

Vigilant Returns Home Following 63-Day Caribbean Patrol

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. – The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Vigilant returned home Nov. 6 to Cape Canaveral following a 63-day patrol in the Caribbean Sea, the 7th Coast Guard District said in a release.

Vigilant concluded the patrol in which the crew conducted numerous at-sea vessel boardings to ensure the safety of life at sea and enforce U.S. federal laws. The crew also worked with partner nations to enhance national security and stability throughout the Caribbean basin.

During the crew's two months at sea, they detected and interdicted two drug trafficking vessels, detained seven smugglers, and seized over \$700,000 worth of narcotics. The Vigilant crew worked closely with representatives from the Bahamas and Haiti to effect prosecution of the suspected criminals.

The Vigilant crew also saved the lives of three men who had been lost at sea for over six days. The men's sailboat was caught in a gale, blown over 100 miles from shore, and then becalmed. The survivors had been without water for two days when they were found by the Vigilant crew. After giving them necessary medical attention, the crew returned the survivors safely to their home country.

The Vigilant is a multimission 210-foot medium-endurance cutter. Missions include illegal drug and migrant interdiction, as well as search and rescue. The Vigilant patrols throughout the Caribbean basin to ensure safety of life at sea and to enforce international and domestic laws.

Coast Guard Forces to Provide Maritime Security for APEC Summit

ALAMEDA, Calif. – U.S. Coast Guard service members are scheduled to provide port security for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Economic Leader's Summit Nov. 12-18 in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea (PNG), the Coast Guard Pacific Area said in an Oct. 31 release.

The deployment of Coast Guard personnel comes after U.S. Ambassador to PNG Catherine Ebert-Gray and PNG Police Commissioner Gary Baki signed a first-of-its-kind memorandum of understanding last week authorizing the Coast Guard to enforce security zones near Port Moresby during the summit.

Leaders and senior officials from 21-member nations are scheduled to attend the summit, including Vice President Mike Pence representing the United States.

"APEC Leader's Week marks the culmination of Papua New Guinea's efforts over the past two years as a host of the 2018 summit," said Ebert-Gray. "With dignitaries arriving from the 21 APEC economies, the United States and the U.S. Coast Guard is happy to offer its support in providing safety and security operations to supplement the Joint Security Task Force efforts to protect Papua New Guinea ports, waterways and coastal areas during this significant international event."

The Coast Guard is deploying small boats and nearly 100 specialized members as part of an adaptive force package to provide port security, waterside protection and anti-terrorism capabilities prior to and during the summit. The security

teams will work in coordination with PNG Police and partner nations' security forces.

The APEC security mission is one of several recent joint operations conducted by the Coast Guard in the Western Pacific. In August, the service participated in the 17th annual Southeast Asia Cooperation and Training exercise, which brought together service members from navies and coast guards from nine nations to focus on increasing maritime domain awareness through collaborative and coordinated information sharing.

The Coast Guard is also engaged in the Oceania Maritime Security Initiative, with law enforcement detachments deployed on supporting U.S. naval vessels such as the guided-missile destroyer USS Shoup, assisting Pacific nations with protecting their exclusive economic zones and combating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

These deployments support the Coast Guard's broader efforts to strengthen the United States' relationships with partner nations in the Western Pacific, enhancing their maritime capabilities and governance, and supporting regional stability and the security of global maritime commons.

"The United States is a Pacific nation," said Vice Adm. Linda Fagan, U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Area commander. "We have deep and long-standing ties to our partners in the region, and more importantly, we share a strong commitment to a rules-based international system that promotes peace, security and shared prosperity."

Coast Guard Returns 24 Migrants to the Dominican Republic Following At-Sea Interdiction

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Winslow Griesser returned 24 migrants to authorities in Santo Domingo Oct. 30 following the at-sea interdiction of a migrant vessel Oct. 17 in waters approximately 22 nautical miles northeast of Punta Cana, Dominican Republic.

The interdiction is the result of ongoing efforts in support of Operation Unified Resolve, Operation Caribbean Guard and the Caribbean Border Interagency Group (CBIG).

