

USCGC Munro Returns to California Following 121-Day Bering Sea Patrol



The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Munro's (WMSL 755) 26-foot over-the-horizon cutter boat returns to the fantail notch after conducting a boarding of a commercial fishing vessel in Dutch Harbor, Alaska May 2, 2025. Munro conducted a total of 32 boardings in the Bering Sea to preserve fisheries resources and ensure each vessel's safety, survival, and communications gear complied with federal regulations. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Lt. j.g. Samika Lewis)

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

ALAMEDA, Calif. – The crew of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Munro (WMSL 755) returned to their Alameda home port Wednesday following a 20,000-nautical-mile, 121-day deployment patrolling the Bering Sea.

Munro departed Alameda mid-March and operated throughout the Bering Sea during a months-long Alaska Patrol in support of the Coast Guard's Arctic District.

The crew provided U.S. maritime presence in the region while patrolling along the maritime boundary line between the United States and Russia, supporting U.S. strategic interests in the North Pacific Ocean by promoting maritime governance and enforcing domestic fishery regulations.

Munro conducted 32 boardings of commercial fishing vessels to ensure compliance with U.S. law, preserve the integrity of U.S. fish stocks, encourage sustainable fishing practices, and maintain a level playing field within the U.S. exclusive economic zone. Exemplifying interagency coordination, Munro hosted a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration law enforcement officer aboard, enhancing enforcement efforts to protect the \$6 billion Alaskan fishery.

Munro also served as the primary search and rescue (SAR) asset in the Bering Sea. During the patrol, the crew conducted more than 100 flight evolutions with three separate aircraft, qualifying eight pilots and increasing SAR readiness in the region. Most notably, Munro collaborated with Forward Operating Station Cold Bay, Alaska, to respond to a long-range SAR case.

During the operation, Munro served as a "lily pad," refueling the Coast Guard helicopter at sea and maximizing its on-scene search time in the vicinity of Nunivak Island, more than 300 nautical miles from Cold Bay, for two people reportedly in the water from an overturned skiff.

The Coast Guard's efforts to secure Arctic waterways aim to ensure American security, prosperity and freedom in the face of evolving Arctic security challenges and risks.

“Munro is happy to be home after a long and successful patrol,” said Munro’s commanding officer, Capt. Jim O’Mara. “Our job in the Bering Sea was to keep U.S. mariners safe, protect the economic integrity of the U.S. exclusive economic zone, and uphold the border control and territorial integrity of the U.S. Arctic. I can proudly say that we accomplished that mission on all fronts. We’re excited to return home to our friends and families after four months of hard work.”

Enhancing international collaborations, Munro hosted two Royal Canadian Navy exchange officers aboard for the four-month patrol. While aboard, the officers sharpened their seamanship skills, earning certifications as underway officer of the deck after an intensive qualification process that allowed them to lead the bridge team and navigate the cutter.

Commissioned in 2017, Munro is a Legend-class national security cutter named for Signalman First Class Douglas A. Munro, the only Coast Guardsman awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions in 1942, sacrificing himself in the defense, rescue and evacuation of a U.S. Marine battalion from Point Cruz at Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands.

Coast Guard Base Alameda is the home port for four national security cutters which 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. Munro routinely conducts operations throughout the Pacific, where the cutter’s combination of range, speed and ability to operate in extreme weather conditions provides the mission flexibility necessary to conduct vital strategic missions.

U.S. Coast Guard Conducts Bilateral Maritime Law Enforcement Operations With Republic of Marshall Islands



Crew members from the Legend-class U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Stratton (WMSL 752) bring Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) Sea Patrol Able Seaman aboard Stratton for bilateral maritime law enforcement operations in RMI waters, July 9, 2025. The U.S. Coast Guard and the RMI have long cooperated to enhance maritime security and sovereignty in the Pacific with a focus on bilateral maritime law enforcement operations that help combat maritime trafficking and safeguard fisheries for both countries. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Kate Kilroy)

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

MAJURO, Republic of the Marshall Islands – The crew of

national security cutter USCGC Stratton (WMSL 752) conducted at-sea boardings with the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) Sea Patrol within RMI's exclusive economic zone from July 9 to 13.

Stratton's crew embarked three law enforcement officers from the RMI Sea Patrol, who provided a combined presence and conducted two successful maritime law enforcement boardings of commercial fishing vessels operating in the RMI EEZ. While no violations were initially reported from the boarding, potential issues with the catch emerged later and constituted further inspection from RMI.

