

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.

Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk Returns Home After 70-day, Counter-Drug Patrol in the Eastern Pacific Ocean



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

KEY WEST, Fla. – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk (WMEC 913) returned to their home port in Key West, March 16, following a 70-day deployment to the Eastern Pacific Ocean.

Mohawk deployed in support of Joint Interagency Task Force – South (JIATF-S) and Operation Martillo, where crew members conducted counter-drug missions in the Coast Guard Eleventh District’s area of responsibility. While at sea, Mohawk’s crew

successfully contributed to protecting their fellow Americans by countering transnational criminal organizations and preventing dangerous and illegal narcotics from reaching the United States. The crew worked side by side with Coast Guard units, embarked law enforcement personnel from the Tactical Law Enforcement Team Pacific (PACTACLET) and the Costa Rican Coast Guard.

Throughout the deployment, crew members interdicted three suspected drug smuggling vessels and apprehended six suspected drug smugglers. Crew members seized nearly 8,200 pounds of cocaine and 330 pounds of marijuana.

While on patrol, Mohawk's crew interdicted a sailing vessel suspected of illicit activity. Mohawk's boarding team embarked the vessel and subsequently located contraband, seizing 637 pounds of cocaine and detained the crew.

Additionally, the crew of Mohawk coordinated with Coast Guard Cutter James (WMSL 754) and Coast Guard Cutter Stone (WMSL 758) to deter narcotics trafficking in the region. Notably, Mohawk's crew jointly interdicted a go-fast style vessel with James' crew off the coast of Colombia, seizing more than 5,900 pounds of cocaine. Coordinating with a maritime patrol aircraft, Mohawk's pursuit caused the go-fast vessel to jettison bails of cocaine overboard for later recovery. James' crew proceeded to stop the go-fast vessel and apprehend three suspected narcotics smugglers for future prosecution.

Mohawk's crew also had the opportunity to operate with the Costa Rican Coast Guard Grupo de Operaciones Policiales Especiales (GOPES), a Costa Rican special police operations unit. Mohawk identified a fishing vessel suspected of drug smuggling and proceeded to board it. The boarding team discovered 1,600 pounds of cocaine and 330 pounds of marijuana. Following the boarding, the three suspected drug smugglers, fishing vessel and contraband were transferred to GOPES for prosecution in Costa Rica. This joint operation

underscores the ongoing U.S. commitment to regional stability and support for partner nation efforts to combat the destabilizing effects caused by transnational criminal organizations.

During a visit in Golfito, Costa Rica, Mohawk's crew and embarked PACTACLET personnel exchanged best practices with GOPES and shared law enforcement techniques and other tactics for interdicting illicit drug ventures at sea. Mohawk crew members provided a tour of the cutter as well and exchanged coins and patches with their Costa Rican counterparts. In addition, Mohawk crew members volunteered their free time to clean, complete yard work and undertake preservation projects at Hogar de Ancianos de Golfito, a local retirement home.

Furthermore, the Mohawk's crew participated in training evolutions with James' embarked Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron aviation detachment and MH-65 Dolphin helicopter. This training served to increase competency for shipboard-helicopter operations and bolstered the tactical relationship between deployed units operating together in the Eastern Pacific.

"I am extremely proud of our accomplishments during this deployment," said Cmdr. David Ratner, commanding officer of Mohawk. "The Mohawk crew, with the support of embarked law enforcement personnel from the Pacific Tactical Law Enforcement Team, displayed toughness and grit to effectively fight back against destabilizing transnational criminal organizations in the Eastern Pacific and kept nearly 8,200 pounds of cocaine and 330 pounds of marijuana from reaching the United States."

Based in San Diego, California, PACTACLET personnel provide counter-narcotic law enforcement capabilities and support the interdiction, apprehension and processing of suspected drug smugglers. PACTACLET members are skilled in law enforcement boarding procedures at sea and are critical for mission

execution.

Launched Jan. 15, 2012, Operation Martillo, Spanish for “Hammer,” is a counter-narcotic campaign support by U.S. Southern Command and led JIATF-S. By leveraging interoperability between numerous domestic and international partnerships, the task force strives to disrupt and dismantle transnational criminal organizations by fighting crime and defunding their illicit ventures.