“The excellent coordination between three Coast Guard cutters and Coast Guard Sector San Juan ensured the safe return of all 24 persons to the Dominican Republic and serves as a constant reminder of the inherent dangers associated with taking to the sea in such overloaded and unseaworthy vessels,” said Lt. Luke A. Walsh, Winslow Griesser commanding officer.

During a routine patrol of the Mona Passage, the crew of a Coast Guard HC-144 Ocean Sentry maritime patrol aircraft detected a grossly overloaded 20-foot migrant boat in international waters traveling illegally toward Puerto Rico. Coast Guard Sector San Juan watchstanders diverted the Coast Guard Cutter Thetis to interdict the vessel.

Shortly thereafter, Thetis arrived on scene with the migrant vessel that was disabled and taking on water. Thetis crew safely embarked all 24 migrants, a Haitian man and 23 Dominicans, including an adult woman and two male minors. Once aboard a Coast Guard cutter, all migrants receive food, water, shelter and basic medical attention.

The migrants were subsequently transferred from Thetis to the Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Napier and then to Winslow Griesser for their final transport to the Dominican Republic.

Thetis is a 270-foot medium-endurance cutter homeported in Key West, Florida, while Joseph Napier and Winslow Griesser are 154-foot fast-response cutters homeported in San Juan.

Cutter Vise Returns to St. Petersburg After Hurricane Michael Mission

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. – The crew of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Vise returned Oct. 29 to St. Petersburg after responding to Hurricane Michael and conducting a 16-day port reconstitution and aids-to-navigation (ATON) patrol, the 7th Coast Guard District said in an Oct. 30 release.

During the patrol, the crew of the Vise assisted with the devastation left in the wake of Hurricane Michael. The crew transited over 650 miles and serviced more than 70 ATON in an effort to facilitate safe navigation along the Intracoastal Waterway from St. Marks to Panama City.

“Due to the Coast Guard’s preparation and responsiveness, the crew of the Vise, along with other Coast Guard operational and support elements, were able to reopen the entire ICW [Intracoastal Waterway] and Port of Panama City within days of the devastating storm,” said Chief Warrant Officer Paul Curtis, commanding officer of Vise.

The Vise is a 75-foot inland construction tender that pushes a

68-foot crane barge. The crew of 16 maintains the west coast of Florida's fixed aid-to-navigation systems that includes approximately 1,600 aids.

"Maritime commerce is the lifeblood of the global economy and the crew of the *Vise* played a major part during this deployment by ensuring the ports and waterways in the hurricane affected areas were properly marked to ensure all maritime traffic can operate in a safe manner," said Curtis. "By quickly and efficiently reopening ports, and ensuring safe transit along the waterways, our crew played a key role in the Coast Guard's Maritime Commerce Strategy."

Coast Guard Repatriates 84 Haitian Migrants

MIAMI – The Coast Guard Cutter *Thetis* crew repatriated 84 Haitian migrants Tuesday to Port-au-Prince, Haiti, the 7th Coast Guard District said in an Oct. 30 release.

While on routine patrol the cutter *Thetis* crew located an overloaded 42-foot migrant vessel dead in the water Oct. 28 approximately 30 miles southwest of Turks and Caicos Islands, arrived on scene and safely embarked 84 migrants for safety of life at sea concerns.

A Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter crew forward deployed to Great Inagua, Bahamas, provided overhead support.

"The overloaded vessel we interdicted was dead in the water and lacked basic safety equipment such as life jackets and flotation devices, which could have led to a fatal accident at

sea,” said Cmdr. Randall Chong, commanding officer of the cutter Thetis. “I am very proud of my crew on the cutter Thetis for finding, aiding, and ultimately rescuing all persons on board and, we will continue to patrol the Caribbean and Florida Straits to ensure safety of life at sea.”

Once aboard Coast Guard cutters, all migrants receive food, water, shelter and medical attention.

Approximately 132 Haitian migrants have attempted to illegally migrate to the U.S. via the maritime environment since Oct. 1 compared to 2,488 Haitian 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.

Thetis is a 270-foot medium-endurance cutter homeported in Key West, Florida.

Second California-based FRC Arrives at Coast Guard Base Los Angeles-Long Beach

SAN PEDRO, Calif. – The Coast Guard received the second California-based 154-foot fast response cutter (FRC) in San Pedro, Oct. 31.

