

# Coast Guard Cutter Waesche returns home following counternarcotics patrol; \$166M in contraband seized



Release from Coast Guard Pacific Area

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Coast Guard Cutter Waesche returns home following counternarcotics patrol; \$166M in contraband seized

ALAMEDA, Calif. – The Coast Guard Cutter Waesche (WMSL 751) and crew returned to their Alameda homeport, Friday, following a 90-day counternarcotics patrol in the Eastern Pacific Ocean.

The 418-foot national security cutter and crew patrolled more

than 15,000 nautical miles conducting law enforcement and search-and-rescue operations in international waters off Central America and South America.

During nighttime patrol operations, Waesche personnel were notified by a Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA) and aircrew of a suspected narcotics-smuggling vessel transiting international waters. Waesche's personnel launched the cutter's small boat crews and boarding teams, who interdicted the vessel after a multi-hour pursuit. The interdiction resulted in the seizure of approximately 400 pounds of cocaine and 5,000 pounds of marijuana.

Waesche later received a separate report from an MPA aircrew of another suspected narcotics-smuggling vessel transiting international waters. Waesche directed the launch of the deployed Jacksonville, Florida, based Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron (HITRON) aircrew and MH-65 Dolphin helicopter to interdict the vessel. The seizure resulted in an additional estimated 400 pounds of cocaine and 4,500 pounds of marijuana.

"Counternarcotics is one of the Coast Guard's most tactically demanding missions, requiring the integration of multiple Coast Guard units, federal agencies and partner nations," said Capt. Robert S. Mohr, Waesche's commanding officer. "The crew's tenacity throughout the patrol and focus seizing drugs from suspected smugglers in international waters off the coast of Central America is a testament to this crew's resiliency. They embody the best the Coast Guard has to offer with their determination and teamwork."

The Waesche deployed with the HITRON aircrew, the Coast Guard's Pacific Tactical Law Enforcement Team Detachment 108, and a civilian team responsible for operating the cutter's ScanEagle, an advanced unmanned aircraft system.

Additionally, the crew of the Waesche completed joint

exercises with the Mexican Navy during the patrol. Waesche conducted formation operations with ARM Jalisco, a 280-foot Oaxaca-class offshore patrol vessel, executing maneuvers in close-quarters range to strengthen partner-nation relationships, interoperability, and operational proficiency between the sea services.

As part of the Coast Guard's living marine resources protection mission, Waesche's crew rescued an entangled sea turtle stuck in discarded fishing line. The crew cut the fishing line and released the turtle back to the ocean.

Waesche's crew offloaded approximately 6,325 pounds of cocaine and more than 13,220 pounds of marijuana worth a combined estimated wholesale total of more than \$166 million in San Diego. In addition to Waesche's two interdictions, they offloaded contraband interdicted by the Coast Guard Cutter Steadfast's (WMEC 623) crew who were responsible for one interdiction, seizing approximately 3,300 pounds of cocaine and the Coast Guard Cutter Active's (WMEC 618) crew who were responsible for two interdictions seizing approximately 2,116 pounds of cocaine and 3,716 pounds of marijuana.

The Waesche is one of four Legend-class national security cutters homeported in Alameda, California. National security cutters are capable of operating in the most demanding open ocean environments, including the hazardous fisheries of the North Pacific and the vast approaches of the Southern Pacific where a large amount of narcotics traffic occurs. With robust command, control, communication, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance equipment, stern boat launch and aviation facilities, as well as long-endurance station keeping, the national security cutters are afloat operational-level headquarters for complex law enforcement and national security missions involving multiple Coast Guard and partner agency participation.

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# Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star returns home by Easter after 144-day Operation Deep Freeze 2023 mission



[Release from Coast Guard Pacific Area](#)

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*Editor's Note: Click [here](#) to view the U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Area Polar Operations imagery page*

SEATTLE – The Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star (WAGB 10) and crew returned to its homeport of Seattle, Saturday, following a 144-day deployment to Antarctica in support of Operation Deep

Freeze 2023.

This deployment marks the Polar Star's 26<sup>th</sup> journey to Antarctica in support of Operation Deep Freeze, an annual joint military service mission to resupply the United States Antarctic stations, in support of the National Science Foundation (NSF) – the lead agency for the United States Antarctic Program (USAP). This year also marks the 63rd iteration of the annual operation.

