

Coast Guard Commissions USCGC John Witherspoon in Kodiak, Alaska



The Coast Guard Cutter John Witherspoon (WPC 1158) crew displays signal flags during the cutter's commissioning ceremony at Coast Guard Base Kodiak, Alaska, April 3, 2025. The commissioning marked the first of three fast response cutters scheduled to homeport in Alaska and was presided over by Rear Adm. Megan Dean, commander of the Seventeenth Coast Guard District. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Shannon Kearney)

From U.S. Coast Guard 17th District Public Affairs, Apr. 3 2025

KODIAK, Alaska – The Coast Guard commissioned its newest cutter, Coast Guard Cutter John Witherspoon (WPC 1158) for

official entry into its service fleet during a ceremony held in Kodiak, Thursday.

The ceremony was presided over by Rear Adm. Megan Dean, commander of the Seventeenth Coast Guard District. Members of the Witherspoon family were also in attendance, including the cutter's sponsor, Regina Nash, the daughter of John Witherspoon.

The Witherspoon is the 58th Fast Response Cutter (FRC) in the service and the first of three FRCs scheduled to be homeported at Coast Guard Base Kodiak. The crew of the Witherspoon will primarily serve in and around the Aleutian Islands, Bering Sea, Gulf of Alaska, and North Pacific Ocean. The cutter is designed for missions such as search and rescue; fishery patrols; drug and migrant interdiction; national defense; and ports, waterways, and coastal security.

The namesake for the cutter, Capt. John G. Witherspoon, enlisted in the Coast Guard in 1963 and commissioned as an ensign in 1971. During his career, Witherspoon rose to the rank of captain and served as the commanding officer on Coast Guard Cutters Mallow (WLB 396), Valiant (WMEC 621), and Dependable (WMEC 626).

During his tenure, Witherspoon became the first African American to command a medium endurance cutter and the first African American officer to command both afloat and ashore units. He earned both the Coast Guard Meritorious Service Medal and two Coast Guard Commendation Medals during his career.

In honor of his dedication to mentorship amongst Coast Guard personnel, the Coast Guard established the Captain John G. Witherspoon Inspirational Leadership Award, which is given to one active duty officer and one reserve officer each year who demonstrate Witherspoon's qualities of honor, respect, and devotion to duty.

The Coast Guard has ordered a total of 65 FRCs to replace the 1980s-era Island-class 110-foot patrol boats. The FRCs feature advanced command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance equipment; over-the-horizon cutter boat deployment to reach vessels of interest; and improved habitability and seakeeping.

The commissioning ceremony is a traditional milestone in the life of a cutter that marks its entry into active service and represents the cutter's readiness to conduct Coast Guard operations.

**U.S. Northern Command
Maritime Assets Support
Southern Border Operations**



Members of a U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment and U.S. Navy Sailors assigned to the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Spruance (DDG 111) conduct small boat operations in the Pacific Ocean, March 26, 2025. (U.S. Navy photo by MCSN Joey Sitter)

01 April 2025

PETERSON SPACE FORCE BASE, Colo. – U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) maritime assets, including the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers USS Spruance (DDG 111) and USS Gravelly (DDG 107), are actively supporting southern border operations at sea in partnership with the U.S. Coast Guard.

Spruance, deployed off the coast of Southern California, recently provided vectoring assistance to U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Cutter Forrest Rednour (WPC-1129) and Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations interceptor M857 in intercepting a suspect vessel, which resulted in 13 persons taken into custody. Spruance also recently rendered assistance to distressed people when a 35-foot panga was spotted taking on water in international waters, approximately 50 miles

southwest of San Diego. Spruance launched a 7-meter rigid hull inflatable boat crew and rescued 18 individuals, including one U.S. citizen. Watchstanders from Coast Guard Sector San Diego launched a USCG MH-60 Jayhawk, which transported the persons from Spruance to Coast Guard Sector San Diego.

