

Coast Guard Enforces Safety Zone for Tow of Battleship USS Texas



Pilot boat crews tow the battleship USS Texas down the Houston Ship Channel near Baytown, Texas, Aug. 31. The USS Texas is moving from the San Jacinto Battleground State Historic Site in La Porte, Texas, to a dry dock in Galveston where it will undergo extensive hull repairs. *U.S. COAST GUARD / Petty Officer 1st Class Corinne Zilnicki*

HOUSTON – The Coast Guard enforced a safety zone in the Houston Ship Channel and Galveston Ship Channel for the tow of the battleship USS Texas, Aug. 31, the Coast Guard 8th District said in a release.

The Coast Guard captain of the port, in coordination with the Coast Guard's law enforcement partners, established a safety zone to ensure the safety of the public and security for all vessels in the channels.

Crews from Coast Guard Station Houston, Coast Guard Marine Safety & Security Team Houston, Coast Guard Station Galveston,

Coast Guard Cutter Hawk, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, Harris County Sheriff's Office and the Houston Police Department enforced the safety zone during the tow, which began at approximately 6 a.m. and concluded at 9 p.m.

Marine safety experts from Coast Guard Sector Houston-Galveston and the Coast Guard's Salvage Engineering Response Team traveled aboard the battleship to ensure a safe, successful tow. Houston Pilots towed the battleship from the San Jacinto Battleground State Historic Site in La Porte, Texas, down the Houston Ship Channel, then transferred the tow to Galveston-Texas City Pilots, who transported the ship to Gulf Copper & Manufacturing Corporations' Galveston Shipyard in Galveston.

While in dry dock, the USS Texas will undergo \$35 million in hull repairs.

"Today's successful transit of the battleship Texas was a historic, monumental event only possible with planning and partnerships throughout the port community," said Capt. Jason Smith, captain of the port and commander of Sector Houston-Galveston. "Long before today's event, the Battleship Texas Foundation and Valkor worked closely with naval architects from Resolve Marine and the Coast Guard's Salvage Engineering Response Team to ensure a sound transit plan. Coast Guard crews partnered with local pilot associations and various other maritime law enforcement agencies to protect both the battleship and our waterways throughout the transit. As we say in the maritime community for a job well done, Bravo Zulu to all involved."

Coast Guard Cutter Midgett Arrives in the Western Pacific



U.S. Coast Guard Capt. Willie Carmichael, commanding officer of U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Midgett (WMSL 757), salutes members of the Philippine Coast Guard after the cutter moored in Manila, Philippines, Aug. 30. *U.S. COAST GUARD / Chief Petty Officer Matt Masaschi*

MANILA, Philippines – The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Midgett (WMSL 757) arrived in Manila Aug. 30 for its first international port call during the crew's months-long Western Pacific deployment to the region, the Coast Guard Pacific Area said Aug. 31.

Midgett's crew will conduct professional exchanges and operate with the Philippine Coast Guard as part of an at-sea search-and-rescue exercise while in Manila, building upon the strong

partnership between the two nations.

Midgett is operating in support of United States Indo-Pacific Command, which oversees military operations in the region.

Operating under the tactical control of Commander, U.S. 7th Fleet, the cutter's crew plans to engage in professional and subject matter expert exchanges with regional partners and allies and will patrol and operate as directed during their Western Pacific deployment.

The Coast Guard provides expertise within the mission sets of search and rescue; illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; maritime environmental response; maritime security; maritime domain awareness; aviation operations; interoperability; and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

"Engaging with our Philippine Coast Guard partners is truly an honor," said U.S. Coast Guard Capt. Willie Carmichael, commanding officer of the Midgett. "Together we will continue to build strong relationships and learn from each other. Our deep-rooted partnership will combine the best of both our Coast Guards and the planned search-and-rescue exercise and professional exchanges are a great opportunity for us keep the Indo-Pacific region open and free."

Commissioned in 2019, Midgett is one of two Coast Guard legend-class national security cutters homeported in Honolulu. National security cutters are 418 feet long, 54 feet wide and have a 4,600 long-ton displacement. They have a top speed in excess of 28 knots, a range of 12,000 nautical miles, endurance of up to 90 days and can hold a crew of up to 170.