Stratton's shared patrol with the RMI officers emphasized collaborative efforts in maritime safety, security, and stewardship to maximize the protection of natural resources. The U.S. Coast Guard and RMI have long cooperated to enhance maritime security and sovereignty, focusing on bilateral maritime law enforcement that combats maritime trafficking and safeguards fisheries for both countries.

"It has been an honor to host members of the Sea Patrol and conduct bilateral maritime law enforcement boardings alongside our partners from the Republic of the Marshall Islands," said Capt. Brian Krautler, the Stratton's commanding officer. "We focused on boardings to deter, detect, and suppress illicit transnational maritime activity, specifically maritime drug trafficking, fisheries offenses, and illegal migration. Our combined operations and shared efforts enforce laws and preserve the local way of life, deepening our partnership. Standing together, we improve regional maritime governance and build a resilient future for both our nations."

Bilateral maritime law enforcement agreements enable Pacific nations to protect their sovereignty and help ensure the safety and security of mariners and vessels of all nations conducting legal maritime operations within the nation's

EEZ. Through these agreements, the host nation makes determinations regarding targeting vessels for law enforcement boardings within its EEZ, identifies violations, and determines penalties and follow-on actions.

Stratton conducted these boardings in support of Operation Blue Pacific, the U.S. Coast Guard's campaign throughout Oceania to maintain unrestricted, lawful access to the maritime domain for all nations, enhance maritime governance, and improve regional prosperity.

Commissioned in 2012, Stratton is one of ten Legend-class national security cutters and one of four homeported in Alameda, California. 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 sail with a crew of up to 170. These crews routinely conduct operations throughout the Pacific, where their combination of range, speed, and ability to operate in extreme weather provides the mission flexibility necessary to conduct vital strategic missions.

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

Coast Guard Academy Think

Tank Puts Polar Issues Front and Center



Coast Guard Cutter Bertholf (WMSL 750) transits through Glacier Bay, Alaska, Oct. 24, 2024. During the patrol, Bertholf's crew operated as far north as the Arctic Circle, patrolling along the maritime boundary line between the United States and Russia and supporting U.S. strategic interests in the North Pacific Ocean. *Photo credit: U.S. Coast Guard | Troy Spence*

The Arctic is a hot topic these days. As sea ice melts, many questions surface: How should Arctic nations manage more shipping traffic while preserving the delicate environment? Can countries maintain a history of regional cooperation in this increasingly contested space?

As these and other concerns come to the fore, there's one entity keeping all things polar on the front burner: the Center for Arctic Study and Policy, or CASP.

This tiny U.S. Coast Guard Academy office – with an annual operating budget of just \$150,000 and two salaried positions –

plays an outsized role in promoting knowledge of the north and south polar regions, a growing area of human interest as the environment rapidly changes.

The Arctic polar region is primarily ocean, surrounded on its edges by the eight member states of the Arctic Council: Canada; the Kingdom of Denmark, which includes Greenland and the Faroe Islands; Finland; Iceland; Norway; the Russian Federation; Sweden; and the United States, where Alaska includes a 1.5-million-square-mile exclusive economic zone in its surrounding waters.

Council decisions are achieved in agreement with six “permanent participants” that represent Aleut, Arctic Athabaskan, Gwich’in, Inuit, Saami and Russian Indigenous people, who have inhabited the Arctic for millennia. About 10% of the 4 million Arctic residents are native peoples, according to the “Arctic Review,” an online publication covering polar issues.

There is a long history of international cooperation regarding Arctic scientific research and discovery and access to the region’s abundant fisheries, oil and gas assets, minerals, tourist sites and other resources. But rapid changes to the area’s physical, economic, geopolitical and technological characteristics have altered the future of polar affairs. As a result, many nations, including the United States, have intensified their focus on the region.

The U.S. Coast Guard, part of the Department of Homeland Security, underscored the region’s strategic importance in its 2023 Arctic Strategic Outlook Implementation Plan: “Global geopolitical trends combined with changes to the Arctic’s physical environment are increasing the region’s economic opportunities and strategic importance while hastening the impacts and risks to U.S. Arctic residents, commercial activity, and U.S. national security.”

In the middle of the action is CASP, the U.S. Coast Guard's only scholarly center and internal think tank. It focuses only on the polar regions – mostly the Arctic but also Antarctica.

