

U.S. Coast Guard Responds to 2 Chinese Research Vessels in Arctic



The China-flagged research vessel JIDI operates approximately 265 miles northwest of Utqiagvik, Alaska, September 2, 2025. The Coast Guard Arctic District deployed USCGC Healy (WAGB-20) to monitor and query the vessel. (U.S. Coast Guard Courtesy Photo)

From U.S. Coast Guard Arctic District, Sept. 3, 2025

JUNEAU, Alaska – The U.S. Coast Guard responded to two Chinese research ships operating offshore Alaska between Sunday and Tuesday.

On Tuesday, the Coast Guard responded to the Chinese-flagged research vessel JIDI operating approximately 265 miles northwest of Utqiagvik, Alaska.

On Sunday, August 31, the Coast Guard responded to the Liberia-flagged Chinese research ship, Zhong Shan Da Xue Ji Di approximately 230 miles north of Utqiagvik.

Both vessels were operating over the delineated U.S. Extended Continental Shelf and are two of five similar Chinese vessels that have recently been operating in the region.

For both instances, the Coast Guard Arctic District deployed USCGC Healy (WAGB-20) to monitor and query the vessels.

An HC-130J Hercules fixed wing aircraft from Air Station Kodiak was also deployed Sunday to provide aerial support.

On Saturday, Coast Guard Cutters Waesche (WMSL 751) and Healy (WAGB 20) conducted a joint patrol in the Arctic Ocean before responding to the Chinese research vessels. The Arctic is a growing zone of strategic global competition. The Coast Guard is the only U.S. surface presence in the Arctic and works in conjunction with U.S. Northern Command and Alaskan Command to constantly monitor [foreign vessels](#) operating in and near U.S. waters in support of U.S. homeland defense and security operations.

In August, the Coast Guard commissioned the Cutter Storis (WAGB 21) in Juneau. Storis is currently operating in the Bering Sea and Arctic to secure U.S. national security interest in this strategically vital region.

“This operation highlights the value of our ice-capable fleet,” said Rear Adm. Bob Little, commander, U.S. Coast Guard Arctic District. “The U.S. Coast Guard is controlling, securing, and defending the northern U.S. border and maritime approaches in the Arctic to protect U.S. sovereignty, and Healy’s operations demonstrate the critical need for more Coast Guard icebreakers to achieve that.”

The Healy and the HC-130J aircraft were operating under Coast Guard Arctic District’s Operation Frontier Sentinel, which is

designed to counter adversary activity in U.S. waters. The Coast Guard continues to monitor ongoing Chinese activity in the region.

U.S. Coast Guard Upgrades Base Charleston to Support Major Cutters



From U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, Sept. 2, 2025

WASHINGTON – The Coast Guard’s Facilities Design and Construction Center completed a contract modification with The Whiting-Turner Contracting Company Aug. 25 to remove up to 100 submerged concrete piles under the old Pier November at Base Charleston in North Charleston, South Carolina.

The modification, with a potential value of approximately \$14.8 million, includes work that is necessary to complete construction of new, modernized piers to provide support and logistics for up to five major cutters homeported at the base.

This contract action was supported by funding in the recently enacted One Big Beautiful Bill Act that included nearly \$5 billion to address the Coast Guard's most pressing shore infrastructure needs. Construction is expected to be substantially completed in 2026.

"Thanks to the leadership and support of the President, the Secretary of Homeland Security and Congress, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act provides more than \$24 billion to invest in the Coast Guard fleet and our inventory of shore facilities and infrastructure," said Rear Adm. Chad L. Jacoby, deputy commandant for systems. "We are moving out to make the most of this historic investment, beginning with this contract modification to address previously unidentified obstacles and keep construction of Pier November at Base Charleston on schedule. The CG-SHORE and contracting teams took prompt action to get this effort underway quickly and ensure the project is completed on time with minimal impact to operations. They are setting a strong example for future efforts that will be supported with reconciliation funding."

Coast Guard seizes 40,000 pounds of cocaine through Operation Pacific Viper, averages over 1,600 pounds interdicted per day



U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Hamilton (WMSL 753) boarding team interdicting two go-fast vessels suspected of drug smuggling approximately 115 miles southeast of the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador, June 26, 2025. The vessels were initially detected by a maritime patrol aircraft, and Hamilton's embarked Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron (HITRON) aircrew provided airborne tactical support, resulting in the seizure of more than 4,475 pounds of cocaine. (U.S. Coast Guard photo)
From U.S Coast Guard Southeast District, Sept. 4, 2025

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Coast Guard announced Thursday it has seized more than 40,000 pounds of cocaine in the Eastern Pacific Ocean since launching Operation Pacific Viper in early August, averaging over 1,600 pounds interdicted daily.