Mohawk is a 270-foot, Famous-class medium endurance cutter and was commissioned in 1991. The cutter’s primary missions are counter-drug and migrant interdiction operations, enforcement of federal fishery laws as well as search and rescue in support of Coast Guard operations throughout the Western Hemisphere.

Mohawk falls under the command of U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area, which is based in Portsmouth, Virginia. U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area oversees all Coast Guard operations east of the Rocky Mountains to the Arabian Gulf. In addition to surge operations, they also allocate ships to deploy to the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific to combat transnational organized crime and illicit maritime activity.

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

Coast Guard Cutter Naushon

Decommissioned After Nearly 40 Years of Service



From U.S. Coast Guard 17th District, March 21, 2025

ANCHORAGE, Alaska – The Coast Guard decommissioned Coast Guard Cutter Naushon (WPB 1311) during a ceremony in Homer, Friday.

Rear Adm. Megan Dean, the commander of Coast Guard District 17, presided over the ceremony honoring the nearly 40 years of service Naushon and its crews provided to the nation.

Commissioned on October 3rd, 1986, Naushon was the 11th Island-Class cutter to join the fleet.

Naushon has been stationed in Homer since 2016 and has since responded to over 50 search-and-rescue cases and completed nearly 900 law enforcement sorties.

Naushon is a 110-foot, Island-Class patrol boat, a multi-

mission platform that conducted operations to support search and rescue response, marine environmental protection, and national defense.

The Coast Guard is replacing the aging Island-Class patrol boats with Sentinel-Class Fast Response Cutters (FRCs) which feature enhanced capability to meet service needs. There are currently four FRC's homeported in Alaska, with two more scheduled for delivery in the near future.

"I'm incredibly proud of the partnerships we've built and the positive impact Naushon and its crew have had on the local community and economy," said Lt. Markham Ross, the commanding officer of Naushon. "I'm honored to have had the opportunity to write the final chapter in Naushon's storied history, and I'm blessed to have served the people of Alaska with the finest crew and cutter in the fleet."

CMF's Combined Task Force 150 and U.S. Coast Guard Integration Key in Recent Drug Seizure



ARABIAN SEA (March 23, 2025) Illegal narcotics seized from a stateless vessel are stacked on the deck of the U.S. Coast Guard Sentinel-class fast response cutter USCGC Emlen Tunnell (WPC 1145) in the Arabian Sea. (Photo by U.S. Coast Guard)
By Commander U.S. Naval Forces Central Command Public Affairs | March 24, 2025

MANAMA, Bahrain – A U.S. Coast Guard fast-response cutter, working in direct support of New Zealand-led Combined Task Force (CTF) 150 of Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), seized 260 kilograms of illegal narcotics from a vessel in the Arabian Sea, March 19.

The Sentinel-class fast-response cutter USCGC Emlen Tunnell's (WPC-1145) boarding team discovered and seized 200kg of methamphetamine and 60kg of heroin from the vessel. After weighing and documenting the haul, the crew properly disposed of the narcotics.

Royal New Zealand Navy Capt. Dave Barr, CTF 150 deputy commander, said this drug bust is a testament to the tenacity and expert seamanship of the Coastguardsmen on the Emlen Tunnell operating so far off the coast in challenging waters, and the ability to seamlessly integrate with the multinational CTF 150 staff.

“The waters in this area are full of legitimate fishing and trading vessels so it’s important to get this part right and accurately identify those vessels that are likely to be carrying narcotics,” said Barr. “A big part of our mission is to deter smugglers, so that those legitimate operators can continue to navigate freely to carry out their business.”

This interdiction is part of ongoing efforts to combat illicit drug trafficking in international waters and demonstrates the CMF’s continued commitment to safeguarding maritime security against malign non-state actors.

Emlen Tunnell is forward deployed to Bahrain. The fast response cutter is part of a contingent of U.S. Coast Guard ships operating in the region under Patrol Forces Southwest Asia (PATFORSWA). PATFORSWA deploys Coast Guard personnel and ships alongside U.S. and regional naval forces throughout the Middle East.