Widening Interest, Changing Arctic

Tony Russell, CASP's executive director since 2022, said his personal interest in the Arctic started in 2007. He was serving as an active-duty officer in the Coast Guard and completing a master's degree at the Marine Corps University. The Arctic, Russell thought, would be a unique thesis topic.

"That was when folks were just beginning to understand how access – physical access – was increasing via the sea ice reducing [and asking] what does that mean?" said Russell, who retired from the Coast Guard as a captain in 2020. Global attention to the region also coalesced around a 2008 U.S. Geological Survey report predicting the Arctic Circle had massive stores of undiscovered oil and gas reserves.

Then, as now, the drastic environmental changes were hard to ignore: According to the National Snow and Ice Data Center, scientists have observed a consistent decline in Arctic sea ice cover in nearly 50 years of continuous satellite monitoring – a rate of decline of more than 2% per decade. In 2025, sea ice cover is at its lowest level since recording began in 1979.

The Arctic in the past four decades has warmed three times faster than the worldwide average, according to "Arctic Climate Change Update 2024: Key Trends and Impacts – Summary for Policymakers," a report by the Arctic Council's Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme.

The evolving situation sparked new areas of concern, collaboration and potential conflict among nation-states, residents, the scientific community and industry players.

The area's residents, land, waterways and wildlife face new

threats from erosion, flooding, wildfires and greater human activity. The Arctic is at risk from more air crashes, vessel collisions and groundings. It's also exposed to threats to subsea cables, unsafe shipping through the Russian maritime Arctic and friction from regional military exercises (involving the U.S. and its allies but also Russia and China).

"That all speaks to rising interest for U.S. national security," Russell said.



Dr. Abbie Tingstad poses for a photo at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, Sept. 25, 2024. Tingstad is a renowned Arctic analyst, a trusted voice on the challenges posed by the changing environment in the region and also the first Visiting Research Professor at the Center for Arctic Study and Policy (CASP) at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. *Photo credit: U.S. Coast Guard | Petty Officer 2nd Class Janessa-Reyanna Warschkow*

Renewing the Center's Mission

Although CASP was founded in 2014, Russell's tenure began as the Coast Guard Academy was relaunching and revitalizing the

center, complete with new offices at the academy's New London, Connecticut, headquarters. The center is now housed within the academy's Office of Scholarship, Research and Innovation. Its renewed mission is focused on educating cadets, conducting research and analysis, and broadening partnerships.

At the reborn CASP, a federally funded rotating research professor position was first filled in 2023 by Arctic analyst Abbie H. Tingstad, who holds a Ph.D. and the title of visiting arctic research professor. Tingstad's predecessors, Drs. Rebecca Pincus and Barry Zellen, were funded by Coast Guard Academy alumni donations.

In addition to overseeing a two-year research agenda, Tingstad is a sought-after expert on Arctic affairs and widely published author of Arctic peer-reviewed research, policy papers and presentations, and media commentaries. Her work has touched on topics such as the role of icebreakers in diplomacy and the effects of a poleward shift in fish stocks in the Northern Bering Sea.

Tingstad also directs CASP's participation in international policy development for the Arctic.

"For example," Tingstad said, "we are part of a multinational network of research and educational institutions that are shaping the conversation about all the facets of Arctic security and what that means, and how it's changing, and what it implies for governance and cooperation in the Arctic region."

CASP is also educating the next generation of Coast Guard officers. It accepts some 18 to 20 cadets every other semester into its polar studies course, focused on U.S. and international strategies and policies in the region. In addition to studying Arctic history and policy, cadets attend expert lectures involving academia, the military, business, Indigenous communities and political spheres.

They also benefit from CASP's reorganization, which "allowed us to increase our access to all of the academic disciplines at the academy," Russell said. That's important because "the challenges that the Arctic faces are definitely multidisciplinary," he said, involving infrastructure, science, policy, business and more. "All of those things factor into what's going on in the Arctic region."

Each year, CASP encourages six to eight cadets to delve deeper into polar issues as Arctic scholars. Russell highlighted two cadets, among others, making important contributions to Arctic policy.

Elise Beauchemin, an Arctic scholar studying marine environmental science, completed CASP-sponsored internships last year with the University of Alaska Anchorage and at CASP. She worked with the Coast Guard Research and Development Center, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Lincoln Labs, and the Navy's Undersea Warfare Development Center. She also completed a course supporting Tingstad's research. Beauchemin was accepted into the prestigious Fulbright U.S. Student Program and recognized by DHS Secretary Kristi Noem at the Coast Guard Academy commencement in May.

