

USCGC Myrtle Hazard completes successful patrol emphasizing community commitment in CNMI



[Release from U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam](#)

Nov. 15, 2023

SANTA RITA, Guam – The USCGC Myrtle Hazard (WPC 1139) crew successfully completed a multifaceted patrol from Oct. 16 to Nov. 5, 2023, underscoring the Service's unwavering commitment to the community and partners in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

During this period, the cutter's crew achieved several key

objectives, including the delivery of vital donations and supplies, and facilitating critical wellness checks in the wake of Typhoon Bolaven.

Lt. Jalle Merritt, commanding officer of the Myrtle Hazard, expressed pride in her crew's accomplishments, stating, "The value and impact of our efforts in the CNMI are a testament to the dedication and skill of our personnel. We are honored to serve these communities and contribute positively to their resilience and well-being."

Community Support and Disaster Response

In a joint effort with Guam Animals in Need (GAIN), the Myrtle Hazard team ensured the timely delivery of 500 lbs. of dog food to support animal rescue initiatives in Rota and Tinian. This gesture highlights the U.S. Coast Guard's broader commitment to supporting local communities and non-governmental partners. In addition, they delivered supplies to the U.S. Marine Corps in Tinian.

Moreover, the cutter crew played a pivotal role in transporting the CNMI Northern Islands Mayor, Val Taisakan, enabling essential post-storm wellness checks and the distribution of necessary supplies to Agrihan and Pagan residents. This timely intervention, following Typhoon Bolaven, was critical in assessing and addressing the immediate needs of the island communities.

Capt. Nick Simmons, commander of U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam, emphasized the humanitarian nature of the U.S. Coast Guard's mission. "Our service to the community goes beyond maritime safety and security. It's about building strong relationships and being there for our partners, especially in times of need."

Training and Maintenance Achievements

Alongside these community-focused initiatives, Myrtle Hazard personnel diligently conducted shipboard training, encompassing navigation and damage control drills. This training ensures the crew's preparedness for a wide range of maritime operations and emergencies. The cutter's engineering team also successfully completed repairs to four maintenance and casualty items, reinforcing operational readiness.

The Myrtle Hazard's most recent patrol reflects the U.S. Coast Guard's enduring commitment to serving and protecting the communities within its area of responsibility. The successful completion of this patrol not only demonstrates operational excellence but also reinforces the humanitarian values at the core of the U.S. Coast Guard's mission.

About the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Myrtle Hazard

The USCGC Myrtle Hazard is a 154-foot Sentinel-class cutter homeported in Guam. It plays a vital role in maritime law enforcement, search and rescue, and homeland security operations in the region.

U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star departs Seattle to begin Operation Deep Freeze in Antarctica



[Release from Coast Guard Pacific Area](#)

16 November 2023

SEATTLE – The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star (WAGB 10) and crew departed Seattle, Wednesday, and are scheduled to transit to Antarctica in support of Operation Deep Freeze.

Operation Deep Freeze (ODF) is an annual joint military 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 marks the 27th year for the Polar Star to render support.

Each year, the Polar Star crew breaks a navigable channel through ice, allowing fuel and supply ships to reach McMurdo Station, which is the largest Antarctic station and the logistics hub of the USAP.

“Operation Deep Freeze is a unique and important mission that

Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star undertakes each year," said Capt. Keith Ropella, Polar Star's commanding officer. "This mission requires year-round effort from the crew to prepare this 47-year-old cutter for the 20,000 nautical mile round trip and extreme environmental conditions we will face. We have an incredible and dedicated team; I couldn't be more excited or more proud to make this journey with them."

The U.S. Coast Guard is recapitalizing its polar icebreaker fleet to ensure continued access to the polar regions and to protect the country's economic, environmental, and national security interests. Each year, the crew is asked to put forth an immense amount of time and effort to prepare the cutter for their annual deployment in support of ODF. The Polar Star completed the third of five planned phases of the service life extension project (SLEP), costing \$15.6 million over a 132-day maintenance period.

"The U.S. Coast Guard is pleased to continue partnering with the National Science Foundation and the U.S. Antarctic Program to enable a durable U.S. presence on Antarctica and across the Southern Ocean," said Vice Adm. Andrew Tiongson, Pacific Area commander. "Our commitment to the Antarctic region is unwavering, and we have been pleased to increase our maritime cooperation with like-minded members of the Antarctic Treaty, as well as investing in new technologies and vessels to ensure our presence is enduring."

