

Coast Guard Cutter Stone Returns Home After 63-Day Patrol in the Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea



Coast Guard Cutter Stone (WMSL 758) makes way, June 29, 2024, in the Atlantic Ocean. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Thomas Settle)

From U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area, July 24, 2024

NORTH CHARLESTON, S.C. – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Stone (WMSL 758) returned to their home port in North Charleston, Wednesday, following a 63-day patrol in the Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea in support of homeland defense and counterdrug operations.

Supporting the Tri-Party partnership, Stone served as on-scene commander, leading U.S. Navy and Royal Canadian navy assets in

a dynamic mission to preserve the sovereignty of U.S. waters and counter the actions of foreign actors and transnational criminal organizations.

The Tri-Party partnership, comprised of U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area, U.S. Second Fleet and Canadian Joint Task Force-Atlantic maritime forces, was established in 2015 and continues to be an effective partnership aimed at preserving mutual interests and upholding the rules-based international order in support of good maritime governance.

“This deployment offered a unique opportunity to demonstrate the diverse capabilities of the national security cutter, and how seamlessly and rapidly the Coast Guard can integrate with joint and allied forces to counter maritime threats,” said Capt. Jonathan Carter, commanding officer of Stone. “The Stone’s crew performed admirably throughout the demanding mission.”

Stone is a 418-foot, Legend-class national security cutter. The cutter’s primary missions are counterdrug operations and defense readiness. Stone falls under the command of the Coast Guard Atlantic Area in Portsmouth, Virginia. Atlantic Area oversees all Coast Guard operations east of the Rocky Mountains to the Arabian Gulf. In addition to surge operations, Atlantic Area also allocates ships to deploy to the Caribbean Sea, Eastern Pacific Ocean, and South Atlantic Ocean to combat transnational organized crime and illicit maritime activity.

Coast Guard Cutter James

Returns Home Following South Atlantic Ocean Deployment to Counter Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing



The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter James (WMSL 754) and the Brazilian navy Amazonas (P 120) conduct a passing exercise at sea in the southern Atlantic Ocean, May 25, 2024. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Logan Kaczmarek)

NORTH CHARLESTON, S.C. – The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter James (WMSL 754) returned to their home port in North Charleston, July 11, after completing a 98-day patrol in the South Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea.

James' crew patrolled in support of Operation Southern Cross, promoting maritime governance with partners in the South Atlantic by working to illuminate and monitor illegal,

unreported, and unregulated fishing (IUU-F) activity in the region.

While on patrol, James interacted with partners in Uruguay, Argentina and Brazil, strengthening relationships by focusing on shared interests in countering illicit maritime activity. Through several subject matter expert (SME) exchanges and joint engagements, James demonstrated counter IUU-F capabilities to promote the rules-based order and advance White House initiatives to further advance Atlantic Cooperation.

During the patrol, James' crew conducted port visits to Montevideo, Uruguay; Buenos Aires, Argentina; and Rio de Janeiro and Fortaleza, Brazil. At each city, Coast Guard personnel engaged with their international counterparts to promote partnership. Notably, James' command cadre met with senior leadership from the Uruguay Navy, the Argentine Prefectura Naval, and the Brazilian Navy, holding roundtable discussions to tackle the global impacts of IUU-F while devising strategies to enhance maritime domain awareness, improve information sharing and combat the threat together.

Additionally, James' small unmanned aircraft system (UAS)-contracted team presented their system and capabilities to senior naval leadership, illustrating the sizable benefits of UAS in detecting and monitoring IUU-F activity. The visits included community relations events and tours of the ship, and culminated in diplomatic receptions aboard James, bringing together key civilian and military leaders from each respective country.

Showcasing law enforcement expertise and dedication to joint efforts against illicit maritime activity, James' crew organized and hosted in-port SME exchanges and at-sea mock boarding engagements with the Argentine Prefectura Naval and the Brazilian Navy. James crew members conducted a mock counter-IUU-F engagement with the Argentine Prefectura vessel

Mantilla (GC-24), demonstrating the procedures of a high seas boarding inspection on a foreign-flagged fishing vessel. James also organized multiple demonstrations of visit, board, search and seizure procedures to exercise interoperability with the Brazilian Navy.

During the cutter's visit to Buenos Aires, James's crew received a presidential welcome from Argentina's President Javier Milei. Coast Guard Capt. Donald Terkanian welcomed President Milei on board and provided him with a tour of James. This historic event initiated several other key engagements with Argentina's Vice President Victoria Villarruel, senior military and civilian leaders.