And, after completing the Arctic studies course, Emelia Campbell was one of three team members invited to partner with the Coast Guard's Maritime Law Enforcement Fisheries Division to research implementation options for the Central Arctic Ocean Fisheries Agreement. This 10-party pact bans commercial fishing in the central Arctic Ocean for 16 years while scientists study the ecological impact. With CASP, Campbell participated in the Fridtjof Nansen Institute's Arctic Security Conference in Oslo, Norway. In January 2025, she presented research findings at the Arctic Frontiers conference in Tromsø, Norway, and later briefed Coast Guard executives.

CASP has also sponsored cadets to attend and present at industry conferences, such as the Navy League's Sea-Air-Space,

American Society of Naval Engineers symposia and International Marine Design Conference.

The center supports summer internships for roughly eight cadets each year. “We have two cadets right now on an exchange with the Icelandic Coast Guard,” Russell said, where they’re “getting some great exposure” working with another Arctic nation partner.

Other cadets have interned at the Marine Exchange of Alaska, a nonprofit focused on preventing maritime disasters; the Arctic Domain Awareness Center, a DHS research center at the University of Alaska Anchorage; and the Defense Department’s Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies.

Promoting International Partnerships

In addition to maintaining a spirit of cooperation, CASP’s ongoing outreach and engagement with most Arctic nations and dozens of U.S. and international organizations – through cadet exchanges, tabletop exercises, policy and research development, and other areas – is yielding Arctic insights for potential action by U.S. and allied militaries, policymakers, industry groups and affected populations.

For the Coast Guard decision-makers, Russell said, CASP “helps flatten the learning curve and it helps maintain consistency and quality of information we’re using for those decisions.” And for external partners who need or want to share information with the Coast Guard, “we know who the subject matter experts are within the service that do that.”

Through its extensive partner network, CASP can foster international dialogue on issues such as illegal fishing, homeland defense, Arctic-capable shipping design, transportation safety, biodiversity preservation, ecosystem management and emergency preparedness.

For instance, CASP helps nations better prepare for Arctic

emergencies, which now occur with relative frequency. That includes this year's Bering Air Flight 445 that crashed on the sea ice on the way to Nome, Alaska, killing 10 people on board; and the 2023 grounding of a 206-person cruise ship stranded for days on Greenland's remote East Coast.

A recent CASP-hosted tabletop exercise convened emergency response and aviation representatives from four nations and several U.S. military and federal organizations to wargame crises in remote areas of the Arctic. The exercise revealed potential gaps in training, infrastructure, communication and hardware. CASP also moderated a panel discussion on cruise ship search and rescue with the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators and maritime rescue organizations.

"At the end of the day," Russell said, "the process is as important as the answer, and we strive to provide the kind of analytical research and defensible background knowledge that best informs polar policy choices and answers."

Erika Fitzpatrick is an award-winning writer living in Washington, D.C. With more than 20 years of experience in public policy journalism and communications, she specializes in covering issues affecting service members, veterans and military families. This article originally appeared in the July-August issue of Seapower.

**U.S. Coast Guard completes
historic Quad Sail to**

strengthen Indo-Pacific maritime partnership



Quad partners from the U.S. Coast Guard, Japan Coast Guard, Australian Border Force, Indian Coast Guard and the command and crew of the Legend-class U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Stratton (WMSL 752) take a photo on the flight deck during the first Quad at-sea mission while Stratton patrols the Pacific Ocean, July 1, 2025. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Kate Kilroy)

From U.S. 7th Fleet, July 20, 2025

SANTA RITA, Guam – The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Stratton (WMSL 752) arrived in Guam, July 3, after a landmark multinational sail with representatives aboard from the maritime forces from Australia, India, and Japan—collectively known as the Quad.

As four leading maritime nations in the Indo-Pacific, Quad

nations are united in our conviction that peace and stability in the maritime domain underpin the security and prosperity of the region. We are committed to a region where all countries are free from coercion and strongly oppose any unilateral actions that seek to change the status quo by force or coercion.

This inaugural event underscored the U.S. Coast Guard's commitment to fostering a free and open Indo-Pacific and reflected the U.S. Coast Guard's strategic priority to strengthen partnerships that uphold the rule of law, sovereignty, and regional stability. The Quad Sail enhanced joint operational capabilities, boosted readiness, and promoted a secure Indo-Pacific region with unrestricted, lawful access to maritime domains.

