

# U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star completes Operation Deep Freeze 2023 mission, departs Antarctica



[Release from U.S. Coast Guard](#)

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March 15, 2023

The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star (WAGB 10) and crew departed the Antarctic region March 2, after 67 days below the Antarctic Circle in support of Operation Deep Freeze 2023.

The Polar Star and crew broke a 17-mile channel through fast ice and conducted over 1,600 hours of ice breaking operations to create a navigable route for cargo vessels to reach McMurdo

Station. The Polar Star and crew executed more than 60 hours of ice escorts for cargo vessels through difficult pack ice conditions.

“Though sea ice around the Antarctic continent overall has been determined to be at one of the lowest in recent history, the sea ice in McMurdo Sound was observed to be at the highest concentration on record dating back to at least 2012,” said Lt. Cmdr. Don Rudnickas, the onboard ice analyst. “The pack ice conditions this year were difficult and made icebreaker support critical not only for establishing the fast ice channel, but for the close escort through pack ice of three of the four cargo vessels resupplying McMurdo Station.”

While operating in Antarctica, the Polar Star and crew made two logistical stops at McMurdo Station. After the first stop in McMurdo, the cutter and crew assisted in moving a 30,000-ton aging and degraded ice pier from Winter Quarters Bay to make way for a modular causeway system that was installed for the season. The cutter also provided an ice escort to motor vessel Ocean Giant and crew, who delivered the 65-ton MCS that was offloaded, assembled, and used as a pier to replace the traditional ice pier used for cargo operations.

“The Antarctic region is a harsh and challenging environment to operate in,” said Lt. Cmdr. Benjamin Litts, operations officer. “Despite the inhospitable conditions, our crew adapted and tirelessly performed at the highest level to ensure mission success.”

Before departing the Antarctic Region, the cutter also visited Palmer Station, the United States’ research facility located on the Antarctic Peninsula. Polar Star personnel went ashore to meet with the station manager and staff, tour the facility, and shared camaraderie in one of the most remote regions on the planet. This was the first visit from a U.S. Coast Guard icebreaker to Palmer Station since 1987.

“Ice breaking in Antarctica is a unique and dynamic mission requiring months of preparation and coordination among all our partners,” said Capt. Keith Ropella, commanding officer. “Mission success was a result of our crew working with fellow service members from the U.S. Air Force, Army, and Navy as a Joint Task Force to continue our proud support of the United States Antarctic Program.”

Operation Deep Freeze is the annual logistical support mission provided by the Department of Defense to the National Science Foundation (NSF) managed by the U.S. Antarctic Program (USAP). This includes coordination of strategic inter-theater airlift, tactical intra-theater airlift and airdrop, aeromedical evacuation support, search and rescue response, sealift, seaport access, bulk fuel supply, port cargo handling, and transportation requirements supporting the NSF. This is a unique mission demonstrating U.S. commitment to the Antarctic Treaty and to research programs conducted for the betterment of all humanity. The Polar Star and crew contribute to this yearly effort through icebreaking to clear the channel for supply vessels.

The Polar Star is the United States’ only asset capable of providing access to both Polar Regions. It is a 399-foot heavy polar icebreaker commissioned in 1976, weighing 13,500 tons and is 84-feet wide with a 34-foot draft. The six diesel and three gas turbine engines produce up to 75,000 horsepower.

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# **Coast Guard Cutter Kimball**

# returns home following Western Pacific patrol



## [Release from Coast Guard Pacific Area](#)

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March 14, 2023

HONOLULU – The Coast Guard Cutter Kimball (WMSL 756) and crew returned to their Honolulu homeport, Friday, following a 42-day, 10,000 nautical mile Western Pacific patrol.

Kimball was the first U.S. military ship in recent history to visit the port city of Kagoshima, Japan, where the crew partnered with servicemembers from Japan Coast Guard's 10th District [to plan and conduct combined operations and search-and-rescue exercises](#).

