

# USNS Comfort Departs Ecuador After Third CP25 Mission Stop



MANTA, Ecuador (July 9, 2025) Hospitalman Christopher Olheiser and Logistics Specialist 3rd class Daniel Clerge, both assigned to the Mercy-class hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20), load medical supplies onto Comfort in Manta, Ecuador during Continuing Promise 2025, July 9, 2025. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Thomas Boatright)  
By USNAVSOUTH/4TH FLEET PUBLIC AFFAIRS, July 14, 2025

MANTA, Ecuador – The Mercy-class hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) departed Manta, Ecuador following the third mission stop of Continuing Promise 2025 (CP25), July 10, 2025.

Throughout the six-day visit to Ecuador, Comfort's crew worked alongside Ecuador providing medical care to the people of

Ecuador, renovating dilapidated infrastructure and training side-by-side with the Ecuadorian military.

During the CP25 visit to Ecuador, the Comfort's team of U.S., Canadian, Dominican Republican, and Ecuadorian medical professionals, assisted 2,767 patients from Manta and surrounding communities. The team filled 2,486 prescriptions, conducted nine CT scans, and distributed 694 pairs of glasses and 584 pairs of sunglasses. Additionally, the Comfort surgery team performed 48 surgeries to include cataract extraction, cleft lip repair, soft tissue mass removal, and hernia repair.

"Alongside our Ecuadorian partners, the Navy team continues to deepen our relationships and promote a shared commitment to the region," said Capt. Ryan Kendall, commodore, Destroyer Squadron 40 and Continuing Promise 2025 mission commander. "Through medical care, subject matter expert exchanges, and military to military training, we are enhancing our combined ability to respond to crises and disaster response."

In addition to medical exchanges and care, veterinarians from the U.S. Army 248th Detachment for Veterinary Support Services conducted subject matter expert exchanges with cattle ranchers in Ropafuertes as well as K-9 training with the Ecuadorian military.

Marines assigned to Marine Force Security Regiment, FAST Battalion, Bravo Company, 5th Platoon conducted a three-day subject matter expert exchange with the Ecuadorian Navy, strengthening partnerships and continuing to enhance our combined capabilities.

Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 11 conducted construction, electrical, plumbing, and engineering support for two Manta schools, Escuela Republica Del Ecuador and Unidad Educativa El Porvenir.

“This was an incredible mission stop, I saw a lot of my own upbringing in the situations of these people we were working with,” said Construction Electrician 3rd Class Francisco Espinozavares, a Seabee assigned to NMCB 11. “I felt a lot of mixed emotions, joy, pride, and a sense that we were doing something meaningful, and it put into perspective how fortunate I am.”

Comfort’s community relations team participated in two beach cleanups, painting and beautification at Gil Delgado Elementary and Verdi Cervallos Hospital, a community soccer game, beach volleyball match, and a mural painting at Port Captaincy in Manta. The crews’ interpersonal relations towards the people of Ecuador created the necessary catalyst to help create and strengthen the bonds between the U.S. and Ecuador.

“We are so thankful for all of you,” said Nury Zambrano, a teacher for Gil Delgado Elementary. “You are the best, and we are so grateful for all that you did here for us and are eagerly waiting for you to return.”

The United States Fleet Forces Band “Uncharted Waters” performed at five locations throughout Manta, reaching a total audience of 1,150 members.

Next, Comfort is scheduled to transfer the Panama Canal and sail toward Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic, its fourth mission stop for CP25.

CP25 marks the 16th mission to the region since 2007, the eighth aboard Comfort and fifth time Comfort has visited Ecuador during previous CP missions. The mission will foster goodwill, strengthen existing partnerships with partner nations, and encourage the establishment of new partnerships among countries, non-federal entities, and international organizations.

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 news and photos, visit [facebook.com/NAVSOUTH4THFLT](https://www.fourthfleet.navy.mil/), <https://www.fourthfleet.navy.mil/>, X [@NAVSOUTH4THFLT](https://twitter.com/NAVSOUTH4THFLT), and <https://www.linkedin.com/company/u-s-naval-forces-southern-command-u-s-4th-fleet>.