Robert Ward, a Sentinel-class fast FRC, arrived at its new homeport at Coast Guard Base Los Angeles-Long Beach, where the crew will begin training to become certified in law enforcement and rescue operations.

Robert Ward is the second of four FRCs to be homeported at

Base Los Angeles-Long Beach and is scheduled to be officially commissioned in February.

Two additional FRCs are scheduled to arrive and be commissioned by summer. While these ships will be based in San Pedro, they will operate throughout the 11th Coast Guard District, which includes all of California and international waters off Mexico and Central America.

FRC's are 154-foot multimission ships designed to conduct: drug and migrant interdictions; ports, waterways and coastal security operations; fisheries and environmental protection patrols; national defense missions; and search and rescue.

Each cutter is designed for a crew of 24, has a range of 2,500 miles and is equipped for patrols up to five days. The FRCs are part of the Coast Guard's overall fleet modernization initiative.

FRCs feature advanced command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance equipment as well as over-the-horizon response boat deployment capability and improved habitability for the crew. The ships can reach speeds of 28 knots and are equipped to coordinate operations with partner agencies and long-range Coast Guard assets such as the Coast Guard's National Security Cutters.

FRCs are named in honor of Coast Guard enlisted leaders, trailblazers and heroes. The four California-based FRCs are scheduled to be:

■ Forrest Rednour (WPC 1129) – Rednour aided in the rescue of 133 people during the sinking of the U.S.A.T. Dorchester, Feb. 3, 1943. He was awarded the Purple Heart and Navy and Marine Corps Medal for his actions. Rednour lost his life in the sinking of the Coast Guard Cutter Escanaba in June 1943.

■ Robert Ward (WPC 1130) – Ward operated beach-landing boats during the Normandy invasion. He landed his craft on the Cotentin Peninsula and rescued two stranded boat crews in the

face of a heavily fortified enemy assault.

■ Terrell Horne III (WPC 1131) – Horne was murdered by suspected drug smugglers who intentionally rammed the boat he and fellow Coast Guardsmen were aboard during law enforcement operations near Santa Cruz Island off the Southern California coast in December 2012. Horne pushed one of his shipmates out of the way of the oncoming vessel attack and sustained fatal injuries.

■ Benjamin Bottoms (WPC 1132) – Bottoms was part the Coast Guard aircrew that rescued an Army aircrew from a downed B-17 off the west coast of Greenland in 1942. Bottoms and the pilot conducted the first landing of a cutter plane on an icecap and commenced a two-day rescue over a rugged Arctic terrain that required multiple flights. During the second day of rescue operations, radio contact with Bottoms' plane was lost and he was declared missing in action.

Coast Guard Responds to Vessel Collision Near California-Mexico Maritime Border

SAN DIEGO – The Coast Guard medevaced an injured person via helicopter and rescued 17 passengers after a vessel collision near the maritime boundary line, the 11th Coast Guard District said in an Oct. 27 release.

The crew of the 332-foot yacht Attessa IV contacted Coast Guard Sector San Diego's Joint Harbor Operations Center watchstanders at approximately 7:50 p.m. reporting a collision

with the 65-foot sportfisher Prowler approximately nine miles offshore of Imperial Beach that resulted in extensive damage to the starboard quarter of the vessel and multiple injuries.

A Coast Guard Sector San Diego MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter crew and a Coast Guard Station San Diego 45-foot response boat-medium crew were dispatched to respond. The Coast Guard Cutter Sea Otter was also diverted to assist.

Crews arrived on scene at approximately 8:45 p.m. The Jayhawk crew hoisted a critically injured passenger and returned to Sector San Diego where awaiting EMS took the man to UC San Diego Medical Center–Hillcrest in critical condition.

The RB-M crew transferred 17 passengers, two reporting injuries, from the Prowler and took them to Sector San Diego.

The remaining 10 passengers were transferred to the Attessa IV and are scheduled to return to San Diego, while the captain remained aboard the Prowler.

The Sea Otter remained on-scene with the Prowler awaiting commercial salvage. The cause of the collision is under investigation.