CTF 150 is one of five task forces under CMF, the world’s largest international naval partnership. CTF 150’s mission is to deter and disrupt the ability of non-state actors to move weapons, drugs and other illicit substances in the Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Oman.

Combined Maritime Forces is a 46-nation naval partnership upholding the international rules-based order by promoting security and stability across 3.2 million square miles of water encompassing some of the world’s most important shipping lanes.

Coast Guard offloads over \$517.5 million in illicit drugs interdicted in Eastern Pacific Ocean



Crew members from USCGC Stone (WMSL-758) stand at parade rest in front of interdicted narcotics at Port Everglades, Florida, Mar. 20, 2025. The Stone's crew secured the illegal drugs from 14 interdictions in the international waters of the Eastern Pacific. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class James Hague)

From U.S. Coast Guard 7th District, March 20, 2025

Editor's Note: Click the desired date for b-roll showing specific cases from [Jan. 30](#), [Jan. 31](#), [Feb. 19](#) & [March 10](#).

MIAMI – The crew of U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Stone offloaded approximately 45,600 pounds of illicit narcotics worth more than \$517.5 million at Port Everglades, Thursday.

The seized contraband was the result of 14 interdictions in international waters of the Eastern Pacific Ocean, and 35 suspected smugglers were transferred ashore to face federal prosecution in U.S. courts.

“You heard it said before that the Coast Guard’s national security cutters are game changers in the counter-drug mission, but they still require a crew of men and women willing to serve on or over the sea, and place themselves in harm’s way,” said Capt. Jonathan Carter, commanding officer of Stone. “I’m incredibly proud of our crew’s performance and their efforts to combat narco-terrorism this deployment. In one exceptional case, the crew interdicted four go-fast vessels in 15 minutes, seizing nearly 11,000 pounds of cocaine that will never be mixed with deadly fentanyl to threaten American lives here at home.”

On Dec. 21, Stone’s embarked aircrew from Coast Guard Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron detected a suspicious vessel in international waters approximately 321 miles west of Ecuador. Stone’s boarding team interdicted the go-fast vessel, apprehended three suspected smugglers and seized over 1,630 pounds of cocaine.

On Dec. 22, a maritime patrol Dash-8 aircrew detected a suspicious vessel in international waters approximately 180 miles southeast of the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador. Stone’s embarked HITRON aircrew and boarding team interdicted the low-profile go-fast vessel, apprehended three suspected smugglers and seized approximately 12,220 pounds of cocaine.

On Jan. 9, a maritime patrol Dash-8 aircrew detected a suspicious vessel in international waters approximately 148 miles west of Salinas, Ecuador. Stone’s embarked HITRON

aircrew and boarding team interdicted the go-fast vessel, apprehended three suspected smugglers and seized approximately 2,370 pounds of cocaine.

On Jan. 28, Stone's embarked [unmanned aircraft system \(drone\)](#) crew detected a suspicious vessel in international waters approximately 459 miles south of Manzanillo, Mexico. Stone's boarding team interdicted the vessel, apprehended five suspected smugglers and seized approximately 3,885 pounds of cocaine.

On Jan. 30, Stone's embarked UAS crew detected a suspicious vessel in international waters approximately 715 miles off Mexico. Stone's boarding team interdicted the vessel, apprehended two suspected smugglers and seized approximately 3,800 pounds of cocaine.

On Jan. 31, Stone's embarked UAS crew detected a suspicious vessel in international waters approximately 630 miles off Mexico. Stone's embarked HITRON aircrew employed airborne use of force tactics to compel the non-compliant vessel to stop, and the boarding team apprehended three suspected smugglers and seized more than 2,565 pounds of cocaine.

On Feb. 12, Stone's embarked UAS crew detected a suspicious vessel in international waters approximately 655 miles south of Mexico. Stone's embarked HITRON aircrew employed airborne use of force tactics to compel the non-compliant vessel to stop, and the boarding team apprehended three suspected smugglers and seized more than 3,640 pounds of cocaine.

On Feb. 18, [Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk](#)'s crew detected and boarded a sailing vessel approximately 70 miles northwest of Isla Malpelo, Colombia. Mohawk's boarding team apprehended three suspected smugglers and seized approximately 635 pounds of cocaine.