The Polar Star crew [departed Seattle](#) bound for Antarctica on Nov. 14, 2022, traveling more than 25,000 miles through the North Pacific, South Pacific, Indian, Southern, and South Atlantic Oceans, including stops in four continents.

While en route to Antarctica, the Polar Star made two logistical stops in Australia in Chowder Bay, Sydney and Hobart. In Hobart, the cutter and crew hosted a reception on the cutter for guests from the Australian Antarctic Division, Australian Border Force, Tasmanian government representatives, and [local industry partners](#).

After arriving in Antarctica, the cutter broke a 15.3-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. The cutter departed the Antarctic region on March 2, after 67 days of operations in support of [Operation Deep Freeze 2023](#).

On the return journey, the Polar Star crossed Drake Passage, rounded Cape Horn and transited the Strait of Magellan followed by stops in Punta Arenas and Valparaiso, Chile. The Polar Star's stop in [Valparaiso](#) consisted of a multi-day visit where the crew conducted professional exchanges with Chilean Navy and First Naval Zone members, as well as students from the Chilean-U.S. Binational Center.

“The completion of this mission is a testament to our crew’s hard work, sacrifice and dedication,” said Capt. Keith Ropella, Polar Star’s commanding officer. “While this trip was incredibly rewarding and a once-in-a-lifetime experience, we are glad to be home and reunited with our friends and families again.”

Operation Deep Freeze is the annual logistical support mission provided by the Department of Defense to the NSF managed by the USAP. This includes coordination of strategic intertheater airlift, tactical intertheater 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 will proceed to Vallejo, California, in May for Phase III of its five-year Service Life Extension Project (SLEP). SLEP was awarded to Mare Island Dry Dock LLC to recapitalize targeted systems such as the propulsion, communication and machinery control systems and conduct major maintenance to extend the cutter’s service life by four years. By replacing obsolete, unsupportable or maintenance-intensive equipment, the Coast Guard will mitigate the risk of lost operational days due to unplanned maintenance or system failures. Each phase is coordinated so that operational commitments, such as Operation Deep Freeze missions in Antarctica will still be met.

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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# Combating Climate Change

Captured by SD 1078 in the Atlantic Ocean during Hurricane Fiona, Sept. 22, 2022. (Video: NOAA and Saildrone)

*Excerpted from the upcoming article in the May 2023 issue of Seapower Magazine*

As climate change increasingly affects weather patterns over the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico, tracking hurricanes and monitoring their intensity has become more critical than ever.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) reports that between 1980 and 2021, hurricanes caused 6,697 deaths and over \$1.1 trillion in damages. Hurricanes' massive waves and roaring winds can also have catastrophic effects on ships at sea, making accurate forecasting a must for naval operations.

While new technology has steadily improved hurricane-tracking forecasts since the 1990s, predicting how rapidly a tropical storm or hurricane may intensify has been more problematic. To understand storm intensity, scientists measure heat and momentum, collecting data on the exchange of energy between the ocean and atmosphere. But in order to do this in the most accurate way, scientists need data from inside the storm itself.

That's where uncrewed systems come in. "With uncrewed systems, we can either do what we're already doing, but do it more productively and efficiently, or we can go get data we just couldn't get before," said NOAA Corps Captain William Mowitt, director of NOAA's Uncrewed Systems Operations Center.

You can read the full article about how the U.S. Navy, NOAA,

and private partners are using uncrewed systems and new technologies to forecast hurricanes in the May issue of Seapower Magazine.

*Vicky Uhland is a Colorado-based writer and editor who also covers the Navy League's annual Sea-Air-Space conference.*

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## Coast Guard Uses New Tech for Oil Spill Response



Kirsten Trego talks about the USCG – Oil Spill Response: Tech Effort on the Horizon in the exhibit hall.

When most people think of the U.S. Coast Guard, they envision daring rescues at sea. But the USCG has a variety of lesser-known but equally important duties, said USCG Capt. (Ret.) Kirsten Trego.

During the Monday morning presentation, "USCG Oil Spill Response: Tech Efforts on the Horizon," Trego discussed how the Coast Guard is the federal on-scene coordinator for oil-discharge cleanup in the coastal zone. That zone not only includes the nation's shores, but also rivers, waterways, the Great Lakes and more.