Kimball's crew met with Japan Coast Guard senior leadership

and hosted Japan Coast Guard servicemembers, U.S. Consulate Fukuoka staff, community leaders and local media aboard the cutter during the port visit in support of Operation SAPPHIRE.

Operation SAPPHIRE is a [joint agreement between the U.S. and Japan Coast Guards](#) signed in 2022 for enhancing cooperation between the two sea services. SAPPHIRE is an acronym for the 'Solid Alliance for Peace and Prosperity with Humanity and Integrity on the Rule of law-based Engagement.'

"By collaborating with Japan Coast Guard members and conducting evolutions that enhanced communication and interoperability during the patrol, the crew continued to strengthen a solid foundation for the positive and productive relationship with the maritime service of a like-minded nation," said Captain Tom D'Arcy, Kimball's commanding officer.

Kimball's crew demonstrated proficiency in the ship's aviation program by working with an air operations inspection team to conduct a biennial Shipboard-Aviation Standardization Inspection (AVSTAN). By achieving their AVSTAN certification, Kimball can continue deploying with aviation detachments during future patrols.

Kimball also supported U.S. Coast Guard efforts to increase its presence in the Indo-Pacific. Kimball's crew delivered a MH-65 Dolphin helicopter from Air Station Barber's Point to Santa Rita, Guam, to enable forward operations that extend the service's air coverage in the region.

During the patrol, the cutter's engineering department was presented with the Rear Admiral R. S. Lucas Plaque Award for their outstanding contributions to the Coast Guard's naval engineering program. Members from Kimball's engineering department were cited for excellence and ingenuity during

recent patrols and for completing three extensive industrial periods encompassing significant maintenance, contractual repair projects, and casualty repairs valued at over \$4.4 million.

“I am extremely proud of our crew’s accomplishments,” said D’Arcy. “Kimball continues to remain on the front lines of the Coast Guard’s strategic plan. Our engagements in Japan strengthened our existing relationships with international partners who uphold good maritime governance. Kimball’s patrol re-affirmed the U.S. Coast Guard’s commitment to facilitating a free and open Indo-Pacific.”

Commissioned in 2019, Kimball is the Coast Guard’s seventh national security cutter and one of two homeported in Honolulu. National security cutters are 418-feet-long, 54-feet-wide and have a displacement of 4,500 long-tons. With a range of 12,000 nautical miles, the advanced technologies of Legend-class national security cutters are designed to support the national objective to maintain the security of America’s maritime boundaries and provide long range search-and-rescue capabilities.

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## **USCGC Spencer returns to Portsmouth after an 88-day African patrol**



[Release from Coast Guard Atlantic Area Public Affairs](#)

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March 10, 2023

PORTSMOUTH, Va. – The crew of USCGC Spencer (WMEC 905) returned to their home port in Portsmouth, Friday, following an 88-day deployment in the U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa area of operations, employed by the U.S. Sixth Fleet and Combined Task Force 65, to defend U.S., allied and partner interests.

During the patrol, Spencer's crew worked to combat illicit transnational activities, including illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing, by conducting multinational law enforcement operations in the Atlantic Ocean. Their efforts served to strengthen existing relationships with African

nations and prioritized opportunities for new partnerships. Spencer's crew also participated in [Obangame Express 2023](#), a maritime exercise with participants from the U.S. Navy, U.S. Coast Guard and 17 West African partners. Conducted by U.S. Naval Forces Africa, Obangame Express is designed to improve regional cooperation, information-sharing practices, and tactical interdiction expertise to enhance the collective capabilities of participating nations to counter illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing and other sea-based illicit activity.

"I am very proud of what this crew accomplished on Spencer while working with our partners in Africa," said Cmdr. Corey Kerns, Spencer's commanding officer. "Together we demonstrated the U.S.'s commitment to maritime security in West Africa and the Gulf of Guinea. We helped our partners in the region build the capability to enforce a rules-based order critical to their own food and economic security. I know this deployment will be something we all remember for a long time, and it was an honor to be a part of it."