"The Quad Sail signaled a hallmark moment for our respective nations and the Indo-Pacific," said Capt. Brian Krautler, commanding officer of the Stratton. "Together, we fostered professional exchanges and enhanced maritime domain awareness. We believe in the necessity of a prosperous and secure Indo-Pacific and share concern over the rise of malign behaviors that undercut law and order and erode maritime safety and security. The Stratton team is honored to represent the U.S. Coast Guard in this historic endeavor."

The U.S. Coast Guard's mission in the Indo-Pacific relies on close collaboration with allies, enhancing operational flexibility and delivering a wide range of capabilities. National security cutters, such as the Stratton, routinely operate across the Pacific.

Throughout Stratton's patrol, the crew has engaged with regional partners and participated in joint operations to advance maritime safety and security. Stratton is currently assigned to Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 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.

Commissioned in 2012, Stratton is one of 10 Legend-class national security cutters; four of the 10 are homeported in Alameda, California. These 418-foot vessels, with a 54-foot beam and 4,600 long-ton displacement, have a top speed of 28 knots, a 12,000-nautical-mile range, and a crew capacity of up to 170. Their versatility, range, speed, and ability to operate in extreme weather provide mission flexibility throughout the Pacific.

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

U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Resolute Returns Home, Offloads Approximately \$93.2 Million Worth of Drugs in St. Petersburg



The crew of USCGC Resolute (WMEC 620) pose for a group photo during a drug offload at Coast Guard Sector St. Petersburg, July 17, 2025. Resolute deployed in support of Joint Interagency Task Force-South (JIATF-South), an interagency and international task force that conducts counter-illicit trafficking and security cooperation operations in the Caribbean Sea and Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Riley Perkofski)

[From Public Affairs Detachment Tampa Bay](#)

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. – The crew of U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Resolute offloaded nearly 12,600 pounds of cocaine, worth an estimated \$93.2 million, in their homeport of St. Petersburg, Thursday, following a 59-day patrol in the Eastern Pacific.

Resolute deployed in support of Joint Interagency Task Force-South (JIATF-South), a U.S. Department of Defense command that leverages the capabilities of U.S. Intelligence and Law Enforcement agencies, Allies and Partner Nations to detect, monitor, and support interdiction of illicit narcotics movements in the air and maritime domains throughout the Western hemisphere. During their patrol, Resolute's crew

worked to detect, deter, and intercept smuggling of illegal narcotics into the United States.

Resolute spent several weeks as the only U.S. Coast Guard cutter in the Eastern Pacific, playing a critical role in maintaining maritime domain awareness and operational coverage across a vast area, spanning over 1,000,000 square miles. Halfway through patrol, Resolute was joined by the cutters Escanaba, Tahoma, and Hamilton, providing broad, coordinated coverage across the major drug-smuggling vectors running from Ecuador towards the United States.

The crew expertly completed a total of six vessel interdictions, including a sailing vessel, one fishing vessel, and four go-fast style speedboats. Although several of the boats were determined to not be carrying illicit contraband at the time of interdiction, they provided excellent opportunities to hone Resolute's tracking and interception capabilities, often done in coordination with Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA) support from the sky. One notable case saw Resolute launching their primary interceptor, an Over-the-Horizon Cutter Boat (OTH), from nearly 70 nautical miles away to successfully intercept a high-speed go-fast vessel transiting south of the Galapagos.

During this time, Resolute's law enforcement team successfully interdicted a suspicious vessel and seized nearly 5,000 pounds of cocaine concealed within the vessel's cabin. Less than two weeks later, Resolute coordinated with an MPA and launched their OTH to pursue a go-fast vessel transiting in heavy seas. While in pursuit, the OTH experienced a critical structural failure, rendering the asset inoperable. Resolute was able to safely recover the disabled OTH, launched their second interceptor, and worked with the MPA to force the go-fast to jettison their load of contraband, over 3,700 pounds of cocaine. Less than 24 hours after that pursuit, Resolute interdicted yet another go-fast style vessel carrying over 3,900 pounds of cocaine. Together, these three successful

seizures prevented over \$93.2 million in illicit narcotics from reaching American streets.