"If something happens, we're the best prepared," she said.

The USGS has a 30-person team dedicated to oil-spill responses. One of the team's focuses is working with the oil and gas industry, state and local governments, federal agencies and academia to research how oil spills are evolving and how best to deal with them.

Trego said these research initiatives include the Great Lakes Oil Center of Expertise, which is dedicated to research, training and testing focused on freshwater and cold-weather conditions during an oil-spill response.

The Coast Guard is also increasingly relying on uncrewed systems to more quickly and safely respond to spills, Trego said. New technology like sub-surface remote sensing uses long-range autonomous underwater vehicles to detect oil under ice in the Great Lakes. There is also an air focus, including remote-sensing unmanned aircraft systems (UAS).

"And where the fun is, is the NOAA MESDIS Marine Pollution Surveillance Program from space," Trego said. Remote-sensing UAS can see oil spills from space, characterize them and report the data.

Trego anticipates more UAS involvement in oil-spill responses in the future. "In the changing landscape of more oil exploration and more risk, traditional methods are no longer viable," she said. "When spills happen, we need to be ready and available to handle them."

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# Coast Guard Cutter Warren Deyampert commissions in Boston



[Release from Coast Guard 1st District](#)

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March 31, 2023

Coast Guard Cutter Warren Deyampert commissions in Boston

BOSTON – The Coast Guard’s newest cutter, the Coast Guard Cutter Warren Deyampert (WPC-1151), was commissioned at Coast Guard Base Boston, March 30.

Chief Warrant Officer Lance DeFoggi, assumed command of the cutter during a ceremony presided over by Vice Admiral Kevin Lunday, the Coast Guard Atlantic Area commander. The Warren Deyampert is the second of six Fast Response Cutters that will be homeported in Boston, serving along the 1st Coast Guard District.

“This is truly a special moment in our lives and a milestone for our family’s history that will be remembered for generations to come,” said Pamela Jackson, a cousin of Deyampert, and the ship’s sponsor “To the crew, congratulations on the commissioning of the 51<sup>st</sup> Fast Response Cutter that will bear the name of my cousin, Warren Deyampert. I am so honored to serve as the sponsor and know that this crew will always have a special place in my heart.”

The Sentinel-class fast response cutter (FRC) is designed for multiple missions, including drug and migrant interdiction; ports, waterways and coastal security; fishery patrols; search and rescue; and national defense. The Coast Guard has ordered 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.

“Now, we are standing ready, to get underway to perform all of the missions we have been training for in the birthplace of the Coast Guard,” said DeFoggi. “We will strive to embody the words of our motto, ‘Gallantry during grave peril’, as what was written on Deyampert’s award citation”.

Born in Attalla, Alabama, the cutter’s namesake joined the Coast Guard at age 19, and served aboard the Coast Guard Cutter Escanaba during World War II, beginning in August, 1941. Deyampert’s primary role was within the food service rating, but he also served as one of the ship’s three rescue

swimmers.

Following a torpedo attack on the U.S. Army transport ship Dorchester in North Atlantic waters on Feb. 3, 1943, Deyampert swam in absolute darkness to rescue survivors in the freezing waters of the North Atlantic. His efforts affected the rescue of more than 100 crewmembers, many of whom were hypothermic and unable to swim.

Four months later, June 13, 1943, the Escanaba sank, following an explosion onboard that was believed to be from a torpedo attack. All but two crewmembers were killed in the explosion. Deyampert was posthumously awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal and Purple Heart Medal for his heroic rescue of the Dorchester crew.

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**USCGC Northland returns home following 62-day Florida Straits and Windward Passage patrol**



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

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PORTSMOUTH, Va. – The crew of the USCGC Northland (WMEC 904) returned to their home port in Portsmouth, Thursday, following a 62-day maritime safety and security patrol in the Florida Straits and Windward Passage.

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

Northland’s crew interdicted multiple unsafe and overloaded migrant vessels during the patrol, providing food, water, shelter and medical aid to 515 migrants. In one case, Northland partnered with additional Coast Guard air and surface assets to intercept an overloaded, tugboat-style

vessel attempting to reach the United States. In another case, Northland was one of the primary assets to respond to a report of multiple people in the water just south of Key West, Florida, rescuing 27 migrants.