Coast Guard Signs for Newest Fast Response Cutter

MIAMI – The Coast Guard signed for the newest Coast Guard Fast-Response Cutter, Terrell Horne, Thursday during a signing ceremony in Key West, Florida, the Coast Guard 7th District said in an Oct. 26 release.

Lt. John Beal, commanding officer of Coast Guard Cutter

Terrell Horne, signed documents to take possession of the cutter Terrell Horne on behalf of the Coast Guard at the signing ceremony.

Members of Coast Guard Sector Key West, cutter Terrell Horne crew and the Horne family attended the ceremony.

The cutter Terrell Horne is named after Senior Chief Terrell Horne, who placed himself in harm's way to protect a shipmate from being struck by a non-compliant vessel near Santa Cruz Island, California, on Dec. 2, 2012 while conducting counter-smuggling operations.

The fast-response cutters are named after Coast Guard enlisted heroes and are replacing the Island-class 110-foot patrol boats.

Coast Guard Cutter Dauntless Returns Home After Seizing Approximately \$27 Million of Cocaine

PENSACOLA, Fla. – Coast Guard Cutter Dauntless is scheduled to return home to Naval Air Station Pensacola, Florida, Oct. 27 following a 54-day patrol in the Eastern Pacific Ocean, the Coast Guard 8th District said in an Oct. 27 release.

The 76-person crew interdicted two vessels with an estimated combined total of over 2,000 pounds of cocaine, which is worth more than approximately \$27.2 million dollars.

The crew departed Pensacola in September for a patrol in

support of Operation Martillo. The operation sends Department of Defense and U.S. Coast Guard crews to work with partner nations to curtail the flow of drugs coming to the U.S. from Central and South America.

The crew of Dauntless assisted with dismantling transnational criminal organizations as part of the Department of Homeland Security's Southern Border Campaign Plan and the U.S. Coast Guard's Western Hemisphere Strategy.

The cutter patrolled over 7,000 nautical miles and transited the Panama Canal.

"Dauntless once again demonstrated the value of the U.S. Coast Guard to the nation as a military service, law enforcement agency and member of the intelligence community in securing our borders and protecting our national security interests," said Cmdr. Timothy Sommella, the commanding officer of Coast Guard Cutter Dauntless. "The interdictions and apprehensions were the result of months of preparation and hours upon hours of training and maintenance followed by precise mission execution at a moment's notice. The crew did a phenomenal job keeping the 50-year-old ship at the highest state of readiness while overcoming enormous logistic and engineering challenges, including at-sea repairs to critical equipment to keep us in the fight."

Operation Martillo is a Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-S) led multi-national detection, monitoring and interdiction operation conducted by U.S. Navy, Coast Guard, and Customs and Border Protection vessels and aircraft working in cooperation with military and law enforcement agencies from various Central and South American nations, Canada, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands.

Coast Guard Icebreaker Healy Crew Completes Second Arctic Mission

ALAMEDA, Calif. – The crew of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Healy completed their second mission of their Arctic West Summer 2018 deployment Oct. 18. Mission 1802 was a scientific mission to study stratified ocean dynamics in the Arctic (SODA) for the Office of Naval Research.

The project, led by Dr. Craig Lee of the Applied Physics Laboratory at the University of Washington, Seattle, aims to better understand how the Arctic environment affects the different water layers of the Arctic Ocean. Understanding these environmental factors may help better predict ice coverage in the region.

Approximately 100 Healy crew members and 30 scientists and engineers departed Dutch Harbor, Alaska, Sept. 14 for SODA. Once in the Arctic Circle, the team deployed an array of scientific equipment, which will monitor the region for the next year and transmit data back to scientists at the Applied Physics Laboratory.

As one of only two icebreakers in U.S. service, Healy is uniquely suited to support these types of scientific missions in the Arctic. Healy, a 420-foot icebreaker homeported in Seattle, hosts a full suite of sensors and equipment specifically designed to gather scientific data. Operating from the ship-based Science Technical Support in the Arctic laboratory (STARC), ship personnel provide technical assistance to visiting science teams to collect and gather data such as water conductivity, temperature, depth and sea floor mapping. In 2017, STARC personnel were instrumental in using side-scan sonar to locate the sunken shipwreck of the

110-foot crab fishing boat Destination, which capsized and sank in the Bering Sea, claiming the lives of all six crewmen aboard.