“The US Navy and US Coast Guard partnership on display in the maritime domain highlights our commitment to national security priorities,” said Gen. Gregory Guillot, Commander, U.S. Northern Command. “USS Gravely is currently operating off the coast of Texas, while USS Spruance has been deployed to the coast of Southern California. Their capabilities and the dedication of their crews enable a robust response in combating illegal maritime activities into the United States such as drug and human trafficking. The message here is clear: our resolve to achieve operational control of the border is all-domain, coordinated, and absolute.”

Spruance and Gravely are each accompanied by an embedded U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET). Founded in 1982, Coast Guard LEDETs carry out a variety of maritime interdiction missions, including counter-piracy, military combat operations, alien migration interdiction, military force protection, counter terrorism, homeland security, and humanitarian response.

Spruance, Gravely and their embedded USCG LEDETs bring maritime capabilities to the USNORTHCOM area of responsibility in response to Presidential executive orders and a national emergency declaration and clarification of the military’s role in protecting the territorial integrity of the United States.

USNORTHCOM was named the DoD’s operational lead for the employment of U.S. military forces to carry out President Trump’s southern border Executive Orders. The combatant command continues to support critical DHS capabilities gaps.

Coast Guard Increases Presence Near Southwest Border Between U.S., Mexico



Maritime enforcement specialists from Tactical Law Enforcement Team South and U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Kimball (WMSL 756) crewmembers interdict a suspected drug smuggling vessel while patrolling the Eastern Pacific Ocean, March 4, 2025. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Max Hanfland)

U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Southwest, March 28, 2025

ALAMEDA, Calif. – The Coast Guard has increased its operational presence near the southwest border between U.S. and Mexico to enhance border security, immigration enforcement and to protect the territorial integrity of the United States.

Coast Guard District Eleven (D11) has expanded its posture from previous steady state counter-illicit-maritime-activities

to gain full operational control of the Southwest Maritime Border.

Since Jan. 21, D11 has tripled its forces operating on the southern border and coordinated Coast Guard surface and air presence with partners to detect, deter, and interdict alien and drug smuggling ventures. D11 diverted aircraft, cutters, small boats and crews under its operational control to the southern border, increasing the illegal alien apprehension rates by 75% with multiple smuggling attempts continuing to occur each night. The Coast Guard remains committed to a persistent operational presence to ensure border security and territorial integrity of the United States.

Irregular maritime migration aboard unseaworthy or overloaded vessels is always dangerous, and often deadly. D11 remains steadfast in its commitment to saving lives and discouraging anyone from taking to the sea in ways that are unsafe and illegal.

D11 has taken immediate actions to increase operational presence and focus to combat illegal fentanyl threatening the United States. In recent years, smuggling ventures across the southern border have been found to include bulk cocaine, methamphetamines, and fentanyl. This trafficking of illegal drugs poses an urgent threat to the American people, and the members of the Coast Guard do everything in their power to interdict drugs before they reach our shores and citizens. Accordingly, the Coast Guard has increased operations to interdict, seize, and disrupt the transshipment of cocaine and other bulk illicit drugs by sea. This includes operations in the Eastern Pacific and the Western Hemisphere Transit Zone, a major highway for illegal smuggling activity. Through sustained counter-narcotics operations, the Coast Guard has imposed billions of dollars of costs on the criminal networks, continuing the fight against corruption and violence fueled by narco-trafficking. Coast Guard law enforcement action and presence is critical to countering the destabilizing impacts

of transnational organized crime. Since January 21, the Coast Guard has interdicted more than 68,800 lbs of cocaine and 4,200 lbs of marijuana totaling nearly \$785 million in wholesale value.

These trends may change due to an influx of Coast Guard assets coupled with Department of Defense (DoD) resources and U.S. Border Patrol in a coordinated effort to protect our southern borders and maritime approaches. U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM) recently deployed two U.S. Navy warships to the southern border to protect the territorial integrity of the United States and support Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Coast Guard operations.

These U.S. Navy warships will operate in direct support of the Coast Guard and carry Coast Guard law enforcement teams that will enable them to conduct border security operations under Coast Guard authorities. As the Coast Guard hardens and sustains its operational posture, including the arrival of these U.S. Navy warships, it is fully integrated with DHS and DoD through NORTHCOM and U.S. Southern Command.