The OTH casualty significantly reduced Resolute's interdiction capability and required a rapid solution in a logistically challenging area of operations. Demonstrating remarkable interagency cooperation and logistical agility, the crew of Resolute worked with JIATF-S, the Coast Guard's Surface Forces Logistics Center (SFLC), and U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Elizabeth City, to swiftly coordinate the replacement of the OTH. The replacement boat was airlifted to Panama City, Panama, aboard a U.S. Coast Guard HC-130J Super Hercules aircraft. Demanding precise timing and expert execution, the undertaking powerfully underscored the Coast Guard's dedication to maintaining a persistent and effective presence in its counter-narcotics mission. With the replacement OTH safely cradled aboard the cutter, Team Resolute was able to resume and successfully complete their patrol in the Eastern Pacific drug smuggling vectors.

"Yet again, the crew impressed me with their ability to achieve significant operational success and protect American interests while fighting every day to maintain a nearly 60-year-old ship in a challenging maritime environment," said Cmdr. Ian Starr, Resolute's commanding officer.

Resolute is a 210-foot, Reliance-class medium-endurance cutter. The cutter's primary missions are counter drug operations, migrant interdiction, and search and rescue in support of U.S. Coast Guard operations throughout the Western Hemisphere. 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](#).

These interdictions relate to Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces' (OCDETF), Strike Force Initiatives and designated

investigations. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level criminal organizations that threaten the United States using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach. Additional information about the OCDETF program can be found at <https://www.justice.gov/OCDETF>.

For 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](#).

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-USCG-

Coast Guard Cutter Reliance Returns Home to Florida After 60-day Patrol



Coast Guard Cutter Reliance (WMEC 615) small boat crew conducts operations in the Gulf of America, July 15, 2025. Reliance's crew completed a 60-day maritime border security patrol to deter illegal migration, fishing, and smuggling in the region. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Ensign Jack Steel)

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

PENSACOLA, Fla. – The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Reliance (WMEC 615) returned to their home port in Pensacola, Friday, following a 60-day maritime border security patrol in the Gulf of America.

Reliance's crew deployed to the Coast Guard Heartland District's area of responsibility in support of maritime safety, security and environmental protection, where crew members conducted extensive operations along the U.S. – Mexico maritime border to protect American sovereignty and territorial integrity. While at sea, the crew worked to deter illegal migration, fishing and smuggling while increasing awareness of all maritime activity in the region.

During the patrol, Reliance's crew visited Galveston, Texas, near where the cutter was constructed in 1964. While in Galveston, the crew hosted free public tours over Independence Day weekend, welcoming over 800 members of the public on board for an up-close look at life aboard a Coast Guard cutter while providing informational materials to prospective recruits.

Additionally, Reliance's crew was honored to receive a visit from Master Chief Petty Officer Michael Koch, command master chief, Coast Guard Heartland District, who recognized Reliance's very own Petty Officer 1st Class Cody Scott, a storekeeper on board, as the Heartland District 2024 Enlisted Person of the Year.

"I am incredibly proud and impressed by the Reliance crew's professionalism, resilience and skill, which they demonstrated throughout this patrol," said Cmdr. Kevin Robinson, commanding officer of Reliance. "Their unwavering dedication to protecting our nation's marine resources and deterring illegal activity at our maritime border reflects the very best of the Coast Guard. Their efforts not only safeguarded American lives and livelihoods but reinforced the Coast Guard's commitment to mission excellence in maritime safety and security."

Reliance is a 210-foot, Reliance-class medium-endurance cutter with a crew of 77. The cutter's primary missions include counter-narcotics and alien interdiction, enforcement of living marine resource laws, and search and rescue throughout the Western Hemisphere.

For 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](#).

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U.S. Coast Guard, USS Sampson Conduct Drug Interdiction in Eastern Pacific



PACIFIC OCEAN (July 10, 2025) Service members aboard the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Sampson (DDG 102) haul seized contraband to a secured space in the Pacific Watch mission, July 10, 2025. (U.S. Navy photo by MCSN Maliq Martin)

[Release From U.S. Pacific Fleet](#)

PACIFIC OCEAN – The U.S. Coast Guard, in coordination with the U.S. Navy destroyer USS Sampson (DDG 102), interdicted two suspected drug smugglers, and seized approximately 3,439 pounds of cocaine in international waters of the Eastern Pacific Ocean July 10.