Joint Task Force-Support Forces Antarctica, provides Department of Defense support to the NSF and the USAP through ODF. Every year, a joint and total force team works together to complete a successful ODF season. Active, Guard, Reserve service members from the U.S. Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, and Navy work together to forge a strong JTF-SFA that continues the proud tradition of U.S. military support to the USAP. The U.S. Coast Guard provides direct logistical support to the NSF and maintains a regional presence that preserves Antarctica as a scientific refuge.

BOLLINGER SHIPYARDS DELIVERS 6TH AND FINAL BOSTON-BOUND FAST RESPONSE CUTTER TO U.S. COAST GUARD



Release from Bollinger Shipyards

USCGC Melvin Bell is the sixth of six FRCs to be homeported in Boston, MA

LOCKPORT, La., – (November 16, 2023) – Bollinger Shipyards LLC

("Bollinger") today announced it has delivered the USCGC Melvin Bell to the U.S. Coast Guard in Key West, Florida. This is the 181st vessel Bollinger has delivered to the U.S. Coast Guard over a 35-year period and the 55th [Fast Response Cutter](#) ("FRC") delivered under the current program.

"We're incredibly proud to deliver the USCGC Melvin Bell, the final of six Fast Response Cutters 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 are 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 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 Melvin Bell will be the sixth 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.

The Coast Guard's FY2024 Unfunded Priorities List includes procuring four more FRCs (which would be the 66th through 69th vessels in the program) to provide increased Coast Guard presence and engagement with allied and partner countries in the Indo-Pacific region. Earlier this year, Adm. Linda Fagan,

the commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard, said, "The Indo-Pacific is clearly a consequential region for America's future. The United States Indo-Pacific Strategy identifies an expanded role for the U.S. Coast Guard as a top Administration priority as we seek to ensure a region that is free and open. The U.S. Coast Guard will continue its long history of operational presence in the region with additional cutter patrols and deployable specialized forces."

Each FRC is named for an enlisted Coast Guard hero who distinguished themselves in the line of duty. Bell, a minority pioneer and Pacific war hero was a patriot whose distinguished career in service of his country spanned 65 years in military and civil service. During his active-duty career, Bell held many distinctions. In 1943 he became the first Pacific Islander advanced to chief petty officer. He later held the distinction of a dual rating as Chief Radioman and Chief Electronics Technician. In 1958 he became the first minority Master Chief in the history of the Coast Guard.

His decorations included the Coast Guard Good Conduct Medal (five awards), Navy Commendation Medal, Navy Unit Commendation, National Defense Service Medal, Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal, American Defense Medal, American Campaign Medal and Victory World War II Medal.

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 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.

Coast Guard to Lay Up Some Cutters, Boats in Face of Recruit Shortfall



By
Richard
R. Burges,
Senior
Editor

The Reliance-class medium-endurance cutter Reliance, shown here in 2022, will be decommissioned and three sister cutters will be laid up, pending decommissioning. *U.S. Coast Guard*

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ARINGTON, Va.—The U.S. Coast Guard will lay up several cutters

and patrol boats because of a service-wide manning shortage, moves that will reduce the Coast Guard's capacity for operations in the near term as the service grapples with the shortage of personnel.

The Coast Guard is short of some 3,000 personnel because in large part of shortfalls in recruiting in fiscal 2024.

"The Coast Guard is short nearly 10% of the entire enlisted workforce and cannot continue to operate as we have historically with fewer people," wrote AJ Pulkkinen in the October 31 announcement posted on the Coast Guard website. "To mitigate the workforce challenge risk in a deliberative and strategic fashion, the Vice Commandant, Adm. Steven Poulin, has provided specific temporary operational guidance to adapt our operations while prioritizing lifesaving missions, national security and protection of the marine transportation system."

"The Coast Guard cannot maintain the same level of operations with our current shortfall – we cannot do the same with less. Conducting our missions is often inherently dangerous, and doing so without enough crew puts our members and the American public at increased risk," wrote Commandant Adm. Linda Fagan and Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard Heath Jones.