Additionally, D11 is assisting with the national transport of illegal aliens to designated locations in Texas and California, where DoD then transports the aliens internationally for repatriation. The Coast Guard continues to devote its forces from across the nation to support these flights. These combined surface and air operations demonstrate the Coast Guard's continued dedication to control, defend, and secure U.S. borders, territorial integrity, and ensure sovereignty.

D11 plays a crucial role in homeland security and economic prosperity by conducting border security and counter-drug operations to safeguard the integrity of the Southwest Border and its maritime approaches, effectively interdicting, seizing and disrupting drug and alien smuggling at sea.

Secretary of Defense Emphasizes Lethality, Deterrence on Guam



From Lt. Cmdr. Michelle Tucker, March 28, 2025

ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE, Guam – Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth arrived on Guam March 27 to meet with military and civilian leaders and speak with troops – his first visit to Guam since his January confirmation.

The visit was the second stop on Hegseth’s Pacific engagement tour, which began in Hawaii and will continue from Guam to the Philippines and Japan. Hegseth focused on strengthening alliances and bolstering warrior ethos among service members,

further strengthening the United States' deterrence posture in the region.

More than 600 service members from military commands across Guam gathered for a troop call at Andersen Air Force Base to kick off the visit. Hegseth praised them for their mission contributions, noting Guam's strategic location in the Indo-Pacific region, and charged them to increase lethality and readiness.

"What unites us is who we are and our purpose as Americans," Hegseth said. "We are in the business of warfighting. You are warfighters on behalf of our nation and we are [going to] make sure you have a military built and prepared for that fight ... American leadership ensures the free world is protected – to advance American interests and the interests of our allies."

The visit fell one day after the 80th anniversary of end of the Battle of Iwo Jima that occurred just 750 miles north northwest of Guam. During the troop call, Hegseth recognized a group of seven Iwo Jima veterans who traveled to Guam to attend commemoration events. He thanked them for their courage and fortitude, and for paving the way for Americans in the Pacific.

Commander, Joint Region Marianas Navy Rear Adm. Brent DeVore greeted Hegseth upon arrival along with other senior military leaders on island.

"The Secretary's visit underscored the Department of Defense's commitment to the security of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, as well as the entire Micronesia region's strategic importance to the Pacific," DeVore said. "We highlighted our efforts and contributions to strategic deterrence, demonstrating U.S. strength and daily preparedness – and tangible examples of ongoing work in cyber security, missile defense, our construction projects throughout Guam,

CNMI, and the COFA states, and infrastructure resilience.”

“We all emphasized the interconnectedness between the Department of Defense efforts and our local communities, in all we do,” he added.

During a military roundtable, Hegseth received briefs from installation commanders and key leaders throughout the region detailing capabilities and future growth on Guam. Commander, 36th Wing, Andersen Air Force Base Air Force Brig. Gen. Thomas Palenske stressed to Hegseth the importance of the work the team is doing on Guam.

“Andersen Air Force Base is incredibly vital to the mission in the Indo-Pacific,” Palenske said. “Our strategic location and the exceptional readiness of our personnel reinforce our commitment to deterrence and combat readiness in the region. The capabilities showcased and discussed during this visit not only empower our forces but also strengthen our alliances and ensure we stand ready to respond to any challenge.”

The “Island Knights” of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 25 flew Hegseth in an MH-60S Sea Hawk helicopter for an aerial tour of the island. During the tour, Naval Facilities Engineering Command Marianas Commanding Officer Navy Capt. Troy Brown briefed Hegseth on current and future construction and resiliency improvements on Guam including the Glass Breakwater, which was damaged during Typhoon Mawar. The breakwater is critical to harbor protection and the supply chain for the entire island.

Finally, Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Gov. Arnold Palacios, and Guam Rep. James Moylan met with Hegseth to discuss military-civilian partnership from a local perspective.

“Our goal is achieve peace through strength,” Hegseth said.

“By putting America first, that means working with partners and allies throughout the region, reestablishing deterrence and building capabilities right here. These islands are the tip of America’s spear in the Pacific.

“I want to be very clear to everyone in this room,” Hegseth continued. “... Any attack against these islands is an attack against the U.S. We recognize that, we understand that, and we are committed to that.”