Coast Guard Offloads \$3.1M in Seized Cocaine, Transfers Custody of 8 Smugglers



The Coast Guard offloaded 330 pounds of seized cocaine and transferred custody of eight suspected smugglers to Caribbean Corridor Strike Force agents in San Juan, Puerto Rico Aug. 24.
U.S. COAST GUARD

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Legare and Caribbean Corridor Strike Force agents offloaded 330 pounds of seized cocaine Aug. 24 in San Juan, following

the interdiction of a smuggling vessel near Puerto Rico, the Coast Guard 7th District said Aug. 25.

The eight men apprehended in this case claimed to be Dominican Republic nationals and are facing federal prosecution in Puerto Rico. The seized contraband has an estimated wholesale value of approximately \$3.1 million.

Special Agents supporting the Caribbean Corridor Strike Force are leading the investigation into this case. The apprehended smugglers are facing federal prosecution in Puerto Rico on drug smuggling criminal charges of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute a controlled substance aboard a vessel subject to the jurisdiction of the United States. The charges carry a minimum sentence of 10 years imprisonment and a maximum sentence of imprisonment for life.

During the late night hours of Aug. 16, the aircrew of a Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine multi-role enforcement aircraft detected a 25-foot suspect vessel north of Isabela, Puerto Rico. During the interdiction, the smugglers jettisoned multiple bales of suspected contraband into the water. The Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Doyle stopped the suspect vessel, apprehended eight men and recovered five bales of the jettisoned cargo.

"This interdiction is an example of how successful interagency cooperation can be through the use of our collective resources," said Lt. Cmdr. Charles Wilson, cutter Joseph Doyle commanding officer. "Customs and Border Protection Caribbean Air Marine Branch and the Coast Guard worked seamlessly to detect and interdict this suspected narcotics trafficking operation before it reached the shores of Puerto Rico."

The seized contraband and the apprehended men were transferred to the cutter Legare for their final transport to Puerto Rico.

Naval Station Newport Now Homeport for Two Coast Guard Cutters



U.S. Coast Guard Cutters Tahoma (WMEC 908) and Campbell (WMEC 909) sit moored at Naval Station Newport, Rhode Island, Aug. 19. Tahoma and Campbell were welcomed to Naval Station Newport during a change of homeport ceremony. *U.S. COAST GUARD / Petty Officer 3rd Class Briana Carter*

NEWPORT, R.I. – The Coast Guard held a joint change-of-homeport ceremony for USCGC Tahoma (WMEC 908) and USCGC Campbell (WMEC 909) Aug. 19 at Naval Station Newport, Rhode Island.

The Tahoma and Campbell are 270-foot Famous-class medium-endurance cutters previously based at the Portsmouth Naval

Shipyard in Kittery, Maine. The relocation of these two cutters will allow the U.S. Navy to conduct infrastructure upgrades as part of a Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.

Adm. Linda L. Fagan, commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard, presided over the ceremony.

“For these two ships, this is actually a homecoming,” said Fagan. “Nine of the Coast Guard’s 270-foot medium endurance cutters, including the Tahoma and Campbell, were constructed right here in Rhode Island. These cutter’s new berths in Newport will provide a continued pathway for our crews to maintain geographic stability in southeastern New England while they conduct historic missions throughout the globe in support of the Atlantic Area commander.”

Attendees at today’s ceremony included Rhode Island Senators Jack Reed and Sheldon Whitehouse, Rep. David Cicilline, Newport Mayor Jeanne-Marie Napolitano, Capt. James McIver, commanding officer of Naval Station Newport, and other local officials.

“We are proud to welcome USCGC Tahoma and USCGC Campbell home to Naval Station Newport,” said McIver. “As fellow members of the United States’ maritime services, we look forward to the return of these units to their original birthplace here in Rhode Island and supporting them as they carry out global missions to meet the needs of our nation and the Joint Force.”

Tahoma is the third Coast Guard cutter to bear the name. Campbell is the sixth Coast Guard cutter to bear its name. Tahoma and Campbell are the eighth and ninth cutters, respectively, of 13 Famous-class cutters in service by the Coast Guard. Both cutters were commissioned in 1988 and are under the operational control of Coast Guard Atlantic Area.

New Coast Guard Cutter Douglas Denman Arrives in Alaska



The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Douglas Denman arrived at the cutter's new homeport in Ketchikan, Alaska, Aug. 19. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

KETCHIKAN, Alaska – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Douglas Denman arrived in Ketchikan, Alaska on Aug. 19 after a 36-day transit from Key West, Florida, the Coast Guard 17th District said in a release.