"There will be no loss of search and rescue (SAR) capabilities," the announcement said. "However, we will temporarily adjust operations to prioritize our lifesaving missions, national security, and protection of the Marine transportation System. "

"As cutter crews are not scalable, the only way to reduce the workforce of the cutter fleet is to reduce the number of operating cutters," the announcement said. "Previously planned cutter decommissionings will continue, including the [Reliance-class] Coast Guard Cutter Steadfast [WMEC 623]. Some

cutters will be placed in a special status awaiting either decommissioning or future reactivation. In some cases, the crews will do a hull swap to lay up the cutter with the largest pending maintenance requirement.

The cutters and patrol boats affected include:

- Three 210-foot Reliance-class medium-endurance cutters (WMECs) will be placed in layup, pending decommissioning.
- Seven 87-foot Marine Protector-class patrol boats (WPBs) will be placed in layup, pending reactivation.
- Five 65-foot harbor tugs (WYTLs) will temporarily not be continuously manned but will be kept in a ready status in case icebreaking is needed.

- Two 154-foot Sentinel-class fast response cutters (WPCs) will commence uncrewed Recurring Depot Availability Program (RDAP) at the Coast Guard Yard in Baltimore, Maryland. The next 154-foot WPC scheduled for RDAP will deliver the hull to the Coast Guard Yard and swap hulls with a cutter that has completed drydock.

The cutbacks will affect 44 shore stations and 36 aids-to-navigation teams (ANTs) as well, which have more personnel than the prescribed staffing standards.

“The stations will be reduced to their staffing standards and the ANTs to one billet below their staffing standards,” the announcement said.

Other shoreside changes include, but are not limited to:

- Crews at all 23 seasonal station smalls will transfer to their parent command.
- The six non-response units (boat forces units without

SAR responsibilities) will suspend operations and their crews will be reassigned in assignment year (AY) 2024.

- The identified 19 stations whose SAR response capabilities are redundant will be deemed Scheduled Mission Units. Three of these 19 stations will be ports, waterways, and coastal security (PWCS) level one-Scheduled Mission Units.”

“The ‘Trackline to 10,000,’ to have ten thousand members assigned to afloat units, is still the goal for our future fleet and we will get there,” said Capt. John Driscoll, the Chief of the Office of Cutter Forces, in the release. “We need to adjust our operating capacity now so we can prepare for the future. We will gradually grow fleet capacity back through continued construction of ships with the latest technology and the best crew habitability. Our cutter fleet is in demand globally, and I can see our cuttermen continuing to explore new locations as our ship operations are dedicated to the highest priority missions.

“The Coast Guard has always answered the call when faced with incredible challenges,” Driscoll said. “We will take this challenge head-on and use it as an opportunity to prepare for the future.”

USS Farragut Going Full Speed Ahead Making Multiple Drug Busts



[Release from USNAVSOUTH/4TH FLEET PUBLIC AFFAIRS](#)

Nov. 9, 2023

By USNAVSOUTH/4TH FLEET PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Caribbean Sea – USS Farragut (DDG 99) has found success in stopping alleged illicit drug traffickers in the Caribbean, with four drug busts in October.

Farragut, with an embarked U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) and Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 50, Detachment Two, made all four drug busts in the Central Caribbean, taking down go fast vessels through a combination of coordinated air and surface operations.

The busts resulted in the confiscation of 1,384 kilograms of cocaine and the detention of 12 suspected illicit drug runners.

“USS Farragut Sailors have brought their hammer to the detection, monitoring, interdiction and apprehension fight against transnational criminal organizations,” said U.S. Marine Corps Col. P. Goguen, Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-South) Director of Operations. “Their results so far demonstrate a highly professional level of planning and preparation that has resulted in the execution of several flawless interdiction events; there are few other Services worldwide that are as effective. We look forward to continued results during the rest of Farragut’s deployment.”

“Every Sailor has a role in this team effort” said Farragut Commanding Officer Cmdr. Tom Roberts. “We gain a good measure of satisfaction in interdicting these drugs and keeping them out of the United States. The positive results are tangible and immediate. Our team can see the difference their efforts hold.”

USS Farragut is currently assigned to Commander, Task Force 45 (CTF 45). CTF-45 is the 4th Fleet surface task force charged with executing combined naval operations, building and strengthening Latin American, south of Mexico, and Caribbean maritime partnerships, and acting as a DoD ready service provider to Joint Interagency Task Force – South in support of counter illicit-drug trafficking operations in the Central and South American waters.