These drug seizures, and the apprehension of 36 suspected drug smugglers, were the result of 14 interdictions since Aug. 8.

Through Operation Pacific Viper, the Coast Guard is accelerating counter-drug operations in the Eastern Pacific

Ocean, where significant transport of illicit narcotics continues from South America. In coordination with international and interagency partners, the Coast Guard is surging additional assets—cutters, aircraft and tactical teams—to interdict, seize and disrupt transshipments of cocaine and other bulk illicit drugs. These operations continue the Coast Guard's efforts to protect the Homeland, project maritime law enforcement presence and disrupt transnational criminal organizations and cartels seeking to produce and traffic illicit drugs into the United States.

"The U.S. Coast Guard brings unique authorities and unmatched capabilities as the world's leader in maritime counter-drug operations," said Rear Adm. Douglas Schofield, acting deputy commandant for operations. "Our maritime fighting force is accelerating counter-drug operations in the Eastern Pacific Ocean. We are leveraging our full range of capabilities to disrupt transnational criminal organizations and cartels and prevent the scourge of illicit drugs from reaching our communities. The men and women of the Coast Guard will not relent in our efforts to control, secure and defend U.S. borders and maritime approaches—where defense of America begins."

Reflecting the early success of Operation Pacific Viper, Coast Guard Cutter Hamilton recently offloaded 76,140 pounds of illicit drugs, including 61,740 of cocaine and 14,400 of marijuana, in Port Everglades, Florida. This historic milestone was the largest offload in Coast Guard history, resulting from 19 interdictions in international waters of the Eastern Pacific Ocean and Caribbean Sea.

Detecting and interdicting drug traffickers on the high seas involves significant interagency and international coordination. U.S. Southern Command's Joint Interagency Task Force-South, based in Key West, Florida, detects and monitors both 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.

The Coast Guard is the United States' lead federal agency for maritime drug interdiction. We are part of the Department of Homeland Security team protecting our nation and are at all times a military service and part of the joint force defending it.

For more information about the Coast Guard, visit www.uscg.mil.

Watch Coast Guard drug interdiction in action here: [How the Coast Guard Seizes 45,000 lbs of Cocaine at Sea – YouTube](#)

Coast Guard Cutter Vigilant Returns Home After Seizing 3,100 Pounds in Drugs



The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Vigilant (WMEC 617) poses for a photo with contraband seized or transferred aboard the cutter during a deployment in the Caribbean Sea, Aug. 16, 2025. Vigilant's crew conducted a two-month, maritime border security patrol in the Windward Passage and Caribbean Sea to protect America's maritime borders and prevent illicit drug smuggling in the region. (U.S. Coast Guard photo)

[Release From U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area](#)

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Vigilant (WMEC 617) returned home to Cape Canaveral, Aug. 19, following a 59-day patrol in the Caribbean Sea and Windward Passage.

During the patrol, Vigilant's crew interdicted 3,100 pounds of illicit drugs in the Caribbean Sea while underway in the Coast Guard Southeast District's area of operations. Vigilant's crew deployed in support of the Joint Interagency Task Force – South (JIATF-S) mission of detecting and monitoring illegal drug shipments in the maritime domain for subsequent interdiction and apprehension.

On July 25, a maritime patrol aircraft notified Coast Guard

Cutter Vigilant's crew of a suspicious go-fast vessel approximately 180 miles south of the Dominican Republic. Vigilant's boarding team interdicted the vessel, seizing more than 1,410 pounds of cocaine and 80 pounds of marijuana.

On Aug 15, a maritime patrol aircraft notified Coast Guard Cutter Vigilant's crew of a suspicious go-fast vessel approximately 35 miles southwest of Haiti. Vigilant's boarding team interdicted the vessel, seizing more than 1,615 pounds of marijuana.