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## **Stratom to Deliver Advanced Automated Refueling System for Uncrewed Navy Vessels**



*SBIR Phase I award supports development of a fully autonomous at-sea fueling system that extends range and reduces risk for autonomous surface vehicles*

From Stratom, July 15, 2025

LOUISVILLE, Colo. – July 15, 2025 – As the Navy expands its fleet of uncrewed surface vehicles (USV), [Stratom](#) has been selected for a Phase I Small Business Innovation Research contract to develop an autonomous refueling system that could redefine naval refueling and logistics at sea.

As the leading developer of autonomous vehicles and refueling

robotic systems for logistics and operational applications, the contract will leverage Stratom's Deployable Onboard Refueling Interface, or DORI, an automated system designed to let USVs refuel without human intervention.

"Autonomous refueling is truly a force multiplier – and the next step toward a fully autonomous maritime force," said Mark Gordon, CEO of Stratom. "With DORI, we're engineering a practical, scalable way for uncrewed vessels to stay on mission longer, without relying on vulnerable crewed interventions."

Building upon existing naval refueling infrastructure while introducing targeted automation, Stratom's DORI system integrates a hose retrieval system, perception sensors, an automated reel mechanism and a quick-release coupling for emergency disconnects. By enabling USVs to safely and reliably refuel while underway without human intervention, the system will extend operational endurance, reduce personnel risk and increase mission flexibility in contested or distributed environments.

The Phase I effort will validate the technical feasibility of the system's automated reel mechanism and include concept refinement, small-scale prototyping, trade studies and integration of commercial bunkering best practices. These activities will ensure the proposed method is technically feasible and aligned with operational requirements.

Looking ahead, Stratom also sees strong potential for commercial deployment of DORI in ship-to-ship (STS) bunkering, a key refueling process in commercial shipping and global maritime logistics. Automating STS bunkering could reduce high-traffic port congestion, improve safety and cut operating costs for long-haul shipping fleets.

Stratom brings deep experience to the development effort, successfully transitioning [robotic refueling systems developed](#)

[for the Army](#) and Navy into commercial applications. [RAPID](#), the company's autonomous refueling, recharging and liquid transfer platform for robotic ground and aircraft refueling, proves the value of automating complex fueling operations through increased uptime, reduced labor demands and enhanced safety.

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## **USS Mount Whitney Returns to Homeport**



From Ensign Samantha Mendiguren, July 15, 2025

GAETA, Italy – The Blue Ridge-class command and control ship USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20) returned to homeport in Gaeta, Italy, after operating in the Mediterranean Sea, Atlantic Ocean, and Baltic Sea. The underway underscored the U.S. Navy’s commitment to regional security and strong partnerships with European and African nations.

During the ship’s underway, it conducted port visits to several nations in Africa and Europe and held numerous key leader engagements, fostering international cooperation and

addressing shared security concerns in both theaters. These countries included Tunisia, Libya, Cabo Verde, Mauritania, Spain, Germany, Poland, Latvia and Sweden.

“From the Mediterranean to the Baltic Sea, we worked alongside our allies and partners, building relationships and demonstrating the U.S. Navy’s unwavering commitment to security and stability in both regions,” said Capt. Colin Price, commanding officer of USS Mount Whitney. “I am incredibly proud of the professionalism and dedication exhibited by Team 20 and grateful to have had the opportunity to work with our many great partners in Africa and Europe.”

Mount Whitney also participated in Baltic Operations (BALTOPS) 25, the premier annual maritime-focused military exercise in the Baltic region. This year marked the 54th iteration of the exercise, bringing together sixteen NATO allies. Over 40 ships, 25 aircraft, and approximately 9,000 personnel participated, working to enhance warfighting capabilities, demonstrate layered defense strategies, and reinforce the strength of partnerships within the Baltic region.

As the U.S. 6th Fleet command and control ship, Mount Whitney supports naval combatants to deter regional adversaries, conduct naval operations in defense of the homeland, and defend the sovereignty of our partners and allies in Europe and Africa.