LEDETS are deployable specialized forces of the U.S. Coast Guard that enforce U.S. laws and treaties in the maritime domain.

U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet supports U.S. Southern Command’s joint and combined military operations by employing maritime forces in cooperative maritime security operations to maintain access, enhance interoperability, and build enduring partnerships in order to enhance regional

security and promote peace, stability and prosperity in the Caribbean, Central and South American region.

Learn more about USNAVSOUTH/4th Fleet at <https://www.fourthfleet.navy.mil>, <https://www.facebook.com/NAVSOUS4THFLT> and @NAVSOUS4THFLT.

U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Terrell Horne returns to home port following a 52-day multi-mission patrol in the Eastern Pacific



[Release from U.S. Coast Guard District 11](#)

Nov. 8, 2023

SAN PEDRO, Calif. – The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Terrell Horne and crew returned to their home port in Los Angeles/Long Beach Tuesday after a 52-day patrol across the Eastern Pacific.

The crew of the Terrell Horne deployed in support of multiple missions, including Operations Green Flash, Albatross, Martillo, and Southern Shield, within the 11th Coast Guard District's area of responsibility. During the patrol, Terrell Horne's crew conducted a range of missions encompassing law enforcement, counter-drug operations, illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing enforcement, and search and rescue operations.

"The crew of the Terrel Horne lived up to the cutter's

namesake in every way during this patrol. Operation Southern Shield allowed the cutter to showcase the versatility of the Fast Response Cutter. This operation brought a patrol boat and a buoy tender almost 4,000 nautical miles from home, conducting operations and international engagements with Mexico, Ecuador, Peru, and Costa Rica, said Chief Warrant Officer Jason Bussell, the commanding officer of the Coast Guard Cutter Terrell Horne. "The crew excelled in counter-illegal fishing missions, search and rescue, and counter-drug operations. Working alongside other Coast Guard assets, the crew was able to interdict a drug smuggling vessel and assisted in the seizure of nearly 2,000 lbs of contraband."

The Coast Guard commissioned the Terrell Horne as the 31st Fast Response Cutter on March 22, 2019. The cutter is named for Senior Chief Terrell Horne III, who died from injuries sustained while conducting maritime law enforcement operations off the California coast in December 2012. He was the executive petty officer aboard the Coast Guard Cutter Halibut at the time. For his heroic actions, the Coast Guard posthumously promoted Horne to senior chief petty officer.

For information on how to join the U.S. Coast Guard, visit [GoCoastGuard.com](https://www.go CoastGuard.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](#).

U.S. Coast Guard formally establishes Base Guam



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

Nov. 7, 2023

SANTA RITA, Guam – The U.S. Coast Guard is proud to announce the establishment of U.S. Coast Guard Base Guam on Nov. 8, 2023, in a ceremony presided over by Rear Adm. Carola List, commander of Operational Logistics Command.

Led by Cmdr. Dana Hiatt, Base Guam, will be pivotal toward enhancing the U.S. Coast Guard's mission support logistics in the region. This strategic move aligns with the Service's commitment to increase mission support throughout Oceania. Given Guam's vital importance to national security, this initiative takes center stage.

The establishment of Base Guam is part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 and expands the U.S. Coast Guard's mission support in the Indo-Pacific region. The establishment will shift current facilities engineering, naval engineering,

comptroller and base operations, health, safety, and work life, personnel support, information technology, and procurement billets and responsibility from the existing U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam to a new Base Guam command structure. The establishment of Base Guam will consist of 17 additional personnel billets and will rely on the realignment of existing elements to provide logistical efficiencies improving U.S. Coast Guard mission support on Guam.

U.S. Coast Guard Base Guam will operate under the direction of the Operational Logistics Command, responsible for mission support logistics across the entire U.S. Coast Guard enterprise while coexisting with U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam. The base is taking on the role of the lead logistics and support command, a strategic decision aimed at better serving the needs of the operational community and partners. Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam retains the role of operational authority for U.S. Coast Guard activity in the Western Pacific.

The Base crew's responsibilities encompass contingency logistics planning for joint operational plans, integration of logistics services, and support for tactical logistics needs for deployed operational assets. Additionally, the enterprise maintains a national-level logistics common operating picture and commands the Coast Guard's 22 existing bases, ensuring the execution of assigned tasking through each of the U.S. Coast Guard's Logistics and Service Centers.