Spencer's crew hosted multiple African country representatives, held diplomatic engagements and participated in community relations events during port visits in Cabo Verde, The Gambia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Nigeria and Côte D'Ivoire. Spencer's port visit to Lomé, Togo marked the first U.S. ship visit to Togo since 2012.

While at sea, Spencer also interdicted a Brazilian sailing vessel carrying 3,040 kilograms of suspected cocaine worth over \$109 million.

Spencer's crew was augmented with several temporarily assigned members, including Tactical Law Enforcement and Maritime Safety and Security Team personnel, medical officers from the U.S. Public Health Service and Coast Guard, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Chinese language translators, electronics technicians and a yeoman.

Commissioned in June 1986, Spencer is a Famous-class medium endurance cutter named after John C. Spencer, the 16th Secretary of the Treasury. Spencer is homeported in Portsmouth, Virginia. The cutter's primary mission areas include homeland security, law enforcement, counter drug, search and rescue, migrant interdiction and fisheries enforcement in support of U.S. Coast Guard operations throughout the Western Hemisphere.

For information on how to join the U.S. Coast Guard, visit [www.GoCoastGuard.com](http://www.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 at [www.uscga.edu](http://www.uscga.edu).

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**Brazil and the United States partner to combat illegal fishing as USCGC Stone arrives in Rio de Janeiro**



## [Release from Coast Guard Atlantic Area](#)

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March 7, 2023

Brazil and the United States partner to combat illegal fishing as USCGC Stone arrives in Rio de Janeiro

RIO DE JANEIRO – USCGC Stone (WMSL 758) arrived in the port of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil for a scheduled visit, Tuesday.

The visit is Stone's second stop in Brazil as the cutter continues its multi-mission deployment in the South Atlantic Ocean, exhibiting the U.S. Coast Guard's partnership with Brazil and strengthening the interoperability of the two nations' maritime forces to counter illicit maritime activity and promote maritime sovereignty throughout the region.

"This deployment has already proven the effectiveness of our

interagency and international partnerships,” said U.S. Coast Guard Capt. Clinton Carlson, Stone’s commanding officer. “On our first stop in Brazil in Recife in February 2023, we embarked representatives from the Brazilian Navy who have consistently provided invaluable insight and enhanced our capabilities, allowing us to more readily conduct maritime law enforcement to safeguard and protect international waters.”

Brazil and the United States’ naval services both use unmanned aerial systems to provide increased maritime domain awareness across a variety of mission sets. The embarked Brazilian officers are part of Brazil’s first ship-based unmanned aerial systems squadron, and the embarkation of these officers aboard Stone highlights the robust partnership between the two nations and their shared commitment to upholding the rules-based international order at sea.

“While deployed with the Stone we have been working to counter illegal fishing,” said Brazil Navy Lt. Caio Cardinot. “It’s been a real pleasure to build this partnership, sharing knowledge and expertise with each other. With common UAS capabilities, a very robust communication center, and a hardworking crew, we have been very impressed during our time here.”

In recent years, the United States and Brazil have partnered to share and exchange maritime tactics, techniques, and procedures. Since 2009, the U.S. Coast Guard provided 34 mobile training team deployments and three resident training courses to Brazil in the areas of crisis management, mobile command systems, port security, maritime law enforcement, search and rescue, and disaster response. Additionally, Stone previously visited Rio de Janeiro in 2021 while conducting a South Atlantic Ocean deployment.

Both countries are dedicated to the responsible management of marine resources, demonstrating their shared commitment through the continued integration of their naval forces.

“This deployment is about partnerships,” Carlson said. “Not only have we embarked officers from the Brazilian Navy, but we’ve also embarked U.S. Navy and Marine Corps personnel augments as well. As we work with Brazil’s maritime forces, we’re strengthening our domestic partnerships as well, bringing both joint and combined capabilities to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing around the world. These partnerships create new opportunities for us to maintain free and sustainable access to maritime resources for all.”