U.S. Coast Guard cutter promotes regional security in the Pacific with Papua New Guinea



East New Britain Province Governor Michael Marum and members from the East New Britian Province government, Papua New Guinea pose with crew from the Coast Guard Cutter Midgett (WMSL 757) on the flight deck in Rabaul, Papua New Guinea March 17, 2025. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Jennifer Nilson)

From U.S. Coast Guard 14th District, March 26, 2025

RABAUL, Papua New Guinea – The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Midgett (WMSL 757) recently concluded its second port call in Papua New Guinea (PNG), following nine days of shiprider operations with representatives from the PNG Defence Force, PNG Customs Service, and PNG National Fisheries Authority.

Midgett was invited by the Papua New Guinea government to participate in the operation. The PNG shipriders led the mission by selecting vessels of interests and conducting boardings while the U.S. Coast Guard provided ship based and shoreside support. The successful shiprider operations

reinforced the importance of deepening and expanding strong bilateral relationships.

During the nine-day operation, Midgett facilitated six at-sea inspections within the PNG Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) under the PNG-U.S. bilateral agreement. The U.S Coast Guard and PNG's bilateral maritime law enforcement agreements enhance PNG sovereignty with the capacity to enforce PNG's maritime laws through shared information exchanges and joint patrols that deter illegal activities and malign behavior in PNG's EEZ.

While in Rabaul, Midgett hosted a key leadership engagement with the East New Britain Governor, Michael Marum, and PNG fisheries stakeholders. During the engagement, members of Midgett and PNG representatives participated in roundtable discussions focused on PNG-U.S. bilateral agreements and security within the PNG EEZ and received a tour of the cutter.

Midgett crewmembers visited a local school to participate in sports and seamanship activities. Midgett also hosted students on board, allowing students to learn about shipboard life and participated in firefighting training.

Commissioned in 2019 and homeported in Honolulu, Midgett is the eighth Legend-class National Security Cutter. At 418-feet, these cutters are the largest and most capable in the U.S. Coast Guard fleet. Equipped with advanced technology, they are ideally suited to support a wide range of missions, including maritime security, law enforcement, and search and rescue operations.

Bollinger Shipyards Gets Coast Guard Contract Modification for Polar Security Cutter Program



Since acquiring the facilities in 2022, Bollinger has nearly tripled its Mississippi production workforce

From Bollinger Shipyards, March 25, 2025

PASCAGOULA, Miss. – Tuesday, March 25, 2025 – Bollinger Shipyards announced today it has received a \$951.6 million Fixed-Price-Incentive-Firm Target (FPIF) contract modification from the United States Coast Guard, advancing the Detail Design and Construction phase of the Polar Security Cutter (PSC) Program. This milestone underscores Bollinger’s integral role in strengthening America’s maritime presence and

operational capabilities in the Arctic.

“Securing this contract modification has truly been a herculean effort and underscores the incredible trust the U.S. Government has placed in Bollinger to build and deliver the first heavy polar icebreaker in half a century,” said Ben Bordelon, President and CEO of Bollinger Shipyards. “We wouldn’t be in the solid position we’re in today without the leadership and the tireless efforts of the entire team at Bollinger Mississippi Shipbuilding. Their hard work and dedication have successfully put the PSC program on a strong path forward after a rocky start under the previous, foreign-owned builder. We now look forward to receiving the green light to begin full production.”

Bordelon also expressed gratitude for the role of national and state leadership in moving this program forward.

“I am also grateful for the leadership of President Trump and his Administration in recognizing the urgent need for American-made icebreakers. Because of his foresight and commitment to rebuilding America’s shipbuilding capabilities, this historic project is now moving forward.”

Bordelon also acknowledged Mississippi’s leadership for championing the PSC Program and state as a dominant force in shipbuilding.

“I also want to thank Governor Reeves and Mississippi’s Congressional Delegation for their leadership and support, especially as we leverage ongoing state and local investments to ensure Bollinger Mississippi remains the premier example of American shipbuilding.”