On Feb. 19, Stone's embarked UAS crew detected multiple suspicious vessels approximately 110 miles south of the

Galapagos Islands, Ecuador. Stone's embarked HITRON aircrew employed airborne use of force tactics to compel the non-compliant vessels to stop, and their boarding teams interdicted four go-fast vessels, apprehending eight suspected smugglers and seizing approximately 10,885 pounds of cocaine.

On Feb. 25, Mohawk's crew detected and interdicted a suspicious vessel approximately 230 miles south of Costa Rica. Mohawk's boarding team apprehended three suspected smugglers and seized approximately 1,600 pounds of cocaine and 330 pounds of marijuana. Costa Rican authorities took custody of the fishing vessel, suspects and bulk contraband for prosecution.

On March 10, Stone's embarked HITRON aircrew detected a suspicious vessel in international waters approximately 270 miles southeast of the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador. The HITRON aircrew employed airborne use of force tactics to compel the vessel to stop, and Stone's boarding team interdicted the go-fast vessel, apprehending two suspected smugglers and seizing approximately 3,980 pounds of cocaine. The transfer of custody from this case will occur at a later date.

"The fight against drug trafficking and transnational criminal organizations doesn't begin at our U.S. maritime borders," said Cmdr. David Ratner, commanding officer of Mohawk. "Our efforts to defend Americans at home begins with denying drug traffickers access to maritime routes and disrupting the flow far out at sea where we operate alongside interagency and strategic regional partners like Costa Rica."

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

[U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Stone \(WMSL 758\)](#)

[U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk \(WMEC 913\)](#)

U.S. Coast Guard Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron

(HITRON) Jacksonville

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

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

[Eleventh Coast Guard District](#)

Detecting and interdicting illicit drug traffickers on the high seas involves significant interagency and international coordination. Joint Interagency Task Force-South, in Key West, conducts the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs. Once an interdiction becomes imminent, the law enforcement phase of the operation begins, and control of the operation shifts to the U.S. Coast Guard for the interdiction and apprehension phases. Interdictions in the Eastern Pacific Ocean are performed by members of the U.S. Coast Guard under the authority and control of the Eleventh Coast Guard District, headquartered in Alameda, California.

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

Each of these interdictions initiate criminal investigations by federal law enforcement partners. Several were tied to the transnational criminal organizations responsible. Drug evidence from these cases is linked to cartels recently designated as foreign terrorist organizations by the U.S. government, including Sinaloa and Cartel Jalisco Nueva Generación. These interdictions denied those criminal organizations more than half a billion dollars and provide critical evidence for their total elimination.

USCGC Stone is one of four 418-foot Legend-class national security cutters homeported in Charleston, South Carolina

under [U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area Command](#). The U.S. Coast Guard Maritime Law Enforcement Academy where Coast Guard boarding officers train to conduct these missions, in Charleston, celebrated its 20th anniversary on March 14.

For breaking news, follow us on [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#). For additional information, find us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Instagram](#).

Make a difference on land, at sea or in the air with the Coast Guard. Visit [GoCoastGuard.com](#) to learn more about active duty and reserve, officer and enlisted opportunities. Information on how to apply to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy can be [found here](#).

Coast Guard Achieves Major Milestone in Drug Interdiction, Border Control Operations



ATLANTIC OCEAN (March 22, 2024) – The Ticonderoga-class guided missile cruiser USS Leyte Gulf (CG 55), embarked U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) and Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 50 work together to intercept a self-propelled semi-submersible drug smuggling vessel (SPSS), in the Atlantic Ocean, March 22, 2024. (U.S. Coast Guard Courtesy Photo/Released)

From U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, March 18, 2025

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Coast Guard achieved a major milestone this week, interdicting over 80,000 pounds of illicit drugs since Jan. 21, being smuggled by drug cartels in an attempt to reach the U.S.

The Coast Guard's achievement comes as U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM) deployed two U.S. Navy warships to the southern border to 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 shift to Coast Guard control during interdiction operations. 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 the Department of Defense (DoD) through NORTHCOM and U.S. Southern Command.