Stone is the ninth Legend-class national security cutter in the Coast Guard fleet, homeported in Charleston, South Carolina. The national security cutters can execute the most challenging national security missions, including support to U.S. combatant commanders.

Stone is under the command of U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area. 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 work with partner commands and 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.goatguard.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](#).

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# Coast Guard Cutter Munro

# returns from multi-month Alaska Patrol



[Release from Coast Guard 17th District](#)

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ALAMEDA, Calif. – The Coast Guard Cutter Munro (WMSL 755) and crew returned home to Alameda, Monday, following a 105-day, 10,000-nautical mile Alaska patrol.

Munro partnered with NOAA Office of Law Enforcement personnel to conduct 24 boardings of commercial fishing vessels with the goal of enforcing sustainable fishing practices and ensuring compliance with federal regulations.

During the patrol, the Munro and crew served as the primary search and rescue (SAR) asset in the Bering Sea.

“The continued existence of these fisheries depends on a healthy and productive ecosystem,” said Capt. Rula Deisher, Munro’s commanding officer. “As a federal law enforcement agency, it is the Coast Guard’s responsibility to ensure the longevity of these resources and safety of the fishing fleet. We’re happy to do our part combating unsustainable fishing and promoting maritime commerce that is essential to a strong U.S. economy.”

The crew performed 452 flight evolutions with five separate aircraft from Air Station Kodiak, Alaska, qualifying seven pilots and ensuring SAR readiness in the region.

“A winter patrol in the Bering Sea is the ultimate test of the cutter and crew,” said Deisher. “I am so proud of the women and men of the Munro who braved the elements, operating in the Arctic region to protect our nations resources and fishers.”

Commissioned in 2017, Munro is named for Signalman First Class Douglas A. Munro, the only Coast Guardsman awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor in 1942 for his actions and sacrifice in the defense, rescue, and evacuation of a U.S. Marine battalion from Point Cruz at Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands.

Munro is one of four Legend-class national security cutters homeported in Alameda. National security cutters are 418-feet long, 54-feet wide, and have a 4,600 long-ton displacement. They have a top speed of more than 28 knots, a range of 12,000 nautical miles, endurance of up to 90 days, and can hold a crew of up to 170. These cutters are the centerpiece of the U.S. Coast Guard’s fleet, capable of executing the most challenging operations, including supporting maritime homeland security and defense missions at home and abroad.

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***USCGC MAURICE JESTER is the  
THIRD of Six FRCs to be  
homeported in Boston, MA***



Release from Bollinger Shipyards

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LOCKPORT, La., – (March 2, 2023) – Bollinger Shipyards LLC (“Bollinger”) has delivered the USCGC Maurice Jester to the U.S. Coast Guard in Key West, Florida. This is the 178th vessel Bollinger has delivered to the U.S. Coast Guard over a 35-year period and the 52<sup>nd</sup> [Fast Response Cutter](#) (“FRC”)

delivered under the current program.

"We're incredibly proud to deliver another Fast Response Cutter to be homeported in Boston, the birthplace of the U.S. Coast Guard," said Bollinger President & C.E.O. Ben Bordelon. "We're confident that pound for pound, the quality and capabilities of the FRC platform is unmatched, and that this vessel will outperform its mission requirements and expectations in the challenging conditions where it will operate in the North Atlantic. Our unique experience building for the Coast Guard is unparalleled and has shown time and time again that we can successfully deliver the highest quality vessels on a reliable, aggressive production schedule. We look forward to continuing our historic partnership with the U.S. Coast Guard."

The USCGC Maurice Jester will be the third of six FRCs to be homeported in Sector Boston, which is known as "The Birthplace of the Coast Guard." The sector is responsible for coastal safety, security, and environmental protection from the New Hampshire-Massachusetts border southward to Plymouth, Massachusetts out to 200nm offshore. Sector Boston directs over 1,500 Active Duty, Reserve, and Auxiliary members whose mission is to protect and secure vital infrastructure, rescue mariners in peril at sea, enforce federal law, maintain navigable waterways, and respond to all hazards impacting the maritime transportation system and coastal region.