These drug seizures contributed toward the Coast Guard's largest drug offload in history. To read more about Coast Guard Cutter Hamilton's (WMSL 753) recent offload, visit: [Coast Guard achieves historic milestone with offload over 76,140 lbs. in illegal narcotics at Port Everglades > United States Coast Guard News > Press Releases](#)

Vigilant's crew initially deployed in support of Operation Vigilant Sentry (OVS) while on patrol in the Windward Passage, working alongside other Coast Guard assets to deter illegal alien migration along the coast of Haiti.

Crew members executed maritime intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance operations while maintaining a continuous presence in the region. This mission is essential to deterring unsafe and unlawful migration ventures bound for the United States.

"I am incredibly proud of this crew's dedication, performance and resilience during a challenging 59-day patrol in support of Coast Guard and national objectives to secure our maritime borders and safeguard lives at sea," said Cmdr. Steven Welch, commanding officer of Vigilant. "Working closely with our Department of Defense and law enforcement partners, as well as multiple partner nations, we seized or disrupted over 3,100 pounds of illegal narcotics bound for the United States.

Additionally, we safeguarded lives at sea by preventing dangerous and illegal migration attempts across the open ocean in unseaworthy vessels. We look forward to returning home to our families and friends and beginning the arduous process to prepare Vigilant and her crew for the next deployment.”

Detecting and interdicting illicit drug traffickers on the high seas involves significant interagency and international coordination because 80% of drugs are interdicted on the high seas. 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.

OVS is a Department of Homeland Security-led operation comprised of federal, state and local partners responsible for preventing and responding to maritime migration. OVS, previously known as Homeland Security Task Force – Southeast, was established in 2003 and is comprised of more than 50 federal, state, and local agencies.

Vigilant is a 210-foot, Reliance-class medium endurance cutter. The cutter’s primary missions are search and rescue, counter-drug operations, alien interdiction and enforcement of federal fishery laws.

Vigilant is an asset that falls under the command of U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area. Based in Portsmouth, Virginia, Atlantic Area oversees all Coast Guard operations east of the Rocky Mountains to the Arabian Gulf.

For information on how to join the U.S. Coast Guard, visit GoCoastGuard.com to learn about active duty, reserve, officer and enlisted opportunities. Information on how to apply to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy can be found [here](#).

Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk returns home to Key West, Florida after 75-day maritime border security patrol



Jamaica Defence Force Coast Guard patrol vessel HMJS George William Gordon and U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk (WMEC 913) conduct an at-sea transfer of contraband and suspected drug smugglers in the Caribbean Sea, Aug. 23, 2025. Mohawk's crew conducted a 75-day maritime border security patrol in the Caribbean Sea, Florida Straits and Caribbean Sea. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Ensign Andrew Ferderer)

From U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area, Aug. 29, 2025

KEY WEST, Fla. – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk (WMEC 913) returned to their home port in Key West, Friday,

following a 75-day maritime border security patrol in the Windward Passage, Florida Straits and Caribbean Sea.

During the patrol, Mohawk's crew deployed to the Coast Guard Southeast District (CGD-SE) area of responsibility, where crews conducted multi-mission operations with joint service, international, and interagency partners to protect America's maritime borders from illegal drug trafficking and prevent unlawful alien migration in the region.

Mohawk's crew initially deployed in support of Operation Vigilant Sentry (OVS) while on patrol in the Windward Passage to deter illegal alien migration along the coast of Haiti.

On Aug. 16, Mohawk's crew assisted the Jamaica Defence Force by interdicting and transferring a vessel with five Haitians aboard who were attempting to illegally enter Jamaica.

The crew also patrolled the Caribbean Sea in support of the Joint Interagency Task Force – South (JIATF-S) mission of detecting and monitoring illegal drug shipments in the maritime domain for subsequent interdiction and apprehension.

On Aug. 21, a U.S. Navy aircrew identified a suspicious vessel in the Caribbean Sea, and a U.S. Coast Guard aircrew assisted in tracking the go-fast vessel with three suspected drug smugglers aboard. Once Mohawk was vectored in, crew members launched the cutter's primary interceptor boat, the service's newest 26-foot, Mk-V over-the-horizon cutter boat, for a 113-nautical-mile pursuit and later coordination with Jamaica Defence Force personnel, who interdicted the vessel in Jamaican waters.

In total, while working with the Jamaica Defence Force during four maritime law enforcement cases, Mohawk's crew interdicted or assisted in the interdiction or transfer of 13 suspected smugglers, two suspect vessels and seized marijuana to

Jamaican authorities for prosecution in Jamaica.