The unique capabilities of the icebreaker, coupled with the expertise of the ship's crew members, make Healy an ideal choice for missions such as SODA.

"The Healy is the only vessel we operate as a country that can get us this far into the ice," Lee said. "If we wanted to come this far up north, we need to have an icebreaker. For the Arctic, the Healy is the only choice other than chartering a vessel from another country."

The Healy crew is also responsible for the deployment of scientific equipment and for overseeing the safety of the visiting science team – from ensuring no one falls overboard to standing polar bear watch while scientists are on the ice. During the SODA mission, the crew deployed navigation moorings, weather buoys, ice-tethered profilers and autonomous underwater vehicles known as Seagliders, and the crew's hard work has not gone unnoticed by Lee or his team.

"Our experience on this cruise has been exceptional," said Lee. "We've received fantastic support – not just from a technical standpoint, but people were enthusiastic to get this done. You can tell the crew is focused on helping, rather than just doing their job. They make things efficient, get things done."

With less ice in the Arctic each year, the human footprint in the region is increasing. Whether it's tourism, commercial fishing, global shipping or a hunt for natural resources, knowing how Arctic ice forms and recedes gives an edge up to anyone planning to work in the region, which is why the Office of Naval Research has taken notice.

SODA is one of several multiyear studies to determine how to best proceed in the region. Knowing how and when conditions in

the Arctic are favorable for transit allows the Department of Defense to plan and prepare for this increased human activity. Knowledge of the changing Arctic environment will ultimately improve our ability to better forecast weather and sea conditions, making it safer for future operations.

This knowledge also allows the U.S. Coast Guard, which leads the Joint Force in the Arctic, to support their full suite of missions in the Polar Regions, including responding to threats, facilitating emerging commercial activities and protecting sovereign rights in the Exclusive Economic Zone and on the Extended Continental Shelf.

Missions such as SODA underscore how important icebreakers are to the national Arctic strategy; that value, however, is threatened by an aging icebreaker fleet.

Presently, the U.S. Coast Guard maintains two icebreakers – Healy, which is a medium icebreaker, and Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star, which is a heavy icebreaker. Protecting national interests in the polar regions is essential to ensure the Coast Guard's national defense strategy and search and rescue capabilities are ready for action, but in order to do so, the icebreaker fleet needs to be modernized.

The 42-year-old Polar Star is showing its age. Reserved for Operation Deep Freeze (ODF) each year, Polar Star spends the winter breaking ice near Antarctica in order to refuel and resupply McMurdo Station. When the mission is complete, Polar Star returns to dry dock in order to complete critical maintenance and prepare it for the next ODF mission. Once out of dry dock, it's back to Antarctica, and the cycle repeats itself.

If something were to happen to Healy in the Arctic or to Polar Star near Antarctica, such as getting stuck in the ice, the U.S. Coast Guard is left without a self-rescue capability, which is why recapitalization of the Polar Security Cutter

fleet is so imperative. It's an initiative that has the attention of the service's top brass.

"As we move out on recapitalizing our polar icebreaker fleet, I am focused on a 6-3-1 approach," said Adm. Karl Schultz, commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard. "We plan to build six icebreakers for the high-latitudes, at least three of which will be heavy, but we can't be in the Arctic the way America needs us unless we build one now."

By contrast, Russia currently operates 41 icebreakers – several of which are nuclear powered. In order to remain ready, responsive and relevant, recapitalization of the U.S. Coast Guard's icebreaker fleet is essential if the nation is to be a global leader in the Arctic. Without assets such as the Healy, research projects such as SODA would not be possible, and since SODA may guide the future of the U.S. armed forces and prepare the Coast Guard and DoD to better serve American interests in the region, investment in the icebreaker fleet is imperative. The 6-3-1 approach underscores the importance of protecting U.S. interests in the Arctic, but the U.S. Coast Guard will continue to lag behind countries such as Russia until that first one is built.

The Healy crew returned to Dutch Harbor Oct. 18 and will depart for mission 1803 Oct. 25. The crew is scheduled to return to their homeport in Seattle Nov. 30.