Each FRC is named for an enlisted Coast Guard hero who distinguished themselves in the line of duty. Maurice Jester enlisted in the Coast Guard as a Surfman in 1917, working his way up to Chief Boatswain's Mate by 1935 while serving on five cutters. Commissioned as a Lieutenant and promoted to Lieutenant Commander, he was the first Coast Guardsman to earn the Navy Cross in World War II, and the first Coast Guard Officer to receive the award for a combat action in direct confrontation with enemy forces. During World War II, Coast Guard cutters battled Nazi submarines in an area off the North

Carolina Coast termed "Torpedo Junction." Jester commanded the Coast Guard Cutter Icarus in the sinking of a German U-352 off the Outer Banks of North Carolina. This historic event resulted in the war's second U-boat sinking by U.S. forces and the first U.S. capture of German combatants.

#### ABOUT THE FAST RESPONSE CUTTER PLATFORM

The FRC is an operational "game changer," according to senior Coast Guard officials. FRCs are consistently being deployed in support of the full range of missions within the United States Coast Guard and other branches of our armed services. This is due to its exceptional performance, expanded operational reach and capabilities, and ability to transform and adapt to the mission. FRCs have conducted operations as far as the Marshall Islands—a 4,400 nautical mile trip from their homeport. Measuring in at 154-feet, FRCs have a flank speed of 28 knots, state of the art C4ISR suite (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance), and stern launch and recovery ramp for a 26-foot, over-the-horizon interceptor cutter boat.

#### ABOUT BOLLINGER SHIPYARDS LLC

Bollinger Shipyards LLC ([www.bollingershipyards.com](http://www.bollingershipyards.com)) has [a 76-year legacy](#)

as a leading designer and builder of high performance military patrol boats and salvage vessels, research vessels, ocean-going double hull barges, offshore oil field support vessels, tugboats, rigs, lift boats, inland waterways push boats, barges, and other steel and aluminum products from its new construction shipyards as part of the U. S. industrial base. Bollinger has 11 shipyards, all strategically located throughout Louisiana with direct access to the Gulf of Mexico, Mississippi River and the Intracoastal Waterway. Bollinger is the largest vessel repair company in the Gulf of Mexico region.

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# USCGC Decisive decommissioned after 55 years of service



[Release from Coast Guard Atlantic Area](#)

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March 2, 2023

USCGC Decisive decommissioned after 55 years of service

PENSACOLA, Fla. – The Coast Guard decommissioned USCGC Decisive (WMEC 629) during a ceremony at Naval Air Station Pensacola, Thursday.

Vice Adm. Kevin E. Lunday, commander of Coast Guard Atlantic Area, presided over the ceremony honoring the 55 years of

service [Decisive](#) and its crews provided to the Coast Guard.

Commissioned in 1968, Decisive was the 15th of 16 Reliance-class medium endurance cutters built for search and rescue, drug and migrant interdiction. It is the first 210-foot cutter to be decommissioned since USCGC Courageous (WMEC 622) and USCGC Durable (WMEC 628) in 2001.

“Decisive is a special ship that has served many districts throughout its history,” said Cmdr. Aaron Delano-Johnson, commanding officer of Decisive. “With a variety of high-performing Coast Guard members with distinguished careers, Decisive boasted some of the finest crews throughout its tenure. Decisive has been a fixture in all four of its homeports, remaining durable and dependable throughout history. I personally want to thank the crew for their dedication and service to our great nation as they were instrumental to upholding the cutter’s motto of being dedicated to duty.”

Decisive’s keel was laid on May 12, 1967, at the Coast Guard Yard in Baltimore, Maryland. Decisive was launched Dec. 14, 1967, and commissioned Aug. 23, 1968. Following its commissioning in 1968, the ship was homeported in New Castle, New Hampshire. The cutter moved homeports several times during its tenure, including St. Petersburg, Florida and Pascagoula, Mississippi before its final assignment to Pensacola.