“I am immensely proud of the Northland crew,” said Cmdr. Andrew Dannelly, commanding officer of Northland. “Day in and day out, the crew demonstrated they are always ready to deliver exceptional service to the nation. Their inspirational vigilance, professionalism and actions saved hundreds of lives.”

Northland is a 270-foot, Famous-class medium endurance cutter. Its primary missions include law enforcement, search and rescue, drug interdiction, fisheries enforcement, migrant interdiction, homeland security, international training, defense and humanitarian operations. Northland patrols the offshore waters from Maine to Florida, the Gulf of Mexico, the Eastern Pacific and the Caribbean Sea.

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 the U.S. Coast Guard Academy can be found [here](#).

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**Coast Guard crew offloads  
\$166 million worth of  
counternarcotics in San Diego**



## [Release from Coast Guard 11th District](#)

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SAN DIEGO – The Coast Guard Cutter Woesche (WMSL 751) crew offloaded more than 6,325 pounds of cocaine and more than 13,220 pounds of marijuana worth more than \$166 million, Wednesday, in San Diego.

The five interdictions occurred in international waters in the Eastern Pacific Ocean off the coasts of Central and South America in February and March.

“The Coast Guard is dedicated to preventing illicit drugs from entering our country via the maritime environment,” said Rear Adm. Andrew Sugimoto, Eleventh District commander. “These transnational criminal networks will be met on the water by our vigilant service members, like the crew of the Woesche, at every turn and brought to justice by the U.S. Attorney’s office.”

The counternarcotics were interdicted by the following U.S.

Coast Guard cutters:

- Waesche's crew was responsible for two interdictions seizing approximately 881 pounds of cocaine and 9,500 pounds of marijuana.
- Coast Guard Cutter Steadfast (WMEC 623) crew was responsible for one interdiction, seizing approximately 3,300 pounds of cocaine.
- Coast Guard Cutter Active (WMEC 618) crew was responsible for two interdictions seizing approximately 2,116 pounds of cocaine and 3,716 pounds of marijuana.

"This marks Waesche's first counter-narcotics patrol in several years and the crew did an outstanding job to work with international and inter-agency partners to successfully prevent \$166 million dollars' worth of illicit drugs from entering our country, cities, and neighborhoods," said Capt. Robert Mohr, commanding officer of the Waesche. "I am extremely impressed with the crew's dedication throughout this dynamic patrol. They overcame multiple challenges with collective hard work, ingenuity, and positive attitudes to keep us in pursuit of these cartels and their dangerous drugs. I couldn't be prouder of this remarkable crew and what they do to protect our communities."

Numerous U.S. agencies from the Departments of Defense, Justice and Homeland Security cooperate in the effort to combat transnational organized crime. The Coast Guard, Navy, Customs and Border Protection, FBI, Drug Enforcement Administration, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, along with allied and international partner agencies, play a role in counternarcotic operations.

The fight against drug cartels in the Eastern Pacific Ocean requires unity of effort in all phases from detection, monitoring, and interdictions, to criminal prosecutions by international partners and U.S. Attorneys' Offices in

districts across the nation. The law enforcement phase of counter-smuggling operations in the Eastern Pacific Ocean is conducted under the authority of the Eleventh Coast Guard District, headquartered in Alameda. The interdictions, including the actual boardings, are led and conducted by members of the U.S. Coast Guard.

“Like the United States Coast Guard and our other law enforcement partners, we are always ready to bring drug smugglers to justice in court,” said Sean P. Costello, United States attorney for the Southern District of Alabama. “Disrupting and dismantling the organizations responsible for transporting and distributing this poison remains among our highest priorities.”

The Waesche is the second Legend-class cutter of the U.S. Coast Guard and is homeported at Coast Guard Island in Alameda. The Waesche is 418 feet long with a top speed of 28 knots and a range of 12,000 nautical miles. It is equipped with a flight deck and hangars capable of housing two multi-mission helicopters, and outfitted with the most advanced command, control, and communications equipment.

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## **SaiLdrone Scales Production of New Mid-size USV**



## [Release from Saildrone](#)

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To meet the growing demand for advanced data-collection capabilities at sea, Saildrone has developed the 33-foot Voyager designed for near-shore ocean mapping and maritime security missions.