“The Coast Guard leads the U.S. government’s efforts to control, secure and defend the nation’s borders and maritime approaches, starting at the U.S. southern border where the president has declared a national emergency,” said Adm. Kevin Lunday, acting Coast Guard commandant. “We are now leveraging U.S. Navy capabilities with Coast Guard teams aboard to augment our forces off Southern California and Texas. We are grateful for this crucial support from our teammates at NORTHCOM and the U.S. Navy. These Navy ships provide unique capability to complement U.S. Coast Guard operations to achieve 100% operational control of the border.”

Since Jan. 21, the Coast Guard has tripled its forces operating on the southern border.

Later this week, the Coast Guard will further recognize its interdiction efforts with a record-setting drug offload by Coast Guard Cutter Stone (WMSL 758). Additional details will be provided via media advisory.

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

Crowley and Naturgy Deploy First U.S. LNG Carrier, American Energy, to Serve Puerto Rico

From Crowley, March 18, 2025

Crowley has raised the U.S. flag on American Energy, commencing operations of the first domestic liquefied natural gas (LNG) carrier to transport U.S.-sourced natural gas to Puerto Rico. The milestone will provide Puerto Rico with increased access to the reliable supply of U.S.-produced LNG, helping address the island's ongoing power demands.

Crowley and Naturgy have entered into a multi-year agreement that provides for the regular delivery of the U.S. mainland-sourced LNG to Naturgy's operating facility in Penuelas, Puerto Rico.

The Crowley-owned carrier American Energy, which has capacity of 130,400 cubic meters (34.4 million gallons) per voyage, will operate in accordance with the U.S. Coast Guard Authorization Act of 1996. The vessel has a CAP 1 rating, certifying its top rating for safety and vessel condition, and its compliance with all regulatory requirements.

"The entry into service of American Energy marks a significant step for fuel supply reliability in Puerto Rico for our energy grid, which will greatly benefit our people," said Puerto Rico Gov. Jenniffer González-Colón. "This partnership is an initiative to act using existing regulations to increase access to a U.S.-based LNG source that expands our options for the stabilization of our energy grid, as we work towards providing our residents and businesses a more consistently reliable power generation source."

The 900-foot-long (274 meters) LNG carrier builds on Crowley's 70-plus years commitment to Puerto Rico. The company also operates the full-service marine Isla Grande cargo terminal in San Juan for its container and roll-on/roll-off vessels, including two LNG-fueled ships, and logistics services. Crowley annually delivers more than 94 million gallons of LNG through its LNG Loading Terminal in Penuelas as well as provides ocean delivery and land transportation using ISO tank containers.

At capacity, each delivery of LNG aboard American Energy provides enough energy to power 80,000 homes for a year. LNG is also a lower-carbon fuel emitting less greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions compared to diesel and other traditional energy sources.

"We are proud and privileged to expand U.S. LNG availability in Puerto Rico in partnership with Naturgy," said Tom Crowley, chairman and CEO of Crowley Corporation. "LNG is an ample, reliable energy source available in the U.S. that provides a more resilient and lower-emission option as part of our nation's energy portfolio for quickly serving the growing power needs of Puerto Rico while supporting American jobs, American energy production and U.S. national security."

"This contract strengthens our presence in the global LNG market, particularly in the United States, and allows Puerto Rico to obtain a stable and competitive energy supply route," said Jon Ganuza, general manager of supply and wholesale markets, Naturgy.

"AMO is proud to be a part of this historic partnership that benefits the people of Puerto Rico," said American Maritime Officers National President Willie Barrere. "U.S. Merchant Mariners, many of whom were born in Puerto Rico, sailing on Jones Act vessels, have been reliably delivering goods to the Commonwealth for decades. Now we will deliver LNG fuel to power the residents and further strengthen the bond between

Puerto Rico and our U.S. seafarers.”

“The SIU is tremendously excited about providing crew members for the American Energy,” said David Heindel, president of the Seafarers International Union (SIU). “Our members have a long, proud history of working aboard LNG vessels, and our affiliated school in Piney Point, Maryland, regularly conducts U.S. Coast Guard-approved curriculums that help prepare mariners for this kind of work. We congratulate Crowley, and we look forward to helping safely operate the newly reflagged ship.”