During the cutter’s last year of service, the sunset crew of 12 officers and 62 enlisted members conducted high profile operations including assistance in the repatriation of over 400 migrants in a week’s time while patrolling the South Florida Straits. Decisive’s crew assisted with a 200 person mass migrant transfer, the largest single repatriation effort at the time since the 1980 Mariel Boatlift.

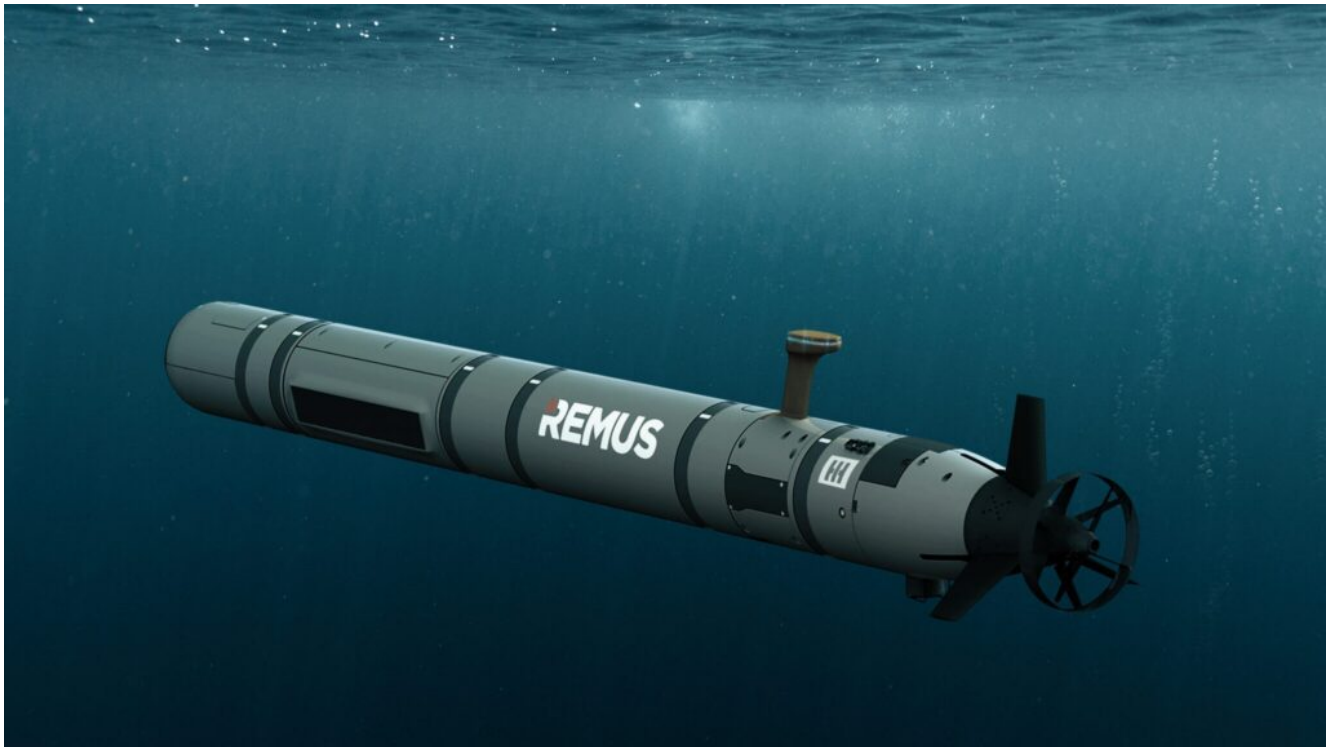
“I am immensely honored being the final commanding officer of Decisive,” said Delano-Johnson. “As I pause and reflect,

remembering the first time I saw the ship as a junior officer aboard a patrol boat in the Straits of Florida, the pride I feel commanding this ship is indescribable. To lead this sunset crew and watch them grow over the past year has been humbling and rewarding. I am grateful for their dedication and service and look forward to staying in touch and following their careers. While our business here is done, we will proudly carry on Decisive's legacy of hard work and reliability."