(March 28, 2023 – ALAMEDA, CA) – Saildrone, the world leader in providing near real-time maritime intelligence using small uncrewed systems, announced today a new, mid-size class of uncrewed surface vehicles (USVs). The 33-foot (10 m) Voyager is specifically designed for near-shore ocean and lakebed mapping, and to meet the challenges of IUU (illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing), ISR (intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance), law enforcement and maritime safety, drug interdiction, and border and harbor security.

Saildrone's three USV models—the Voyager along with the 23-foot (7 m) Explorer and 65-foot (20 m) Surveyor—have been developed to balance mission payload flexibility and endurance. The Voyager's larger size, compared to the Explorer, allows for a more persistent datalink, increased power available for ocean mapping and ISR payloads, and versatile payload integration options.

The ocean mapping sensor suite includes multibeam sonar equipment capable of seafloor mapping of depths to 900 feet (300 m), and the ISR sensor suite includes a smart camera array, digital radar, and sub-surface passive acoustics. Primarily powered by wind and solar, the Voyager also features an electric propulsion alternative, useful for low-wind and near-shore operations.

“With our Voyager platform, Saildrone helps to eliminate maritime gaps above and below the ocean surface, reducing risk to mission and risk to force. We want to be a force-multiplier for our partners and allies when it comes to ISR capabilities,” said Richard Jenkins, Saildrone founder and CEO.

To date, Saildrone has built 100 23-foot Explorer-class USVs at its headquarters in Alameda, CA. To meet the increasing demand for the new Voyager platform, Saildrone has elected to outsource the production of the wing, hull, and keel to composite specialists: [Janicki Industries](#) will manufacture the wing and keel in Washington, and [Seemann Composites](#) will manufacture the hull in Mississippi. Saildrone will continue to produce, install, and service internal components in Alameda.

“One of the truly exceptional aspects of working at a company like Saildrone is the fact that hardware and software engineering, manufacturing, mission operations, and G&A are all housed under one roof—in a former airplane hangar on a site known for aviation and naval innovation,” said Saildrone

COO Mark Cuyler. “But with the rapidly increasing demand for ocean data collection across the fleet, it is necessary to outsource some of our production. Saildrone is proud to work with great US-based companies like Janicki and Seemann, whose expertise in the marine composites industry will help us to more rapidly meet the demanding challenges of the world’s oceans.”

Saildrone has been conducting sea trials of the Voyager in the San Francisco Bay and offshore of California since late 2022, and the first operational maritime security and ocean mapping missions will begin this spring. The company is currently producing new Voyagers at a rate of one per week.

The data collection capabilities of Saildrone’s autonomous vehicles have been proven in numerous operational missions, covering almost 1 million nautical miles from the Arctic to the Antarctic. The company looks forward to its continued and close partnership with the US Government and its allies in boosting maritime security around the globe.

Visit Saildrone at 2023 IPF, March 28-30, at the Baltimore Convention Center and at the Navy League’s Sea Air Space 2023 at the Gaylord National Convention Center in National Harbor, MD.

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**Fairbanks Morse Defense  
Launches Accelerator Program  
to Support Emerging**



[Release from Fairbanks Morse](#)

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*Defense contractor dedicating mentors and additional resources to*

*foster promising mission-critical technologies*

BELoit, Wis. – March 28, 2023 – [Fairbanks Morse Defense](#) (FMD), a portfolio company of Arcline Investment Management (Arcline), has launched the FM Defense Accelerator program to

identify and nurture emerging technologies with mission-critical applications for the future of maritime defense. The defense contractor is now accepting applications for participants.

“As a principal supplier of best-in-class maritime defense technology, we are well positioned to recognize and foster pioneering solutions that have the potential to solve challenges faced by the industry,” said FMD CEO George Whittier. “The FM Defense Accelerator is open to eligible entrepreneurs with a great idea, a plan for bringing it to fruition, and an appetite to work with us and benefit from our expertise and relationship with the Navy, Coast Guard, and Military Sealift Command (MSC).”