In addition, Mohawk worked alongside Department of Defense and Department of Homeland Security partners, contributing to the disposition of 21 drug smugglers, 2,425 pounds of cocaine, and 4,300 pounds of marijuana with an estimated street value of nearly \$23 million.

Throughout the deployment, Mohawk engaged in joint patrols and at-sea transfers with a variety of Coast Guard assets, including Coast Guard Cutter Spencer (WMEC 905), Coast Guard Cutter Vigorous (WMEC 627) and Coast Guard Cutter Alert (WMEC 630).

Reinforcing interagency cooperation, Mohawk partnered with the crews of the USS Cole (DDG-67) and USS Jason Dunham (DDG-109), who provided maritime patrol aircraft support and facilitated a critical transfer of contraband and detainees. These operations support U.S. national objectives and a commitment to a coordinated, multi-faceted approach to deter illicit trafficking and bolster regional security.

Collaborating with U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Mohawk's crew also provided offshore presence to support Coast Guard Sector Miami alongside additional Coast Guard air and surface assets to help prevent illegal immigration and drug smuggling, while augmenting search and rescue capability off the coast of Florida.

"Mohawk's recent operations demonstrate our unwavering commitment to safeguarding our nation's maritime approaches," said Cmdr. Taylor Kellogg, commanding officer of Mohawk. "Our efforts over the last 75 days have served as a deterrent to criminal organizations seeking to exploit our waterways and reinforce our dedication to a safe and secure maritime environment. I'm proud of our crew for their selfless service, teamwork and devotion to duty."

CGG-SE is responsible for Coast Guard activities throughout a

1.7 million square mile area including Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, as well as 34 foreign nations and territories. Interdictions are performed by members of the U.S. Coast Guard under the authority and control of CGD-SE, which is headquartered in Miami.

OVS is a Department of Homeland Security-led operation comprised of federal, state and local partners responsible for preventing and responding to maritime migration. OVS, previously known as Homeland Security Task Force – Southeast, was established in 2003 and is comprised of more than 50 federal, state and local agencies.

JIATF-S, in conjunction with partner nations, works to target, detect and monitor illicit drug trafficking within the joint operating area. The organization facilitates the interdiction and apprehension of illicit traffickers to dismantle transnational criminal organizations while reducing the flow of drugs to the public. 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.

Mohawk is a 270-foot, Famous-class medium endurance cutter. The cutter's primary missions are counter-drug and alien interdiction operations, enforcement of federal fishery laws and search and rescue in support of U.S. Coast Guard operations throughout the Western Hemisphere. The cutter falls under the command of U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area, which is based in Portsmouth, Virginia.

For more information on how to join the U.S. Coast Guard, visit [GoCoastGuard.com](https://www.goCoastGuard.com) to learn about active duty, reserve, officer and enlisted opportunities. Information on how to apply to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy can be found [here](#).

Coast Guard Awards Contract for Waterfront Homeport Improvements in Sitka, Alaska



Photo from U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Douglas Denman Facebook Page

[Release From U.S. Coast Guard Arctic District](#)

JUNEAU, Alaska –The U.S. Coast Guard’s Facilities Design and Construction Center awarded a contract Aug. 14, 2025, to the Whiting-Turner Contracting Company to design and construct new homeport facilities in Sitka, Alaska.

The award, with a total potential value of \$50.475 million,

will construct waterfront facilities to support the arrival of one fast response cutter (FRC), Coast Guard Cutter Douglas Denman (WPC-1149), and improve waterfront facilities for one 225-foot seagoing buoy tender, Coast Guard Cutter Kukui (WLB-203), that is already homeported in Sitka.

This work represents a significant investment in mission support infrastructure supporting Coast Guard operations throughout Sector Southeast Alaska and the greater Arctic District. By modernizing and expanding waterfront facilities, this initiative underscores the Coast Guard's commitment to ensuring readiness and resilience in the region.

Construction of homeport facilities is expected to begin in 2026 and be completed in 2028.

The FRCs feature advanced command, control, communications, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance equipment, as well as over-the-horizon cutter boat deployment, enhancing the Coast Guard's operations to control, secure, and defend the U.S. border and maritime approaches.