During the deployment, James' crew members also had the unique opportunity to join U.S. Navy Carrier Strike Group 10 to execute Operation Southern Seas 2024 with the Brazilian Navy and celebrate the bicentennial of U.S.-Brazilian diplomatic relations. Promoting interoperability with the Brazilian Navy and simultaneously advancing the Tri-Service Maritime Strategy through U.S. sea-service engagement, James completed formation steaming and close quarters maneuvering exercises with Brazilian Navy frigates BNS União (F 45) and BNS Independência (F 44) alongside the USS George Washington (CVN 73) and USS Porter (DDG-78). James conducted a joint live-fire exercise, utilizing its onboard 20mm close-in-weapon system to engage a target flare in tandem with Independência, União and Porter. Finally, James and Independência exchanged crewmembers for five days.

After departing the Southern Atlantic Ocean, James patrolled the Caribbean Sea to execute Operation Martillo in support of Joint Interagency Task Force-South, collaborating with fellow Coast Guard units as well as the Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, and international partners to counter illicit trafficking in the region.

James is a 418-foot, Legend-class national security cutter.

The cutter's primary missions are counter-drug operations and defense readiness. James falls under the command of the Coast Guard Atlantic Area in Portsmouth, Virginia. Atlantic Area oversees all Coast Guard operations east of the Rocky Mountains to the Arabian Gulf. In addition to surge operations, Atlantic Area also allocates ships to deploy to the Caribbean Sea, Eastern Pacific Ocean, and South Atlantic Ocean to combat transnational organized crime and illicit maritime activity.

Coast Guard Offloads More Than \$96 Million in Illegal Narcotics Interdicted in the Caribbean Sea



Crew members from Coast Guard Cutter Forward offload more than \$96 million in illegal narcotics at Port Everglades, Florida, July 22, 2024. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Nicholas Strasburg)

From U.S. Coast Guard 7th District, July 23, 2024

MIAMI – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Forward offloaded more than 7,302 pounds of cocaine with an assessed street value of approximately \$96 million in Port Everglades, Monday.

Coast Guard crews, working alongside interagency and international partners, interdicted the illegal drugs in the international waters of the Caribbean Sea during three separate cases.

“This was another vital success of our combined drug interdiction efforts,” said Lt. Cmdr. Juan Ramirez, a Coast Guard District Seven staff attorney. “These drug offloads underscore our continued partnerships with the U.S. Navy and the Royal Netherlands Navy in combating the flow of illicit narcotics across the Caribbean. The success of our joint

efforts to save lives by reducing the availability of these harmful drugs is dependent on our cooperation with regional and international partners.”

The following assets and crews were involved in the interdictions:

- Royal Netherlands Navy ship HNLMS Groningen (P 843)

- USS St. Louis (LCS 19)

- U.S. Coast Guard Tactical Law Enforcement Team Pacific (PAC-TACLET) Law Enforcement Detachments 110 and 105

- U.S. Coast Guard Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron (HITRON)

- Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-South)

- U.S. Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations (CBP-AMO)

Three suspected smugglers will face prosecution in federal courts by the Department of Justice.

PAC-TACLET is part of the Coast Guard’s deployable specialized forces program, with advanced training in high-risk interdiction operations in the maritime environment, including non-compliant vessel pursuit missions. Law enforcement detachments from PAC-TACLET and HITRON aircrews deploy aboard Coast Guard, U.S. Navy and foreign allied ships to augment their capabilities and authorities to perform counter drug missions under U.S. law.

Detecting and interdicting illegal drug traffickers on the high seas involves significant interagency and international coordination. The Joint Interagency Task Force South in Key West, Florida conducts the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs. Once interdiction becomes imminent, the law enforcement phase of the operation begins, and control of the operation shifts to the U.S. Coast Guard throughout the interdiction and apprehension. Interdictions in the Caribbean Sea are performed by members of the U.S. Coast Guard under the authority and control of the Coast Guard's Seventh District, headquartered in Miami.

These interdictions relate to Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) designated investigations. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level criminal organizations that threaten the United States using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach. Additional information about the OCDETF program can be found at <https://www.justice.gov/OCDETF>.

USCGC Forward (WMEC 911) is a 270-foot Famous-class, medium endurance cutter homeported in Portsmouth, Virginia. The cutter's primary missions are counter drug operations, migrant interdiction operations, enforcement of federal fishery laws, and search and rescue in support of Coast Guard operations throughout the Western Hemisphere.