The establishment of Base Guam marks a significant milestone in strengthening the U.S. Coast Guard's presence and capabilities in the region. The unit is physically located on the existing U.S. Coast Guard footprint within U.S. Naval Base Guam.

U.S. Coast Guard Cutter James returns from Eastern Pacific patrol after interdicting 12,909 kilograms of cocaine, 7,107 pounds of marijuana



[Release from U.S. Coast Guard 7th District](#)

Nov. 7, 2023

Charleston, S.C. – The crew of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter James (WMSL 754) returned home to Charleston, Saturday,

following a 113-day patrol in the Eastern Pacific Ocean.

Patrolling in support of Joint Interagency Task Force-South, James worked alongside other Coast Guard cutters, Department of Defense and Department of Homeland Security units, and international partners to conduct counter-drug operations.

During the patrol, James' crew disrupted illegal narcotics smuggling, interdicting 12,909 kilograms of cocaine and 7,107 pounds of marijuana valued at over \$380 million. While in theater, James interdicted eight drug-smuggling vessels and apprehended 23 suspected traffickers, including one low-profile vessel laden with contraband. The efforts by the crew of the James directly contributed to U.S. Coast Guard objectives to combat transnational criminal organizations and enhance regional stability and security.

James' crew conducted multiple joint operations with foreign partner nations such as Ecuador and Mexico. James conducted a passing exercise with the Mexican navy's ARM Chiapas. During the exercise, James practiced close quarters tactical maneuvering and landed the Chiapas' Panther helicopter on deck. This exercise with the Mexican navy was particularly important to promote interoperability and enhance ongoing and focused partnership efforts.

While in the Eastern Pacific Ocean, James interdicted an Ecuadorian go-fast vessel laden with illicit narcotics. James executed a complex at-sea rendezvous with Isla Darwin (ECU) and transferred three suspected narcotics traffickers and 73 bales (1,742 kilograms) of cocaine. The evolution enhanced cooperation with Ecuadorian partners and supported the home-country prosecution of international crimes.

James is a 418-foot National Security Cutter. The cutter's primary missions are counter-drug operations, and defense readiness in support of U.S. Coast Guard operations. The National Security Cutters fall under the command of the 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, 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.goatguard.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](#).

U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Kimball returns home following 85-day Bearing Sea patrol



Nov. 2, 2023

HONOLULU – The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Kimball (WMSL 756) returned home to Honolulu, Wednesday, after an 85-day multi-mission patrol covering 14,000 nautical miles spanning from the Hawaiian Islands to north of the Arctic Circle.

The crew provided search-and-rescue coverage and conducted living marine resources (LMR) and counter Illegal Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing operations during the patrol following their actions responding to the Maui wildfires.

Kimball departed August 8 for the Aleutian Island chain and later that evening, the cutter received a report of people in the water attempting to escape a raging wildfire on Maui. The cutter shifted to the tactical control of Sector Honolulu and altered course to support the mass search and rescue efforts. Arriving on scene within hours, Kimball assumed the role of On Scene Commander of Coast Guard Station Maui, Coast Guard

Cutter Joseph Gerczak (WPC 1126), and Air Station Barbers Point MH-65s, who collectively searched 790 square nautical miles, saved 17 lives, and assisted approximately 40 survivors ashore. During Kimball's three days on scene, their crew launched two cutter small boats for over 25 combined hours and deployed the cutter's UAS drone for over 8 hours of flight time, conducting search and rescue and damage assessment support.

After being relieved by Juniper, Kimball's crew transited north to support the Coast Guard's 17th District by providing search-and-rescue coverage and conducting LMR and counter IUU-Fishing patrols spanning the Northern Pacific Ocean, Bering Sea, and the American Arctic.

Operating under Operation Alaskan Groundfish Enforcer, Kimball ensured compliance with all federal fisheries conservation laws and safety requirements by completing 10 LMR boardings on fishing vessels in the Bering Sea. Kimball issued eight citations and one termination for gross violation of U.S. and international regulations. This resulted in the Kimball escorting the fishing vessel back to the nearest port and ensured they corrected their discrepancies.

As the sole U.S. military asset in the Bering Sea, Kimball diverted [to provide presence](#) alongside the U.S. domestic fishing fleet in the remote region of the U.S. Arctic upon receiving intelligence of a Russian military exercise within the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Kimball's presence ensured the safety of 23 mariners while they worked within the U.S. EEZ near Russian warships as part of Operation Frontier Sentinel.