The Kukui's primary mission is the servicing of aids-to-navigation (ATON) buoys within an area of responsibility extending across the inland and coastal waters of southeastern Alaska. Other missions include maritime law enforcement, ports and waterways security, marine environmental response, and search and rescue.

Coast Guard Achieves Historic

Milestone with Offload Over 76,140 lbs.



The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Hamilton offloads more than 76,140 lbs of illicit narcotics at Port Everglades, Florida, on August 25, 2025. This is the largest cocaine offload to date in Coast Guard history, with the assistance of partner agencies, during counterdrug operations in the Eastern Pacific Ocean and Caribbean Sea. (U.S. Coast Guard courtesy photo)

[Release From Coast Guard Southeast](#)

MIAMI – The U.S. Coast Guard achieved a historic milestone with the offload of 76,140 pounds of illicit narcotics, valued at \$473 million, marking the largest quantity of drugs offloaded in Coast Guard history, in Port Everglades, Monday [Aug. 25].

Coast Guard Cutter Hamilton's crew offloaded

approximately 61,740 pounds of cocaine and approximately 14,400 pounds of marijuana.

This combined illegal narcotics offload prevented the maritime flow of approximately 23 million potential lethal doses from reaching the United States.

“The U.S. Coast Guard in partnership with our federal, DoD, and international partners are offloading 61,740 pounds of cocaine, and this represents a significant victory in the fight against transnational criminal organizations, highlighting our unwavering commitment to safeguarding the nation from illicit trafficking and its devastating impacts,” said Rear Adm. Adam Chamie, Coast Guard Southeast District commander. “To put this into perspective, the potential 23 million lethal doses of cocaine seized by the U.S. Coast Guard and our partners, are enough to fatally overdose the entire population of the state of Florida, underscoring the immense threat posed by transnational drug trafficking to our nation.”

The seized contraband was the result of 19 interdictions in international waters of the Eastern Pacific Ocean and Caribbean Sea.

On June 26, a maritime patrol aircraft spotted two suspicious go-fast vessels approximately 115 miles southeast of the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador. Hamilton’s embarked Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron aircrew employed airborne use of force tactics resulting in Hamilton’s boarding team interdicting both vessels, seizing more than 8,800 pounds of cocaine.

On June 27, a maritime patrol aircraft spotted a suspicious go-fast vessel approximately 125 miles southeast of the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador. Hamilton’s embarked HITRON aircrew employed airborne use of force tactics allowing Hamilton’s boarding team to interdict the vessel, seizing more than

4,330 pounds of cocaine.

On June 30, a maritime patrol aircraft spotted a suspicious go-fast vessel approximately 87 miles north of Bonaire. A Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment 408 crew deployed on USS Cole interdicted the vessel, seizing approximately 2,425 pounds of cocaine.

On July 3, a maritime patrol aircraft spotted a suspicious go-fast vessel approximately 15 miles north of Aragua, Venezuela. A LEDET 404 crew deployed on the Royal Netherlands Navy ship HNLMS Friesland interdicted the vessel, seizing more than 5,450 pounds of cocaine.

On July 11, a maritime patrol aircraft spotted a suspicious go-fast vessel approximately 17 miles northeast of Silva, Venezuela. Friesland's embarked HITRON aircrew employed airborne use of force tactics, and an embarked LEDET 404 boarding team interdicted the vessel, seizing 9,088 pounds of marijuana.

On July 21, Hamilton's embarked unmanned aircraft system crew spotted suspicious go-fast vessel approximately 600 miles south of Acapulco, Mexico. Hamilton's embarked HITRON aircrew employed airborne use of force tactics, and Hamilton's boarding team interdicted the vessel, seizing more than 3,395 pounds of cocaine.

On July 23, Hamilton's crew detected and boarded a suspicious go-fast vessel approximately 88 miles southeast of Socorro Island, Mexico. Hamilton's embarked HITRON aircrew employed airborne use of force tactics, and Hamilton's boarding team interdicted the vessel, seizing more than 9,160 pounds of cocaine.

On July 25, a maritime patrol aircraft notified Coast Guard Cutter Vigilant's crew of a suspicious go-fast vessel approximately 180 miles south of the Dominican Republic. Vigilant's boarding team interdicted the vessel, seizing more

than 1,410 pounds of cocaine and 80 pounds of marijuana.