**Coast Guard holds
commissioning ceremony for**

Marine Safety Unit Lake Worth



Caption: Lt. Giacomo Terrizzi III assumed command of the newly established Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit Lake Worth as the unit's first commanding officer during an assumption of command ceremony held at Port of Palm Beach, Florida, July 19, 2024 (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd class Eric Rodriguez)

From U.S. Coast Guard 7th District, July 20, 2024

Miami □ Lt. Giacomo Terrizzi III assumed command of the newly established Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit Lake Worth, Friday, as the unit's first commanding officer during an assumption of command ceremony held at the Port of Palm Beach.

Capt. Chris Cederholm, Coast Guard Sector Miami commander, presided over the ceremony.

“The change from a marine safety detachment to an MSU in Lake

Worth will bring more Coast Guard resources to the area,” said Terrizzi. “The expansion in authority demonstrates our service’s dedication to the surrounding maritime community as the area continues to expand and evolve.”

In October 2023, the Commandant of the Coast Guard approved a request to convert 18 detached units to junior command units. The selected units were identified by the Junior Command Opportunities Work Group and selected based on a variety of factors such as mission complexity, distance from other Coast Guard units, and the personnel allowance list. The request, drafted by the Coast Guard Deputy Commandant for Operations, was in response to a research and development study that identified a need for junior command opportunities in marine safety to develop future leaders within the ranks.

USCGC Vigilant returns home after 55-day patrol in the Windward Passage



Credit: U.S. Coast Guard

From the U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area, 22 July 2024

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Vigilant (WMEC 617) returned home to Cape Canaveral, July 11, following a 55-day maritime safety and security patrol in the Windward Passage. Vigilant deployed in support of Homeland Security Task Force Southeast (HSTF-SE) and Operation Vigilant Sentry (OVS).

During the deployment, Vigilant's crew operated in the Seventh Coast Guard District area of operations and worked alongside other Coast Guard assets, international partners, the Department of Defense, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and Puerto Rico Police's Joint Force of Rapid Action units to conduct counterdrug and migrant interdiction operations.

While on patrol, Vigilant's crew assisted Coast Guard Sector Key West with the interdiction of 117 Haitian migrants in the Florida Straits from an unlawful voyage bound for the United States. The migrants were endangered by the unsafe conditions

aboard their grossly overloaded and unseaworthy vessel before being rescued by the Coast Guard.

Vigilant's crew also coordinated post-seizure operations after the Royal Netherlands Navy intercepted eight suspected drug smugglers and interdicted 503 pounds of cocaine worth an estimated value of \$6.8M. The joint-operations with the Royal Netherlands Navy served to strengthen ties with international partners and promote regional stability and security.

For over a week of patrol, Vigilant served as Cutter Tasking Unit for OVS while operating in the region. Crews executed maritime intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance operations while maintaining a continuous surface presence in the waters around Haiti. These operations were essential to deterring illegal migration ventures and illicit drug smuggling, contributing directly to the shared U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. national objective of combatting transnational criminal organizations.

"It was great to have another successful patrol aboard Vigilant, ensuring the safety and protection of mariners and conducting law enforcement operations," said Cmdr. Jon Potterton, commanding officer of Vigilant. "Our crew did an exceptional job maintaining and operating our vessel as it approaches 60 years of service to our nation. We look forward to returning to our community, family, and friends after we successfully deterred illegal maritime migration, saved lives, and prevented drugs from entering the United States."

Established in 2003, HSTF-SE is the Department of Homeland Security-led interagency task force charged with directing operational and tactical planning, command and control, and functions as a standing organization to deter, mitigate, and respond to maritime mass migration in the Caribbean Sea and Florida Straits.

OVS is the 2004 DHS plan that provides the structure for

deploying joint air and surface assets and personnel to respond to irregular maritime migration in the Caribbean corridor of the United States. Its primary objectives are to protect life at sea while deterring and dissuading mass maritime migration alongside our federal, state, and local partners.

Vigilant is a 210-foot, Reliance-class medium endurance cutter. The cutter's primary missions are counterdrug operations, migrant interdiction, enforcement of federal fishery laws and search and rescue in support of U.S. Coast Guard operations.

Valiant is a Coast Guard asset assigned to U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area, which is based in Portsmouth, Virginia. Atlantic Area oversees all Coast Guard operations east of the Rocky Mountains to the Arabian Gulf. In addition to surge operations, Atlantic Area also allocates 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](https://www.goCoastGuard.com) to learn about active duty, reserve, officer and enlisted opportunities. Information on how to apply to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy can be found [here](#).