"I couldn't be prouder of Kimball's crew," said Capt. Bob Kinsey, Kimball's commanding officer. "They were able to showcase the true value that the national security cutter brings to such a dynamic area of responsibility. The crew's

diversity of skill harnessed our Coast Guard authorities and capabilities to provide tangible lifesaving results, from responding to the tragic fires in Maui to providing an influential presence in the Chukchi Sea and American Arctic to preserving the livelihoods of our Bering Sea fishermen through the enforcement of federal safety and living marine resources laws.”

To ensure crew preparation and proficiency, Kimball conducted numerous flight operations with MH-65 Dolphin and HH-60 Jayhawk helicopters and aircrews from U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Kodiak, resulting in the qualification of eight pilots and recertification of Kimball’s crew.

While in Dutch Harbor, Alaska, Kimball’s crew engaged with the local community by participating in sports at the community center, conducted cutter tours, and volunteered for community events. Notably, Kimball assisted the Museum of the Aleutians in relocating fragile gray whale fossils for a new exhibit. Kimball also met with the mayor of Dutch Harbor to discuss how the Coast Guard and the town can continue strengthening their relationship.

Commissioned in 2019, Kimball is the Coast Guard’s seventh national security cutter. National security cutters are the largest and most technologically sophisticated cutters in the Coast Guard’s white-hull fleet. National security cutters can operate in the most demanding open ocean environments, including the Bering Sea’s hazardous fisheries and the Southern Pacific’s vast approaches, where much of the American narcotics trafficking 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, National security cutters are an afloat operational-level headquarters for complex law enforcement and national security missions involving multiple Coast Guard and partner agency

participation.

Coast Guard, partners complete Operation Koa Kai off the Island of Hawaii



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

Nov. 1, 2023

HONOLULU – The U.S. Coast Guard completed Operation Koa Kai, a

comprehensive month-long maritime security and safety operation conducted throughout October off the Island of Hawaii.

The annual operation, carried out in collaboration with the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office of Law Enforcement, focused on safeguarding the coastal waters and maritime assets, ensuring the well-being of both residents and visitors to the region.

Operations completed include:

- 137 underway hours with 19 joint patrol hours
- Two search and rescue responses
- 26 maritime security and response operation patrols
- 11 small vessel security boardings (SVSB)
- Three high-capacity passenger vessel escorts
- 24 Response Boat-Small boardings and nine uninspected passenger vessel boardings
- Dockside inspections conducted in collaboration with the Marine Safety Team (MST) Hawaii for certificate of inspection verification.

“This operation exemplifies the commitment of our Coast Guard personnel and partner agencies to the security and safety of Hawaii’s maritime domain,” said Chief Warrant Officer Omar Perez, a Coast Guard Sector Honolulu enforcement officer. “Our combined efforts are essential in maintaining maritime security and safeguarding lives in the waters off the Big Island of Hawaii.”

While taking part in Operation Koa Kai, the Coast Guard Maritime Safety & Security Team 91107 Honolulu (MSST) provided safety zone enforcement for the 2.4-mile swim course included in the Ironman World Championship Women’s Race held in Kailua-Kona. The MSST played a pivotal role in a collaborative

interagency effort, joining forces with agencies such as the Federal Bureau of Investigations, Department of Homeland Security Federal Air Marshals, Department of Defense, Hawaii Police Department, Hawaii Sheriff's Office, Hawaii Conservation Officers, Hawaii Fire Department, and the Ironman Public Safety/Emergency Management department. This partnership, characterized by meticulous mission planning and preparation, was aimed at ensuring the safety of all athletes, spectators, staff, and volunteers during the high-profile event.

Operation Koa Kai reflects the Coast Guard's mission to protect and serve the maritime community, ensuring the smooth flow of commerce, maintaining maritime safety, and responding promptly to emergencies.

Agencies involved in Operation Koa Kai include:

- U.S. Coast Guard Maritime Safety & Security Team Honolulu (MSST)
- U.S. Coast Guard Marine Safety Team (MST) Hawaii
- NOAA Office of Law Enforcement (OLE)
- DLNR □□Hawaii Division of Conservation and Resource Enforcement
- Kona Police Department