“As the Arctic grows as an arena of great power competition, the United States will require far more icebreaking capability from the U.S. Coast Guard to defend our interests in the region. Today’s award is a testament to the good work that Bollinger continues to do on the Polar Security Cutter program

and the growing urgency with which their platforms are needed to boost our national defense,” said U.S. Sen. Roger Wicker (R-MS), Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. “The Mississippi Gulf Coast will not only benefit from even more national security-focused quality jobs and economic development, but it will also continue to be a national player and powerhouse in mission-critical innovation and military capability.”

“Mississippi continues to prove its status as the premier destination for American shipbuilding—driving both national defense and commercial maritime strength,” said U.S. Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-MS). “This milestone not only reinforces the Gulf Coast’s strategic importance, but it also reflects the value of returning critical shipbuilding programs to experienced, American-owned hands. Under Bollinger Shipyards’ strong leadership and investment, a once-stalled program will move forward with renewed urgency. I fully support this effort, which brings more high-quality jobs to Mississippi and ensures the Coast Guard is able to meet the growing challenges in the Arctic and beyond.”

Bollinger’s continued investment and growth on the Mississippi Gulf Coast reflect the skills, strength and talent of Mississippi’s workforce,” said Mississippi Governor Tate Reeves. “This announcement reinforces Mississippi’s pivotal role in American shipbuilding and solidifies Mississippi’s reputation as a national leader in maritime innovation and excellence.”

“Bollinger Mississippi Shipyards has a strong track record in American shipbuilding, and their role in the Polar Security Cutter program is another important step. This historic milestone strengthens national security, supports the domestic shipbuilding workforce, and enhances our Arctic presence. Ensuring the U.S. Coast Guard has the tools it needs is critical, and I look forward to seeing this project move forward,” said U.S. Rep. Mike Ezell (R-MS-04).

As Bollinger continues to enhance its operations in Mississippi into world-class shipyards, the company remains committed to making strategic investments to modernize and expand its capabilities. Additionally, the contract modification ensures Bollinger continues to provide its workforce with industry-leading wages throughout the life of the PSC program. Since acquiring foreign-owned VT Halter in November 2022, Bollinger has made a significant economic impact in the state through targeted investments and workforce expansion. To date, Bollinger has invested \$76 million across its Mississippi facilities, including Bollinger Mississippi Shipbuilding (BMS), Bollinger Mississippi Repair (BMR), Bollinger Gulfport Shipyard (BGS), and CHAND Gulf Coast.

Since the acquisition in 2022, Bollinger has increased its Mississippi workforce by over 61%, with production roles at BMS alone increasing by more than 178%. These numbers are expected to rise as the program reaches full production over the coming years. A key driver of this growth has been Bollinger's innovative Bootcamp workforce development programs, which continue to strengthen the skilled labor pipeline.

"Our investment in developing the next generation of skilled American workers not only strengthens our competitive edge in the shipbuilding industry but also underscores our commitment to fostering economic growth and American innovation," added Bordelon. "We are committed to providing high-quality careers that positively impact the families and communities we support along Mississippi's Gulf coast."

This contract modification primarily supports operations at Bollinger Mississippi Shipbuilding, with additional project contributions from facilities located in Massachusetts, Illinois, Virginia, Georgia, Louisiana, and other regions. Completion of the first Polar Security Cutter is anticipated by May 2030.

The Polar Security Cutter will provide the United States with enhanced operational capability in polar regions, playing a critical role in safeguarding national security, economic stability, and supporting vital maritime and commercial interests.

USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul Departs for First Deployment



The Freedom-variant littoral combat ship USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul (LCS 21), along with the “Valkyries” of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 50 Detachment 3 and embarked U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment, departed from Naval Station Mayport March 26, beginning her maiden

deployment to support U.S. 4th Fleet area of operations.
From Littoral Combat Ship Squadron Two, 26 March 2025

MAYPORT, Fla. – The Freedom-variant littoral combat ship USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul (LCS 21), along with the “Valkyries” of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 50 Detachment 3 and embarked U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment, departed from Naval Station Mayport March 26, beginning its first deployment to support U.S. 4th Fleet area of operations.

USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul’s primary mission will be to support counter-illicit drug trafficking in the Caribbean. Minneapolis-Saint Paul operations will involve practical exercises and exchanges with partner nations, supporting U.S. 4th Fleet interoperability, and reinforcing the U.S. position as the regional partner of choice.