On Aug. 2, a maritime patrol aircraft spotted a suspicious go-fast vessel approximately 52 miles north of Carabobo, Venezuela. Friesland's embarked HITRON aircrew employed airborne use of force tactics, and an embarked LEDET 404 boarding team interdicted the vessel, seizing 2,615 pounds of marijuana.

On Aug. 2, a maritime patrol aircraft spotted a suspicious go-fast vessel approximately 640 miles south of Acapulco, Mexico. Hamilton's embarked HITRON aircrew employed airborne use of force tactics, and Hamilton's boarding team interdicted the vessel, seizing more than 4,110 pounds of cocaine.

On Aug. 5, Hamilton's embarked UAS crew detected a suspicious go-fast vessel approximately 543 miles southeast of Clipperton Island. Hamilton's embarked HITRON aircrew employed airborne use of force tactics, and Hamilton's boarding team interdicted the vessel, seizing more than 4,210 pounds of cocaine.

On Aug. 6, Hamilton's embarked UAS crew detected a suspicious go-fast vessel approximately 625 miles southeast of Clipperton Island. Hamilton's embarked HITRON aircrew employed airborne use of force tactics, and Hamilton's boarding team interdicted the vessel, seizing more than 4,375 pounds of cocaine.

On Aug. 7, Coast Guard Cutter Diligence's crew detected and boarded a suspicious go-fast vessel approximately 136 miles southwest of Negril, Jamaica. Diligence's boarding team interdicted the vessel, seizing 1,500 pounds of marijuana.

On Aug 7, Hamilton's embarked UAS crew detected a suspicious go-fast vessel approximately 750 miles south of Acapulco, Mexico. Hamilton's embarked HITRON aircrew employed airborne use of force tactics, and Hamilton's boarding team interdicted the vessel, seizing more than 20 pounds of cocaine.

On Aug 7, a maritime patrol aircraft spotted a suspicious go-

fast vessel approximately 100 miles north of Aruba. A LEDET 108 crew deployed on USS Minneapolis Saint-Paul interdicted the vessel, seizing approximately 2,700 pounds of cocaine.

On Aug 8, Hamilton's embarked UAS crew detected a suspicious go-fast vessel approximately 750 miles south of Acapulco, Mexico. Hamilton's embarked HITRON air crew employed airborne use of force tactics, and Hamilton's boarding team interdicted the vessel, seizing more than 4,145 pounds of cocaine.

On Aug 15, a maritime patrol aircraft notified Coast Guard Cutter Vigilant's crew of a suspicious go-fast vessel approximately 35 miles southwest of Haiti. Vigilant's boarding team interdicted the vessel, seizing more than 1,615 pounds of marijuana.

On Aug 18, a maritime patrol aircraft spotted a suspicious go-fast vessel approximately 130 miles south of Jamaica. USS Minneapolis Saint-Paul's boarding team interdicted the vessel, seizing approximately 6,425 pounds of cocaine.

On Aug 18, HNLMS Friesland's crew detected a suspicious go-fast vessel approximately 20 miles west of Curacao. Friesland's boarding team seized approximately 700 pounds of cocaine.

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

- [U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Hamilton](#)

- [U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Vigilant](#)

- [U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Diligence](#)

- U.S. Coast Guard Helicopter Interdiction Tactical

Squadron (HITRON) Jacksonville

- U.S. Coast Guard Tactical Law Enforcement Team-Pacific (PAC-TACLET)

- U.S. Coast Guard Tactical Law Enforcement Team-South (TACLET-South)

- [USS Minneapolis Saint-Paul](#)

- [USS Cole](#)

- [The Royal Netherlands Navy ship HNLMS Friesland](#)

- [Joint Interagency Task Force-South \(JIATF-S\)](#)

- [U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Air and Marine Operations \(CBP-AMO\) aircrews](#)

- [Southeast Coast Guard District watchstanders](#)

- [Southwest Coast Guard District watchstanders](#)

“Team Hamilton with our partners, worked incredibly hard the last several months to safeguard the American public from the dangers of illicit narcotics entering the United States,” said Capt. John B. McWhite, commanding officer, Hamilton. “This outstanding group of professionals achieved unparalleled results in our nation’s fight against transnational criminal

drug organizations. The crew interdicted 11 go-fast vessels, detained 34 suspected drug traffickers, and seized a record 47,000 pounds of cocaine. The commitment and sacrifice of our deployed service members and their families, who forego time together for the protection of our Nation, are to be celebrated.”

