable the vessel. Spencer's boarding team interdicted the vessel and seized approximately 6,435 pounds of cocaine.

On March 8, a maritime patrol aircraft located a suspicious vessel, and Forward's embarked HITRON aircrew employed airborne use-of-force tactics to disable the vessel. Forward's crew interdicted the go-fast vessel, recovering approximately 130 pounds of cocaine.

"I'm incredibly proud of the crew for adding to the success of Operation Pacific Viper," said Cmdr. Andrew Grantham, Forward's commanding officer. "The Coast Guard and our partners are working tirelessly to stop narco-terrorists and criminal organizations before their dangerous and illegal cargos reach American shores."

The following assets and crews were involved in the interdiction operations:

- Coast Guard Cutter Forward
  
- Coast Guard Cutter Spencer
  
- Coast Guard Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron
  
- Joint Interagency Tasks Force-South
  
- Coast Guard Southeast District watchstanders
  
- Coast Guard Southwest District watchstanders

80% of interdictions of U.S.-bound drugs occur at sea. This underscores the importance of maritime interdiction in combatting the flow of illegal narcotics and protecting American communities from this deadly threat. U.S. Southern Command's Joint Interagency Task Force-South based in Key West

conducts the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs. Once interdiction becomes imminent, the law enforcement phase of the operation begins, and control of the operation shifts to the U.S. Coast Guard throughout the interdiction and apprehension. Interdictions in the Eastern Pacific Ocean are performed by members of the U.S. Coast Guard under the authority and control of the [Coast Guard's Southwest District](#), headquartered in Alameda, California.

To protect the Homeland from ongoing trafficking of illicit narcotics from South America to the United States, the Coast Guard is accelerating our counter-drug operations in the Eastern Pacific Ocean in support of Operation Pacific Viper. Since launching this operation in early August, the Coast Guard has seized over 200,000 pounds of cocaine, and apprehended 150 suspected drug smugglers.

The Coast Guard continues increased operations to interdict, seize and disrupt transshipments of cocaine and other bulk illicit drugs by sea. These drugs fuel and enable cartels and transnational criminal organizations to produce and traffic illegal fentanyl, threatening the United States.

These interdictions deny criminal organizations illicit revenue. They provide critical testimonial and drug evidence as well as key intelligence for their total elimination. These interdictions relate to Homeland Security Task Force Tampa, investigations in support of Operation Take Back America, which identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level criminal organizations that threaten the United States using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach.

Coast Guard Cutter Forward is a 270-foot medium endurance cutter homeported in Portsmouth, Virginia under [U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area Command](#).