Decisive was one of the Coast Guard's 14 remaining 210-foot, Reliance-class medium endurance cutters. As part of the Coast Guard's [acquisition](#) program, the 360-foot [Heritage-class](#) offshore patrol cutters will replace the Coast Guard's 270-foot and 210-foot medium endurance cutters. The offshore patrol cutters will provide the majority of offshore presence for the Coast Guard's cutter fleet, bridging the capabilities of the 418-foot national security cutters, which patrol the open ocean, and the 154-foot fast response cutters, which serve closer to shore.

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## **HII AND OCEAN AERO TO PARTNER ON ADVANCED UNMANNED MARITIME CAPABILITIES**



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## HII and Ocean Aero to Partner on Advanced Unmanned Maritime Capabilities

MCLEAN, Va. and GULFPORT, Miss., March 02, 2023 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – HII (NYSE: HII) and Ocean Aero initiated a strategic agreement to advance the combined capabilities of their respective unmanned maritime platforms and autonomy software solutions. The unmanned solution providers recently commenced multiple, simultaneous efforts to enhance the operational reach and duration of the platforms, collaborative autonomy behaviors, shared sensor fusion and perception capabilities, and accelerated seabed-to-shore data transmission methods.

“We are pleased to partner with Ocean Aero to further expand the operational capabilities of the U.S. Armed Forces, partner nations and other maritime-focused commercial institutions,” said Duane Fotheringham, president of the Unmanned Systems business group at HII’s Mission Technologies division. “We are excited to combine the best of our individual products to deliver an exceptional suite of solutions to our customers.”

Kevin Decker, Ocean Aero chief executive officer, added: "This is the perfect time for us to partner with HII. With rising maritime challenges increasing worldwide, we need new capabilities to meet them. Incorporating our two firms' autonomous vehicle value propositions will unlock new tools for our customers at home and abroad."

HII and Ocean Aero are involved in several unmanned maritime systems initiatives and exercises across the globe. Ocean Aero recently completed Digital Horizon, the U.S. Fifth Fleet Maritime Domain Awareness exercise in the Arabian Gulf, where HII's REMUS vehicles (MK18 Mod 1 and MK18 Mod 2) have been deployed continuously since 2013. The HII-Ocean Aero team is already planning to demonstrate their combined capabilities at an upcoming event in the region, in addition to other planned events and exercises for U.S. and international partners.

HII is the preeminent unmanned underwater vehicle manufacturer and a pioneer in the UUV industry, continuously producing REMUS vehicles since the early 2000s. HII manufactures a full range of REMUS UUVs, from small to extra-large, with endurance ranging from several hours to months at depths down to 6,000 meters. More than 600 REMUS UUVs have been sold across the globe, with a majority of those still in operational use today. Additionally, HII's Odyssey autonomy software solution offers scalable autonomy aligned with open architecture standards, including Unmanned Maritime Autonomy Architecture.

Ocean Aero pioneered the world's first and only environmentally powered Autonomous Underwater and Surface Vehicle, the TRITON, which collects data both above and below the ocean's surface and relays it to users from anywhere at any time. Dual modalities allow users to integrate a variety of sensor payloads and communications capabilities, expanding the ocean data collection possibilities and breaking paradigms created by manned platforms. Persistent collections and real-time data transmissions are feeding the most complex models for weather, climate and ocean health and creating

transformational change in the maritime space.

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# Coast Guard Cutter Juniper returns to homeport after completing a 43-day Operation Blue Pacific patrol

## SEAPOWVER

The Official Publication of the Navy League of the United States

[Release from Coast Guard 14th District](#)

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HONOLULU – The Coast Guard Cutter Juniper (WLB 201) returns to homeport in Honolulu after a mission in the Pacific to deter illegal fishing and support partner nation’s sovereignty as part of Operation Blue Pacific.

The crew of the Juniper departed Honolulu mid-January and covered approximately 8,200 nautical miles in the effort to assist Pacific Island partners in protecting maritime governance and a rules-based international order to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific.