Detecting and interdicting illicit drug traffickers on the high seas involves significant interagency and international coordination because 80% of drugs are interdicted on the high seas. 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](#).

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 more than half a billion dollars in illicit revenue. They provide critical testimonial and drug evidence as well as key intelligence for their total elimination. These interdictions relate to Panama Express Strike Force investigations in support of Operation Take Back America. PANEX identifies, disrupts, and dismantles

the highest-level criminal organizations that threaten the United States using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach.

Hamilton is one of four 418-foot Legend-class national security cutters homeported in Charleston, South Carolina under [U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area Command](#).

For more information, follow U.S. Coast Guard Southeast on ["X" \(formerly Twitter\)](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#), and find U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Southwest on ["X" \(formerly Twitter\)](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

Visit [GoCoastGuard.com](#) to learn about active duty and reserve, officer and enlisted opportunities in the U.S. Coast Guard. Information on how to apply to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy can be found [here](#).

For breaking news, find press releases and contact information for our regional public affairs offices here: [U.S. Coast Guard News by Region](#).

**Coast Guard, partners
conclude Operation Ika Moana
in Samoa**



Boats crews comprising Samoan Police Maritime Wing officers, U.S. Coast Guard Mobile Training Team members, and Operation Ika Moana participants conduct training offshore Apia, Samoa, Aug. 12, 2025. During Operation Ika Moana, patrol boat crews from six Pacific Island nations participated in underway training focused on boarding team and search and rescue techniques. (U.S. Coast Guard photo)

From Coast Guard Oceania District External Affairs, Aug. 22, 2025

HONOLULU – The U.S. Coast Guard concluded participation in Operation Ika Moana, a maritime surveillance initiative hosted by the [Samoan Police Maritime Wing](#) in conjunction with the [Pacific Maritime Security Program](#) in Apia, Samoa, Aug. 8-14.

The exercise included representatives from Tuvalu, Kiribati, Tonga, Fiji, Vanuatu, and Cook Islands. Partners from Timor-Leste, Palau, Nauru, the Republic of Marshall Islands, Papua

New Guinea, and Solomon Islands also observed the operation.

Operation Ika Moana is a collaborative maritime surveillance initiative intended to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing and transnational crimes across Oceania, such as drug and human trafficking.

The operation brought together national and regional partners to conduct coordinated patrols, surveillance, joint exercises and crew exchanges.

“Ika Moana provided the U.S. Coast Guard a unique opportunity to work with maritime security professionals from many Pacific Island coast guards, navies and marine police units,” said James Duval, maritime security cooperation director, Coast Guard Office of International Affairs. “We have several common missions, challenges and objectives and have benefitted from the opportunity to discuss, share and contrast our individual techniques. This interaction will help us all continue to refine our skills to best serve the people of our nations.”

The Coast Guard Mobile Training Team delivered classroom and underway training for participating patrol boats focusing on boarding team and search and rescue techniques.

“By partnering with regional maritime law enforcement agencies, the Coast Guard seeks to strengthen global maritime governance to preserve sovereignty,” Lt. Cmdr. James Bruce with the [International Mobile Training Branch](#) at Coast Guard Training Center Yorktown. “We value partnership opportunities focused on our shared objective of rooting out illicit activities and eradicating threats to our collective prosperity.”

The Pacific Maritime Security Program and the Coast Guard share a formal collaborative partnership to coordinate bilateral and joint training with Pacific Island Country partners.

The Coast Guard Mobile Training Team is a deployable unit that fosters international cooperation and strengthens maritime partnerships by exporting formal U.S. Coast Guard training and providing technical assistance to partner nations around the globe. Every year, they train over 2,400 international partners in more than 40 countries.

Coast Guard Establishes New PEO Dedicated to Robotics and Autonomous Systems



[Release From U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters](#)

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Coast Guard announced Tuesday the Initial Operating Capability of the Robotics and Autonomous Systems (RAS) Program Executive Office (PEO).

This PEO is a key component of the Service's Force Design 2028 (FD 2028) plan, aimed at integrating capabilities and is

poised to be the most transformational enhancement to capability since the inception of aviation.