Once selected, participants will work with FMD mentors selected from the defense contractor’s Technology Center of Excellence specifically for their expertise. In addition to the dedicated mentors assigned to FM Defense Accelerator participants, program benefits include the following:

- Individual programs created specifically for each technology ranging from three months to several years
- Access to broader FMD resources, including technical experts and a worldwide service network
- Brand exposure opportunities and marketing support
  
- Route to market advice and support

Once a technology reaches a predetermined development milestone, it has the opportunity to be demonstrated at various industry events, giving FM Defense Accelerator participants exposure to representatives from the Navy, Coast Guard, MSC, and other key stakeholders.

FMD has recently been working with technology collaborators through the Technology Center of Excellence, and a selection of these companies will be transitioned into the FM Defense Accelerator program.

The FM Defense Accelerator will be featured at the FMD booth (837) at the [Sea-Air-Space](#) Exposition from April 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at National Harbor, MD, along with live demonstrations of naval defense technologies being developed by FMD and its technology collaborators.

Companies interested in applying for a place on the program can visit the landing page at <https://rb.gy/f4qogd> to complete the online application.

### **About Fairbanks Morse Defense (FMD)**

Fairbanks Morse Defense (FMD) builds, maintains, and services the most trusted naval power and propulsion systems on the planet. For more than 100 years, FMD has been a principal supplier of a growing array of leading marine technologies, OEM parts, and turnkey services to the Navy, Coast Guard, Military Sealift Command, and Canadian Coast Guard. FMD stands ready to rapidly support the systems that power military fleets without compromising safety or quality. In times of

peace and war, the experienced engineers, sailors, and technicians of FMD demonstrate our commitment to supporting the mission and vision of critical global naval operations wherever and whenever needed. FMD is a portfolio company of Arcline Investment Management.

To learn more, visit [www.FairbanksMorseDefense.com](http://www.FairbanksMorseDefense.com)

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## **Navy, Coast Guard Begin Oceania Maritime Security Initiative Patrol**



USS Mobile (LCS 26) heads towards Naval Surface Warfare Center, Port Hueneme Division in California for a ship groom on the afternoon of Nov. 28. LCS 26, an Independence-class littoral combat ship, was commissioned in 2021 and is

homeported in San Diego. (U.S. Navy photo by Eric Parsons/Released)

[Release from Commander, U.S. Third Fleet Public Affairs](#)

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24 March 2023

SAN DIEGO - The U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard began their joint patrol in the Western Pacific under the Oceania Maritime Security Initiative (OMSI) to reduce and eliminate illegal, unregulated, unreported fishing, combat transnational crimes, and enhance regional security, March 20.

“OMSI is imperative to ensure that the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Convention (WCPFC) agreement is upheld within the Indo-Pacific region,” said Cmdr. Richard Skinnell, Mobile’s commanding officer. “This initiative allows us the opportunity to work jointly with other branches of the military as well as our allies and partners.”

OMSI, a Secretary of Defense program, improves maritime security and domain awareness by enabling Coast Guard law enforcement personnel to conduct maritime law enforcement operations from Navy ships. These joint and combined operations ensure the U.S. military honors its security commitments to allies, partners, and friends.

“Collaborating with our partners throughout Oceania is essential in ensuring a free and open Blue Pacific,” said Cmdr. Jeff Bryant, chief of enforcement, U.S. Coast Guard District Fourteen. It is a privilege and we are proud to support the Federated States of Micronesia through dedicated partnership in the effort to maintain maritime governance and preserve maritime sovereignty.”

The WCPFC international fisheries agreement prioritizes the long-term conservation and sustainable use of highly migratory fish stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean.

“The U.S. Coast Guard is always ready and looking forward to executing the OMSI mission alongside our U.S. Navy partners,” said Bryant.

Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Mobile (LCS 26), with an embarked Coast Guard law enforcement detachment from the Pacific Tactical Law Enforcement Team, supports maritime law with partner nations by enforcing the WCPFC agreement and by suppressing illicit activities. Independence-variant LCS is the platform of choice for this mission due to its fast and agile maneuvering capabilities, large flight deck with manned and unmanned aviation assets and surface warfare mission set.

An integral part of U.S. Pacific Fleet, U.S. 3rd Fleet operates naval forces in the Indo-Pacific and provides the realistic, relevant training necessary to flawlessly execute our Navy’s role across the full spectrum of military operations—from combat operations to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. U.S. 3rd Fleet works together with our allies and partners to advance freedom of navigation, the rule of law, and other principles that underpin security for the Indo-Pacific region.