While on routine patrol, the Sampson detected a go-fast vessel approximately 380 miles southwest of Acapulco, Mexico. The vessel displayed no indication of nationality and was operating in a known drug trafficking corridor. Its appearance and behavior aligned with known maritime smuggling trends, raising further suspicion.

Tactical control of the Sampson was transferred from U.S. Third Fleet to Coast Guard Southwest District for interdiction and apprehension authority. When the U.S. Navy MH-60R Sea Hawk helicopter, assigned to the "Scorpions" of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 49, launched from the Sampson and signaled its presence, the suspects aboard began jettisoning packages into the ocean. After warning shots were ineffective, the helicopter crew employed disabling fire, successfully stopping the vessel.

The Sampson launched two boarding teams, which recovered several of the jettisoned packages and took positive control of the suspect vessel. Coast Guard law enforcement personnel conducted a boarding and determined the vessel to be without nationality, granting authority for a full law enforcement boarding.

The two suspected drug smugglers were taken into custody, and field tests confirmed the presence of cocaine aboard the go-fast.

Due to the vessel's lack of tow points, absence of navigation lights, and poor seaworthiness, the Coast Guard deemed it a hazard to navigation and authorized the sinking of the vessel.

Tactical control of the USS Sampson has since been returned to U.S. Third Fleet for continued operations.

The Coast Guard routinely partners with U.S. Navy and interagency assets to counter transnational criminal organizations operating in the maritime domain.

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.

HASC Marks National Defense Authorization Bill

Edited by Richard R. Burgess, Senior Editor

Arlington, Va. – The House Armed Services Committee (HASC) filed the bill for the 2026 National Defense Authorization Act, the bill's leaders, Committee Chairman Sen. Roger Wicker (R-Miss.) and Sen. Jack Reed (D- R.I.) announced in a July 16 release.

Some announced naval-related provisions are listed below:

- Authorizes procurement for not more than five Columbia-class submarines.
- Authorizes a block buy of up to 15 Medium Landing Ships (LSM) to support testing and experimentation of the

Marine Littoral Regiment formation.

- Limits funding for TAGOS Ship unless the Secretary of the Navy provides information on the Navy's management of the program and an assessment of alternative solutions for the mission.
- Requires the Navy, in implementing the Medium Landing Ship and Light Replenishment Oiler programs, to utilize a Vessel Construction Manager (VCM) acquisition strategy, employing commercial design standards, construction practices, and an external entity to contract for construction.
- Exempts unmanned surface vessels and unmanned underwater vehicles from the Senior Technical Authority requirement and limits certain technical requirements from the Chief Engineer of the Naval Sea Systems Command without prior approval of the program manager.
- Modifies certification requirements of operational demonstrations for propulsion and electrical systems of large and medium unmanned surface vessels to increase industrial base participation.
- Limits funding to certain Navy-developed software for autonomy and command and control of unmanned surface vessels.
- Directs a briefing to the congressional defense committees to prioritize innovative, commercially driven solutions to deliver a scalable medium unmanned surface

vessel (MUSV) capability that meets the urgent needs of the fleet while fostering a competitive industrial base.

- Requires the Navy to move leadership for conventional surface ship maintenance to the Type Commanders, delegates decision-making authority to project managers, port engineers, and ship commanding officers, and directs a new contracting strategy that emphasizes workload stability and collaborative planning.
- Requires the Navy to investigate, and where feasible qualify and fully integrate, 23 advanced technologies and processes into Navy surface ship readiness.
- Supports amphibious warship production and readiness by limiting funding of the Secretary of the Navy and the Secretary of Defense if the 30-year shipbuilding plan does not comply with the statutory requirement for 31 amphibious ships, 15 defines “temporarily unavailable” within the 31 amphibious ship requirements, and requires a plan to maintain and extend the service lives of amphibious ships
- Requires DOD to develop a comprehensive plan to establish a government-controlled open mission systems computing environment for all variants and blocks of the F-35 aircraft operated by the DOD.
- Directs the Navy and Air Force to conduct a comparative study, independent of the air vehicle manufacturer, on the two propeller systems on the C-130J platform.

- Accelerates development of the nuclear-armed sea-launched cruise missile and creates a supplementary parallel pathway for rapid fielding.

- Strongly encourages the Secretary of Defense to invite the naval forces of Taiwan to the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise, as appropriate, and requires a notification and justification if the Secretary chooses not to do so.

- Requires the Navy to develop options for two sources of domestic solid rocket motors in the Navy Modular Missile program.