The RAS PEO is dedicated to the rapid operationalization of the Unmanned Systems Strategic Plan. Robotics and autonomous systems are anticipated to revolutionize Coast Guard operations, leading to significant impacts to securing our border, facilitating commerce, and responding to contingencies. The establishment of a separate PEO is the most efficient mechanism to translate the evolving technology landscape into fielded capabilities – including Counter-Unmanned Aircraft Systems (C-UAS) – and allows for dedicated advocacy for resources. As an organizational innovation under FD 2028, this initiative will leverage this technological revolution and deliver RAS capabilities that are better, faster, safer and cheaper across all mission sets.

The core mission of the RAS PEO is to accelerate the development, acquisition, fielding and sustainment of RAS capabilities across the Coast Guard to enhance mission effectiveness and operational readiness. Key goals include achieving RAS Full Operating Capability (FOC), ensuring seamless integration with ongoing RAS initiatives, developing a robust and adaptable acquisition process tailored to technological advancement, fostering innovation through collaboration with industry, academia, and other government agencies and ensuring the long-term sustainability of deployed RAS capabilities through comprehensive sustainment planning. A central element of this effort will be advancing the Coast Guard's C-UAS Strategy. The RAS PEO will facilitate the Coast Guard's efforts to forge the C-UAS doctrine, partnerships, and capabilities necessary to defend the U.S. Marine Transportation System and safeguard National Special Security Events.

The PEO's responsibilities span the full capability lifecycle, including requirements definition and prioritization, managing acquisition and contracting, overseeing system development and

integration, managing fielding and deployment, developing sustainment plans and collaborating with stakeholders. A temporary implementation team comprised of subject matter experts and supporting personnel has been created to focus on achieving FOC, integrating ongoing RAS efforts and launching pilot projects.

Force Design 2028 is an accelerated effort to establish a blueprint for change and transform the Coast Guard to ensure the Service is ready for the future. Focused on four campaigns—people, organization, contracting and acquisition, and technology—FD 2028 is a once-in-a-generation initiative to transform the Coast Guard’s ability to adapt to its current and future operating environment.

U.S. Coast Guard, Navy Seize Nearly 1,300 Pounds of Cocaine in Eastern Pacific



U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) 105 embarked aboard the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Sampson (DDG 102), prepare to offload interdicted contraband from a rigid-hull inflatable boat while conducting maritime interdiction operations in the Eastern Pacific, Aug. 11, 2025. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Sheryssa Dodard)

From MC1 Brandon Roberson, Aug. 18, 2025

U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) 105 embarked aboard the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Sampson (DDG 102), prepare to offload interdicted contraband from a rigid-hull inflatable boat while conducting maritime interdiction operations in the Eastern Pacific, Aug. 11, 2025. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Sheryssa Dodard)

PACIFIC OCEAN – A U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET), embarked aboard the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Sampson (DDG 102), interdicted a suspected drug smuggling vessel and seized approximately 1,296 pounds of cocaine in international waters Aug. 11.

The Sampson, operating in a known drug trafficking corridor, identified a suspicious vessel exhibiting telltale indicators of smuggling, including excessive fuel barrels and packaged cargo visible on deck. Upon receiving authorization, the ship launched a U.S. Navy MH-60R Sea Hawk helicopter from Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 49, as well as a rigid-hull inflatable boat (RHIB) to intercept.

The suspect vessel attempted to flee and began jettisoning packages overboard. After warning shots failed to compel compliance, the helicopter crew, under Coast Guard direction, employed disabling fire, successfully halting the vessel without injury.

Two boarding teams, including members from LEDET 105, conducted a non-compliant boarding and recovered 12 bales of suspected narcotics. Field tests confirmed the presence of cocaine, and two individuals were taken into custody.

Due to deteriorating seaworthiness and heavy seas, the vessel began taking on water and was deemed unsafe to tow. The suspects were transferred to Sampson, and the vessel was left to sink to mitigate navigational hazards.

The interdiction was conducted under international law and a bilateral agreement with Ecuador. Upon mission completion, tactical control of the Sampson returned to U.S. 3rd Fleet.

This operation reflects ongoing cooperation between the U.S. Navy, U.S. Coast Guard, and interagency partners to disrupt transnational criminal networks operating in the maritime domain.

The Sampson is employed under U.S. Northern Command's maritime homeland defense authorities with a Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment embarked to enable maritime interdiction missions to prevent the flow of illegal drugs and other illegal activity. U.S. Northern Command is working

together with the Department of Homeland Security to provide additional military forces and capabilities at the southern border.