“Combining efforts to deter illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing throughout Oceania is more important than ever,” said Lt. Cmdr. Timothy Bonner, the Juniper’s commanding officer. “It was an honor for the Juniper crew to have the

opportunity to work with our Fijian partners in assisting them in patrolling their exclusive economic zone.”

The Juniper embarked four Fijian shipriders representing Fiji’s Police Force, Ministry of Fisheries, Revenue and Customs, and the Republic of Fiji Navy who spent multiple days underway with the crew.

With support from members of the Juniper, USCG TACLET Pacific, and a Mandarin linguist from the U.S. Marine Corps, the Fijian Shipriders were able to utilize cutter resources to patrol Fijian waters and conduct a fishery boarding in the effort to deter IUU fishing within their EEZ.

While in Suva, Fiji, the Juniper crew hosted U.S. Ambassador Marie Damour and conducted tours for multiple agencies including Fiji’s Ministry of Fisheries, Revenue and Customs, and Maritime Safety Authority. Multiple Juniper crewmembers visited the William Cross College with representatives from the U.S. Navy, U.S. Embassy, and Republic of Fiji Navy to speak with senior-grade students and hold group discussions about the topic of overcoming gender bias. An interagency rugby match with the Republic of Fiji Navy took place that very same day at the historic Albert’s Park in Suva.

After departing Fiji, the Juniper crew transited to American Samoa where they serviced multiple aids to navigation (ATON) in Pago Pago Harbor and on Ta’u Island.

“It is our pleasure to support American Samoa’s maritime transportation system by utilizing our crew’s multi-mission capabilities,” said Lt. j.g. Pryor Miller, the Juniper’s operations officer. “Servicing ATON in the Pacific is essential to providing the needed infrastructure to maintain a maritime transportation system that promotes economic prosperity and an uninterrupted flow of maritime commerce.”

Throughout the entirety of the patrol, Juniper boarding teams conducted multiple boardings and observation reports of

fishing vessels under the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), which strives to protect the region's fish stocks on the high seas. The WCPFC has 26 member nations and 7 participating territories, 18 of which have enforcing authority, including the United States.

Operation Blue Pacific is an overarching multi-mission Coast Guard endeavor, promoting security, safety, sovereignty, and economic prosperity in Oceania while strengthening relationships between partner nations in the Pacific.

The Juniper is a 225-foot seagoing buoy tender home-ported in Honolulu and is responsible for maintaining aids to navigation, performing maritime law enforcement, port and coastal security, search and rescue and environmental protection.

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## **USCGC Vigilant's crew returns home following 28-day Florida Straits patrol**



## [Release from Coast Guard Atlantic Area](#)

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USCGC Vigilant's crew returns home following 28-day Florida Straits patrol

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. – The crew of the USCGC Vigilant (WMEC 617) returned to their home port in Cape Canaveral Saturday following a 28-day patrol in the Florida Straits.

Patrolling in support of Homeland Security Task Force – Southeast and Operation Vigilant Sentry in the Seventh Coast Guard District's area of responsibility, Vigilant's crew conducted maritime safety and security missions while working to detect, deter and intercept unsafe and illegal migrant ventures bound for the United States.

During the patrol, Vigilant assisted with the interdiction of a grossly overloaded vessel with 311 Haitian migrants on

board. The crew provided migrants with food, water, shelter and medical aid until the migrants were repatriated back to their country of origin.

“This interdiction was a great example of the Department of Homeland Security’s outstanding interagency coordination and cooperation,” said Cmdr. Jay Guyer, Vigilant’s commanding officer. “I’m extremely proud of Vigilant’s crew in how they execute this dynamic and difficult mission with professionalism and humanity.”

Vigilant is a 210-foot Reliance-class medium endurance cutter. The cutter’s primary missions are counter drug operations, migrant interdiction, enforcement of federal fishery laws and search and rescue in support of U.S. Coast Guard operations throughout the Western Hemisphere.