Among the key accomplishments, USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul certified in Visit, Board, Search, and Seizure (VBSS) operations, enabling the ship to conduct Maritime Interdiction Operations and support for the embarked Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment.

This capability is vital for countering illicit drug trafficking and ensuring the safety of international waters. In addition, the ship embarked its aviation detachment, which includes the MH-60 R helicopter. This addition significantly enhances the ship’s ability to conduct reconnaissance, track contacts of interest, and engage in maritime interdiction operations. The MH-60 R will serve as the ship’s eyes in the sky, providing real-time intelligence and provide capabilities to effectively conduct our mission.

“I have watched this crew tackle a challenging and condensed schedule to ensure we are prepared for our [first] deployment to the 4th Fleet. We have overcome every obstacle in our path and have demonstrated that we are a resilient team ready to

execute our mission,” said Cmdr. Steven Fresse, USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul’s commanding officer. “This will be USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul’s first deployment, as well as the first for many of my crew members. However, we are eager to accomplish the mission we have been rigorously training for. I am very proud of this crew, and I am confident they will continue to exceed my expectations.”

The crew also completed multiple certifications in a range of critical warfare areas, including Air Warfare, Electronic Warfare, Intelligence, Surface Warfare, Cyber Warfare, and Search and Rescue. These certifications showcase the team’s proficiency across multiple domains, proving that they are well-equipped and prepared to handle the complex and multifaceted nature of modern naval operations. This remarkable achievement demonstrates that the Minneapolis Saint Paul is not only combat-ready but also adaptable to a wide spectrum of missions. All of which resulted in the ship exiting the basic phase and entering the advanced phase of the ship’s life cycle.

Deploying an LCS to the region aims to demonstrate the U.S. commitment to international cooperation, security, freedom and prosperity. The ship’s size, speed, and agility make LCS ideal for narcotics interdictions, partner engagements and port access.

“It has been an honor to watch this crew adjust and adapt to every task we have had to accomplish as a team and get prepared for our first deployment”, said Master Chief Ariel Ampier, USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul’s command master chief. “I am excited to be a part of a team that has been diligently working through every phase to maintain the readiness and success of this ship!”

LCS are a fast, agile, mission-focused platform designed to operate in near-shore environments defeat 21st-century coastal

threats. The LCS is capable of supporting forward presence, maritime security, sea control, and deterrence.

USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul will operationally be assigned to U.S. 4th Fleet. It is homeported in Mayport, Florida and assigned to Littoral Combat Ship Squadron 2.

DON Authorizes Attendance at Sea-Air-Space 2025 for Military, Civilian Personnel



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 25, 2025

ARLINGTON, Va. – Travel for the Navy League's Sea-Air-Space

Symposium has been authorized for all Department of Navy military speakers, moderators, and panelists, and attendance at the event has been approved for all National Capital Region (local) Navy federal civilian employees and uniformed military personnel.

A memo released by acting Under Secretary of the Navy Terrence Emmert, dated 20 March 2025, says, "I approve the Department of the Navy's attendance at the Navy League's Sea-Air-Space Symposium, 6-9 April 2025, at National Harbor, Maryland."

Sea-Air-Space, the nation's largest maritime national security symposium, is critical, as it "provides a platform for the professional development of Department of the Navy personnel on the latest developments in naval warfare, as well as an opportunity for Navy engagement with representatives from a broad cross-section of government, industry, academia, and the international community." (GENADMIN released 24 MARCH 2025).

The Navy League of the United States, the host for Sea-Air-Space, is offering federal active-duty and civilian employees admission and transportation to the event, as well as one complimentary meal event. The Navy League also offers them discounted parking and meals for purchase at a discounted rate. Local bus services to and from the Gaylord National Harbor is also available for all federal civilian employees and uniformed military. Please see website, www.seaairspace.org for further details. Attendees not opting for these services are responsible for their own commuting costs to the event.