Douglas Denman, the Coast Guard's 49th fast response cutter, traveled nearly 7,000 miles from the most southeastern city in the U.S. to the most southeastern city in Alaska, transiting through the Caribbean Sea, the Panama Canal and up the west coast of Central America and the U.S.

Following production of the ship in 2020, the first crewmember arrived in Ketchikan summer of 2021. Since then, the crew has undergone a year of administration and training in preparation to take ownership of the cutter. The engineering department alone attended a total of three months of school in addition to the crew's seven weeks of familiarity training in Lockport,

Louisiana, and seven weeks of post delivery availability phase in Key West.

“It’s been a long but extremely rewarding journey to get to this point,” said Chief Petty Officer Hayes Printy, the cutter’s engineering chief. “Seeing the crew’s growth throughout the process and being able to make this unit what we want is an experience I will cherish and not forget.”

The cutter will be commissioned at the end of September and fully operational in its area of responsibility in Southeast Alaska where the missions will include law enforcement, fisheries enforcement, search and rescue and national security.

The Douglas Denman is scheduled to be permanently homeported in Sitka, Alaska, upon completion of required shore infrastructure improvements.

Coast Guard to Mark Beginning of Construction of a National Coast Guard Museum



The future home of the National Coast Guard Museum in New London, Connecticut. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

NEW LONDON, Conn. – The Coast Guard will be hosting a formal ceremony to commemorate the construction of a National Coast Guard Museum in New London, Connecticut, Friday, Aug. 19 at 2:00 p.m., on the City Pier in New London, Connecticut, the Coast Guard Academy said in an Aug. 15 release

Rep. Rosa DeLauro, D-Connecticut; Rep. Joe Courtney, D-Connecticut, Adm. Linda Fagan, commandant of the Coast Guard; and local government officials will attend the event.

Principle speakers will give remarks during a formal “keel-laying” ceremony to commemorate the construction of a National Coast Guard Museum that will memorialize over 230 years of service into one central location to honor the legacy and heritage of the world’s greatest Coast Guard. The Coast Guard Band, silent drill team and operational assets will also be part of the event.

A longstanding tradition in the shipbuilding industry, a

“keel-laying” celebrates the laying down of a ship’s keel, marking the start of its construction. Although modern shipbuilding techniques have evolved and the ceremony is now properly called a “keel authentication”, the Coast Guard is drawing from the traditions and nomenclature of old when inaugurating the building of the nation’s first and only National Coast Guard Museum.

Joint Strike Fighter Lot 15 Ceiling Allows 28 F-35s for Navy, Marine Corps



An F-35C Lightning II, assigned to the “Black Knights” of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 314, prepares to launch from the flight deck of the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS

Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) while the ship is underway in the Philippine Sea. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Javier Reyes*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Defense Department has increased the ceiling for its contract for Lot 15 Joint Strike Fighters to 129, the department said in an Aug. 12 release.

The Naval Air Systems Command awarded Lockheed Martin a not-to-exceed \$7.63 billion firm-fixed-price, fixed-price incentive (firm target), un-definitized modification to a previously awarded advanced acquisition contract, the Defense Department said in the release. The modification increases the contract ceiling to procure 129 F-35s.

Of the 129 F-35s, the total includes three F-35Bs and 10 F-35Cs for the U.S. Marine Corps and 10 F-35Cs for the U.S. Navy. The numbers notionally will enable the Navy and Marine Corps each to add one F-35C squadron to its force structure.

The total also includes 49 F-35As for the U.S. Air Force; 32 F-35As and four F-35Bs for non-U.S. program partners; and 16 F-35As for Foreign Military Sales customers. The contract also includes 69 shipsets of hardware.

The Navy currently has two F-35C fleet squadrons on strength, while the Marine Corps has one. The Corps also fields five fleet F-35B squadrons.

Work on the contract is expected to be completed in October 2024.

U . S . Coast Guard

Participating in Operations Island Chief, Blue Pacific 2022



The USCGC Oliver Henry (WPC 1140) crew arrives in Manus, Papua New Guinea, on Aug. 14, 2022, from Guam as part of a patrol headed south to assist partner nations in upholding and asserting their sovereignty while protecting U.S. national interests. *U.S. Coast Guard / SW3 Victor Villanueva, NMCB-FOUR* MANUS, Papua New Guinea – The U.S. Coast Guard is participating with partners to support the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency-led Operation Island Chief and the larger Operation Blue Pacific through patrols in the Western Pacific in August and September 2022, the Coast Guard’s Micronesia Sector said in an Aug. 14 release.