Coast Guard Cutter Valiant returns home after 49-day deployment in the Florida

Straits and Windward Passage



(U.S. Coast Guard courtesy photo)
July 17, 2024

NAVAL STATION MAYPORT, Fla. – Coast Guard Cutter Valiant (WMEC 621) and its crew returned to their homeport at Naval Station Mayport, June 28, following a 49-day migrant interdiction operations patrol in the Florida Straits and Windward Passage.

Valiant's crew deployed in support of Homeland Security Task Force – Southeast (HSTF-SE) and Operation Vigilant Sentry (OVS) while underway in the Seventh Coast Guard District's area of operations. Throughout the patrol, the crew of Valiant conducted maritime safety and security missions to protect life at sea and enforce U.S. maritime law.

While at sea in the Florida Straits, crew members rescued eight Cuban migrants from a makeshift vessel that was

transiting northward toward the Florida Keys, attempting to reach the United States unlawfully by sea.

Valiant's crew also patrolled off coastal Haiti to deter illegal and dangerous maritime migration from the region. While underway in the Windward Passage, Valiant's crew interdicted two unsafe migrant vessels north of Haiti. These interdictions resulted in the collective rescue of 197 Haitian migrants who were adrift at sea, including three Haitian migrants who were retrieved from the water by crew members after they had fallen overboard due to their vessel being grossly overloaded.

While on patrol near Dominican Republic waters, Valiant located a 20-foot wooden vessel with no lights or safety equipment and 15 migrants on board. After intercepting the vessel, Valiant's crew transferred the migrants to a Dominican Republic Navy vessel for repatriation to their country of origin. This action led to the successful rescue of the migrants and reinforced the U.S. Coast Guard's continued ability to interoperate with our partner nations in the region.

"This patrol was extremely busy, and the crew is proud that we were able to save over 200 people in unseaworthy vessels," said Ensign John Vaaler, a law enforcement officer aboard Valiant. "The vessels we interdicted were not carrying essential lifesaving equipment adequate for the many people on board. I am very glad we found them when we did, or people may have been lost at sea."

Later in the patrol, Valiant intercepted a go-fast, drug-smuggling vessel in the Windward Passage. This action disrupted the vessel's voyage and forced the suspected drug traffickers to jettison their contraband to the sea, preventing harmful narcotics from reaching American shores.

Valiant is a multi-mission 210-foot, Reliance-class medium-

endurance cutter. Its primary missions include search and rescue, maritime law enforcement, marine environmental protection, homeland security and national defense operations.

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Coast Guard Maritime Safety and Security Team (MSST) Seattle 91101 to Conduct Waterborne Missions in Homer, Alaska

HOMER, Alaska – The Coast Guard is scheduled to conduct waterborne operations in the Homer vicinity over the summer as Sector Western Alaska and U.S. Arctic augments its capabilities with small boat teams from Maritime Safety and Security Team Seattle (MSST) 91101.

MSST 91101, utilizing two 29-foot response boat crews, will patrol harbors, fishing grounds, and trafficked waterways including areas with significant traffic convergence to enforce living marine resources (LMR) regulations on domestic, commercial, recreational, and charter fishing vessels.

“For the next few months, our teams will be conducting operations around Homer in support of various missions, including search and rescue, recreational and commercial vessel safety, and protection of Alaska’s living marine resources,” said Lt. Karl Gunther, Sector Western Alaska and U.S. Arctic enforcement chief. “Teams will maintain a regular presence on the water and conduct routine boardings at sea to inspect a vessel’s catch, gear, and other items to ensure regulatory compliance as well as safety.”

Mariners are advised to research the federally mandated safety and fishery requirements for their vessels prior to conducting operations in Kachemak Bay and to prepare for the highly likely occurrence that a Coast Guard boarding team inspects their vessel for compliance.

Coast Guard boarding teams have the authority to (at any time) go aboard any vessel operating under the jurisdiction of the United States, and address inquiries to those on board, examine the ship’s documents and papers, and examine, inspect, and search the vessel as outlined in 14 USC 522.

U.S. Coast Guard encounters People’s Republic of China military naval presence in Bering Sea

SEAPOWERS

The Official Publication of the Navy League of the United States

U.S. Coast Guard 17th District, July 10, 2024

JUNEAU, AK –The U.S. Coast Guard encountered multiple People’s Republic of China military ships in the Bering Sea, Saturday and Sunday.

The crew of U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Kimball (WMSL 756) detected three vessels approximately 124 miles north of the Amchitka Pass in the Aleutian Islands, and an HC-130J aircrew from U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Kodiak detected an additional vessel approximately 84 miles north of the Amukta Pass.