- Directs a briefing on opportunities for the Irregular Warfare Technical Support Directorate to complement innovation efforts by Naval Special Warfare Command for research, experimentation, and prototyping of unmanned maritime vessels.

- Authorizes personnel end strength for the active component at 344,600 for the Navy; 172,300 for the Marine Corps; 57,500 for the Navy Reserve; 33,600 for the Marine Corps Reserve; and 7,000 for the Coast Guard Reserve.

[Read the FY26 NDAA Bill Language.](#)

[Read the FY26 NDAA Executive Summary.](#)

Secretary Noem Terminates Contract for Two Coast Guard Offshore Patrol Cutters



From the U.S. Department of Transportation, July 11, 2025

"This Administration is unwavering in its commitment to the American taxpayer"

WASHINGTON – Today, United States Department of Homeland

Security Secretary Kristi Noem announced the partial termination of a wasteful shipbuilding contract to protect American taxpayer dollars while revolutionizing the United States Coast Guard for the 21st century.

“This Administration is unwavering in its commitment to the American taxpayer and to a strong, ready Coast Guard,” said a senior Homeland Security official. “We cannot allow critical shipbuilding projects to languish over budget and behind schedule. Our Coast Guard needs modern, capable vessels to safeguard our national and economic security, and we will ensure every dollar is spent wisely to achieve that mission. This action redirects resources to where they are most needed, ensuring the Coast Guard remains the finest, most-capable maritime service in the world.”

As part of that commitment, the Coast Guard is reviewing contracts which are failing to meet delivery agreements. An existing Offshore Patrol Cutter (OPC) contract with Eastern Shipbuilding Group (ESG) has been slow to deliver four OPCs, harming the U.S.’s defense capabilities and wasting American’s hard-earned money. In light of that, Secretary Noem partially canceled ESG’s contract for two out of the four OPCs expected from ESG in Panama City, Florida because it was not an effective use of taxpayer money.

ESG’s delivery of OPC 1 was initially due in June 2023 but will now be completed by the end of 2026 at the earliest. ESG missed its April 2024 delivery for OPC 2. The Coast Guard stopped work on OPCs 3 and 4 after ESG notified the service earlier this year they could not fulfill their contractual duty to deliver all four OPCs without unabsorbable loss. The money saved will be redirected to ensure it’s actually benefiting the Coast Guard.

Due to decades of neglect by previous Administrations and Congress, the Coast Guard has been underfunded, underequipped, and ignored for too long. President Donald Trump is ending

that era of neglect with the passage of the One Big Beautiful Bill and Force Design 2028 – Homeland’s plan to transform the Coast Guard into a more agile, capable fighting force. Now, a massive injection of nearly \$25 billion is coming to the Coast Guard.

The Coast Guard’s goal is to procure 25 OPCs – and that has not changed. The Coast Guard remains intent on acquiring and delivering the full OPC class as fast as possible to address the Nation’s security and safety needs.

The OPC fleet will complement the capabilities of the Service’s National Security Cutters, Fast Response Cutters and Polar Security Cutters as an essential element of the Nation’s layered maritime security strategy. They will be especially critical to the counter-drug and migrant interdiction missions along the southeast border.

U.S. Coast Guard, Mexican Navy Team to Disrupt Suspected Maritime Smuggling Venture



From U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Southwest Public Affairs, July 15, 2025

SAN DIEGO – The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Robert Ward (WPC 1130) and the Mexican Navy vessel ARM Revolución successfully collaborated to deter a suspected maritime smuggling attempt approximately 11 miles southwest of Point Loma, Sunday.

At approximately 4 p.m., the crew of Robert Ward detected a vessel transiting north from Mexican waters into U.S. territorial waters. As the cutter prepared to deploy its small

boat to conduct a boarding, the suspected smuggling vessel suddenly reversed course and fled south at a high rate of speed.

The Robert Ward pursued the vessel to the U.S.–Mexico Maritime Boundary Line. ARM Revolución was observed operating nearby, and Robert Ward relayed a description of the suspect vessel via VHF radio. Mexican Navy personnel aboard Revolución located, stopped and conducted a boarding of the approximately 24-foot center-console vessel with four people aboard within Mexican territorial waters.

The outcome of the boarding is unknown at this time; however, the coordinated effort between the U.S. Coast Guard and Mexican Navy successfully deterred a potential smuggling venture and underscored the value of international maritime cooperation in combating transnational criminal activity.