“Employing our unique authorities, capabilities, and access within Oceania is a privilege. We are eager to further integrate with our Allies and regional partners to protect national interests and combat illicit maritime activity such as illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing,” said Capt.

Nick Simmons, U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam commander. "Strengthening governance and modeling professional maritime behavior on the high seas and the surrounding waters is one way to counter predatory activity and reinforce the Pacific as a positive center of gravity and sustainable economy."

The operation covers a substantial area of the Pacific on the high seas and the exclusive economic zones of the Federated States of Micronesia, Papua New Guinea, Australia, and the Solomon Islands, while renewing relationships bolstered by local knowledge and expertise.

The USCGC Oliver Henry (WPC 1140), a 154-foot Sentinel-class fast response cutter, and crew deployed from Guam are making their first port call of the patrol in Manus, Papua New Guinea. During the patrol, the cutter will also have aerial support from a forward deployed HC-130 Hercules airplane crew from U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Barbers Point and New Zealand Defence Force P-3 Orion airplane crew. Where possible, the crew will also conduct subject matter expert exchanges and engagements.

Operation Island Chief is one of four operations conducted annually under FFA. It includes the Pacific waters of 11 participating FFA member nations – Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Nauru, the Marshall Islands, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

"The Oliver Henry crew are committed to regional collaboration and sharing best practices to strengthen our relationships and information sharing," said Lt. Freddy Hofschneider, commanding officer of Oliver Henry. "The U.S. Coast Guard has been a dedicated partner in the region for decades. We appreciate the support of our colleagues as we take this ship across vast distances in this region, making some transits and port calls for the first time."

A significant emphasis of the operation for the U.S. Coast Guard is the ongoing emphasis on fisheries and resource protection.

“The Pacific Ocean is home to some of the world’s most abundant fisheries,” said Simmons. “These fisheries are living marine resources, part of the global food chain, representing food security and an economic engine for many of the Pacific Island Nations. By leveraging our cutters, aircraft, and intelligence professionals, the U.S. Coast Guard continues our strong partnership with the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency and its members to protect this vital marine ecosystem and ensure continued economic prosperity and a thriving ocean for future generations.”

According to FFA, partners are seeing increasing success through multilateral operations in the Pacific to tackle IUUF. These operations evolved from a focus on protecting against illegal boats entering the fisheries to policing the operations of licensed vessels that haven’t followed the rules and regulations governing their activities. The Pacific region is a vast expanse, and collaboration across the many partners, providing personnel and assets, is crucial to ongoing success.

The Oliver Henry is the 40th Sentinel-class fast response cutter. The ship arrived in Guam and was commissioned along with its sister ships, Myrtle Hazard and Frederick Hatch, in July 2021. In the time since, the crew has participated in several search and rescues cases, completed a counternarcotics patrol off Guam with the Japan Coast Guard patrol vessel Mizuho, and conducted sovereignty and fisheries patrols in the Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam area of responsibility.

Coast Guard Offloads \$22 Million in Seized Cocaine in San Juan, Puerto Rico



Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Tezanos crewmembers offloaded 1,100 kilograms of cocaine, valued at \$22 million dollars, at Coast Guard Base San Juan Aug. 8, following three separate interdictions of drug smuggling vessels near Puerto Rico. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Tezanos and Caribbean Corridor Strike Force agents offloaded 2,425 pounds of seized cocaine Aug. 8, following three separate at-sea interdictions near Puerto Rico, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a release.

Fourteen men, Dominican Republic nationals, apprehended in

these cases are facing federal prosecution in Puerto Rico. The seized contraband has an estimated wholesale value of approximately \$22 million dollars.

These interdictions are the result of multi-agency efforts involving the Caribbean Border Interagency Group and the Caribbean Corridor Strike Force.

During the afternoon of Aug. 3, the aircrew of a Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine multi-role enforcement aircraft detected a 25-foot suspect vessel north of Aguadilla, Puerto Rico. During the interdiction, the smugglers jettisoned multiple bales of suspected contraband into the water. Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Tezanos, assisted by the aircrew of a Coast Guard HC-144 Ocean Sentry aircraft, stopped the suspect vessel, apprehended four men and recovered 13 bales of the jettisoned cargo that collectively weighted 1,653 pounds and tested positive for cocaine.