All four of the People’s Republic of China vessels were transiting in international waters but still inside the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone, which extends 200 nautical miles from the U.S. shoreline.

“The Chinese naval presence operated in accordance with international rules and norms,” said Rear Adm. Megan Dean, Seventeenth Coast Guard District commander. “We met presence with presence to ensure there were no disruptions to U.S. interests in the maritime environment around Alaska.”

The Chinese vessels responded to U.S. Coast Guard radio

communication and their stated purpose was “freedom of navigation operations.” Coast Guard cutter Kimball continued to monitor all ships until they transited south of the Aleutian Islands into the North Pacific Ocean. The Kimball continues to monitor activities in the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone to ensure the safety of U.S. vessels and international commerce in the area.

The Coast Guard, in coordination with U.S. Northern Command, was fully aware of and tracked the Chinese naval presence. In September of 2021 and 2022, Coast Guard cutters deployed in the Bering Sea also encountered Chinese surface action groups.

The Kimball patrolled under Operation Frontier Sentinel, a Coast Guard operation designed to meet presence with presence when strategic competitors operate in and around U.S. waters. The U.S. Coast Guard’s presence strengthens the international rules-based order and promotes the conduct of operations in a manner that follows international norms.

Coast Guard Cutter Kimball is a 418-foot Legend-class national security cutter homeported in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Shield AI’s V-BAT Tapped for \$198M Coast Guard Contract



WASHINGTON (July 1, 2024) – [Shield AI](#), the defense technology company building the world’s best AI pilot, announced today that the U.S. Coast Guard [has awarded](#) the company a \$198,106,876 indefinite-delivery, indefinite-quantity firm fixed-price contract to provide Contractor Owned Contractor Operated (COCO) Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) services. This service will be implemented using the V-BAT unmanned aircraft system (UAS).

“We’re excited to support the U.S. Coast Guard with their ISR operations. All maritime vessels will become drone carriers as maritime forces move to deploy distributed, affordable, intelligent drones. V-BAT’s selection by the U.S. Coast Guard is indicative of a broader market movement where increasingly customers are recognizing they can accomplish the vast majority of their mission sets with affordable drones rather than exquisite, expensive crewed or uncrewed aircraft,” said Brandon Tseng, Shield AI’s President, Co-founder, and former Navy SEAL.

The [V-BAT](#) series aircraft is the only operationally deployed single-engine ducted fan vertical takeoff and land (VTOL) UAS

that can launch and recover from a hover and fly on wing in horizontal flight. With more than five years of persistent operational experience at sea, U.S. and international customers view the V-BAT as a flexible platform capable of performing Group 2 to Group 5 UAS missions and beyond.

Coast Guard Commissions First Pacific Northwest-Based Fast Response Cutter



Coast Guard Cutter David Duren (WPC 1156) transits near the Cape Disappointment Lighthouse as it enters the Columbia River

near Astoria, Ore., for the first time on May 20, 2024. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by [Petty Officer 2nd Class Steven Strohmaier](#))

From U.S. Coast Guard 13th District, June 28, 2024

ASTORIA, Ore. – The Coast Guard commissioned its 56th Fast Response Cutter and first one to be stationed in the Pacific Northwest during a ceremony held in Astoria, Ore., Thursday.

Coast Guard Cutter David Duren (WPC-1156) is the first of three planned Fast Response Cutter's (FRC) to be homeported in Astoria.

The ceremony was presided by Vice Adm. Andrew Tiongson, Pacific Area Commander. Members from the Duren family were also on hand, including the cutter's sponsor, Dawn Duren.

The namesake for the cutter, Master Chief Petty Officer David Duren, enlisted in the Coast Guard in 1965 and retired in 1993. During his career, Duren became a heavy weather coxswain and graduated from the Coast Guard's National Motor Lifeboat School in 1969, qualifying as Coast Guard surfman No. 100.

During his tenure, Duren received two Coast Guard Medals for exceptional heroism and the Douglas Munro Inspirational Leadership Award. He deployed on search and rescue cases more than any other officer-in-charge at the time and during one year, he participated in 250 cases. Personnel under his command received a total of 24 medals and awards.

The crew of the David Duren will primarily serve in the Pacific Ocean, Puget Sound, Strait of Juan de Fuca, and the Columbia River. The Sentinel-class FRC is designed for multiple missions, including search and rescue; fishery patrols; ports, waterways, and coastal security; drug and migrant interdiction; and national defense.

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 one of the most important traditional milestones in the life of a cutter, as it represents the readiness of the cutter to conduct Coast Guard operations and marks her entry into active service.