Newly confirmed 79th Secretary of the Navy, the Honorable John C. Phelan, will address Sea-Air-Space attendees on his priorities for the Department, including ways to revitalize U.S. shipbuilding, strengthen warfighting culture, and recruit America's best and brightest. Top speakers also include acting Commandant of the United States Coast Guard Admiral Kevin Lunday, Acting Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Jim Kilby,

and Commandant of the Marine Corps General Eric Smith.

To register for Sea-Air-Space, click [here](#).

Coast Guard Station Fort Lauderdale Interdicts Vessel With Over \$6M In Illicit Narcotics



A U.S. Coast Guard Station Fort Lauderdale law enforcement

boat crew seized approximately 550 pounds of cocaine, worth an estimated \$6.3 million, from a suspected smuggling venture near Port Everglades, March 22, 2025. (U.S. Coast Guard photo)

Coast Guard Station Fort Lauderdale interdicts vessel with over \$6 million in illicit narcotics

U.S. Coast Guard 7th District, March 24, 2025

MIAMI – A U.S. Coast Guard Station Fort Lauderdale law enforcement boat crew seized approximately 550 pounds of cocaine, worth an estimated \$6.3 million, from a suspected drug smuggling venture near Port Everglades, Saturday.

The law enforcement crew took custody of the 36-foot vessel, Bella Vita, and transferred the suspected smuggler to Coast Guard Investigative Service agents ashore to face federal prosecution.

“Protecting our maritime borders from illicit drug trafficking and transnational criminal organizations remains one of our highest priorities,” said Lt. Daniel Sunday, Coast Guard Sector Miami’s deputy enforcement chief. “The Coast Guard and our federal, state and local law enforcement partners remain vigilant in our shared efforts to keep our maritime borders safe by preventing illicit narcotics from reaching our communities.”

Law enforcement partners from Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations Southeast Region, Broward County Sheriff’s Office, and Palm Beach Sheriff’s Office assisted in the detection and interdiction.

SECDEF Hegseth Tours General Atomics Manufacturing Facility



Pictured L to R: Senator Roger Wicker (R-Miss), Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth, GA-EMS Vice President of Manufacturing Pete Rinaldi, GA-EMS President Scott Forney

Visit Emphasizes Directive to Expand Domestic Defense Industrial Base

From General Atomics Electromagnetic Systems

SAN DIEGO – 24 Mar 2025 – General Atomics Electromagnetic Systems (GA-EMS) hosted U.S. Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth at its Manufacturing Center of Excellence in Tupelo, MS at the invitation of U.S. Senator Roger Wicker (R-Miss), the Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. The visit punctuates Secretary Hegseth’s commitment to re-invigorate and expand the nation’s defense industrial base to rapidly deploy weapons technologies to support an expanding range of national security initiatives.

During his visit, Secretary Hegseth was briefed on GA-EMS' manufacturing capabilities and expansive portfolio, with a focus on the company's weapons systems including hypersonics, missiles and space-based tracking payloads; all of which facilitate a comprehensive, layered defense shield for early detection and rapid response in support of Golden Dome for America.

"It was great to host Secretary Hegseth in Mississippi as we engaged with some of our state's best-in-class defense capabilities, including at General Atomics," Chairman Wicker said. "The General Atomics facility in Tupelo has a nationally competitive workforce that conducts cutting-edge work in advanced military technologies. As Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, I will always showcase Mississippi's leading contributions for the warfighter and work to expand our state's growing role in the defense industrial base."

With over 750,000 square feet of manufacturing facilities located in Tupelo, Scott Forney, president of GA-EMS noted during the tour that the company's commitment to and investment in research and development, its highly trained workforce, and its production capacity directly aligns with the Secretary of Defense's stated goal of advancing "made in the U.S." manufacturing capability to ensure the delivery of highly-capable, cost-effective weapons, specifically missile defense and hypersonics, to support the warfighter and advance America's national interests. GA-EMS also has manufacturing facilities in Iuka, MS with strategic access to the Tennessee – Tombigbee Waterway and Gulf of America to facilitate the expansion of shipyard capacity to meet shipbuilding demand.

General Atomics was honored to host the Secretary of Defense and remains a committed partner to helping the Department of Defense deliver the most transformational and effective weapons to the warfighter at scale to support U.S. military operations.