During the afternoon of July 29, the aircrew of Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine multi-role enforcement aircraft detected a 20-foot suspect vessel in waters northwest of Desecheo Island, Puerto Rico. During the interdiction, the smugglers jettisoned multiple bales of suspected contraband into the water. Cutter Joseph Tezanos stopped the smuggling vessel, apprehended four men and recovered eight bales of the jettisoned cargo that collectively weighted approximately 441 pounds and tested positive for cocaine.

During the afternoon of July 27, the aircrew of Coast Guard HC-144 Ocean Sentry aircraft detected a 20-foot suspect vessel in waters northwest of Aguadilla, Puerto Rico. During the interdiction, the smugglers jettisoned multiple bales of suspected contraband into the water. Cutter Joseph Tezanos arrived on scene and stopped the non-compliant vessel, apprehended six men and recovered three bales of the jettisoned cargo that collectively weighted approximately 330 pounds and tested positive for cocaine.

“These successful interdictions reflect the unwavering resolve and strong partnerships between the Coast Guard and our Caribbean Border Interagency Group partners in stopping illicit drug trafficking in the high seas,” said Capt. José E. Díaz, commander of Coast Guard Sector San Juan. “I’m proud of the professionalism and performance of the cutter Joseph Tezanos in apprehending 14 smugglers and preventing these drugs from reaching the shores and streets of Puerto Rico.”

Special Agents supporting the Caribbean Corridor Strike Force are leading the investigation into this case.

Cutter Joseph Tezanos is a 154-foot fast response cutter that is homeported in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Hawaii-based Coast Guard Units Conclude RIMPAC 2022 Participation



A U.S. Navy Sailor directs Navy and U.S. Coast Guard Sailors to a U.S. Navy MH-60R Seahawk helicopter during flight operations during Rim of the Pacific 2022. *U.S. COAST GUARD / Petty Officer 3rd Class Taylor Bacon*

PEARL HARBOR – Four Hawaii-based Coast Guard units concluded operations contributing to the largest Coast Guard participation in the history of RIMPAC and returned to service of the residents of Hawaii and the Pacific region on Aug. 4, the Coast Guard 14th District said in a release.

U.S. Coast Guard Cutters Midgett and William Hart, the Pacific Dive Locker, and Maritime Safety and Security Team Honolulu partnered with military members from Australia, Peru, Republic of Korea, Canada, France and Japan throughout the in-port and at-sea portions of the Rim of the Pacific 2022, which ran from late June to early August. The exercise marked a series of “firsts” for Coast Guard participation.

Coast Guard Cutter Midgett conducted a broad spectrum of operations with the Japan Maritime Self Defense Force Ship Izumo, the USS Chafee, USS Gridley, French Navy Frigate FS

Prairial, and Peruvian Navy BAP Guise. The combined team of Midgett, William Hart, Izumo and USS Essex completed RIMPAC's first mass rescue operation, successfully partnering to find, recover and provide medical assistance to 10 simulated people in the water.

Following RIMPAC, Midgett's crew will depart on a western Pacific patrol to build on the regional partnerships demonstrated here and conduct international training and fisheries law enforcement. William Hart's crew will conduct necessary maintenance, complete training, and resume their role as a standby search-and-rescue asset for vessels in distress in the waters around Hawaii, a role it shares with the other two fast response cutters in Honolulu, Cutter Joseph Gerczak and Cutter Oliver Berry.

This year's RIMPAC featured the first Coast Guard-led humanitarian assistance and disaster relief exercise. The exercise tested reopening a harbor that had been struck by a simulated hurricane. A boat crew from Coast Guard MSST Honolulu partnered with underwater survey teams from the U.S. and Royal Australian Navies to conduct underwater scans of Honolulu Harbor to identify hidden hazards. After that, divers from the Coast Guard Pacific Dive Locker collaborated with divers from the U.S. Army and Republic of Korea Navy to remove the hazards and practice maintaining aids to navigation underwater.

Following RIMPAC, the Pacific Diver Locker will focus on training and preparations for annual safety inspections and provide support to local Coast Guard assets and aids to navigation missions.

"This was an incredible opportunity to work alongside our partners in the Blue Pacific to strengthen our relationships," said Coast Guard 14th District Commander Rear Adm. Michael Day. "Our ability to come together for RIMPAC 22, in person, has helped reconnect within and beyond the region. It is

through those connections and relationships that we will move forward to bolster impactful engagement opportunities.”