Mount Whitney, forward deployed to Gaeta, Italy, operates with a combined crew of U.S. Sailors and Military Sealift Command civil service mariners in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations in support of U.S. national security interests in Europe and Africa.

Commander, U.S. 6th Fleet, headquartered in Naples, Italy, conducts the full spectrum of joint and naval operations, often in concert with allied and interagency partners to advance U.S. national interests, security and stability in

Europe and Africa.

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# USS Omaha Returns to Homeport



Cmdr. Ryan Doyle, commanding officer of the Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Omaha (LCS 12), speaks to families as the ship is moored pier-side at its homeport of Naval Base San Diego, July 11, 2025. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Kassandra Alanis)

From Petty Officer 2nd Class Kassandra Alanis and Lt.j.g. Tahj Clements, July 14, 2025

SAN DIEGO – The Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Omaha (LCS 12) arrived at its San Diego homeport July 11, following a 10-month rotational deployment to the U.S. 7th

Fleet area of operations.

“I’m excited to welcome home the crew of this mighty warship, who showed incredible dedication and leadership during their deployment,” said Capt. Jose Roman, commodore, Littoral Combat Ship Squadron 1. “From multiple exercises with our partners to ensuring maritime security and freedom of navigation in critical waterways throughout the Indo-Pacific, Omaha has a great deal to be proud of.”

Throughout deployment, the Omaha participated in several multi-national events including the Oceania Maritime Security Initiative (OMSI), Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) Brunei, the Republic of Palau 30th Independence Anniversary, a joint sail with the Royal Australian Navy (RAN), Exercise Noble Wolverine, Exercise Cobra Gold 2025, and Exercise Noble Dingo.

“It’s been an honor to serve with this crew as they’ve achieved outstanding operational milestones and risen to meet every challenge,” said Cmdr. Kevin Smith, commanding officer of the Omaha Gold crew. “Today we welcome home the USS Omaha and the Blue crew, and celebrate the commitment and perseverance of every Sailor onboard, as well as their families who support them.”

In August 2024, the Omaha participated in OMSI, a Secretary of Defense program aimed at diminishing transnational illegal activity on the high seas in the Pacific Island nations of Oceania’s Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ), as well as increasing interoperability with partner nations. The Omaha’s range and capabilities allowed the embarked U.S. Coast Guard law enforcement detachment the ability to access the remote U.S. and Pacific Island nations’ EEZs.

The Omaha participated in CARAT Brunei 2024 alongside the Royal Brunei Armed Forces and other U.S. military assets.

During the exercise, a variety of subject matter expert exchange events were conducted. They focused on topics such as cyber security, emission control, force protection, international maritime law, maritime domain awareness, and public affairs for humanitarian assistance and disaster response. Bilateral training opportunities included best practices for a medical evacuation; mine countermeasures; visit, board, search and seizure; underwater demolition; and other topics. CARAT Brunei 2024 focused on dynamic naval capabilities, featuring cooperative evolutions that highlighted the U.S.-Brunei partnership and their shared goals of ensuring a free and open Indo-Pacific.

The Omaha participated in several events which celebrated the 30th anniversary of the independence of the Republic of Palau, marking the Republic of Palau's independence from the United Nations trusteeship administered by the U.S.

In the early months of 2025, the Omaha participated in Exercise Noble Wolverine, Exercise Cobra Gold 2025, and Exercise Noble Dingo. Noble Wolverine was a joint U.S. and Canadian exercise. During Cobra Gold 2025, Omaha, alongside Republic of Korea, Republic of Singapore, and Kingdom of Thailand navies conducted division tactics and crew exchanges. Noble Dingo included several operations as part of a joint sail with the RAN's Hobart-class air warfare destroyer HMAS Sydney (DDG 42) in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific.

"These Sailors are returning home to their families with significant operational experience.," said Cmdr. Ryan Doyle, commanding officer of the Omaha Blue crew. "I am particularly proud of the resiliency and self-sufficiency that our Sailors demonstrated throughout the deployments."

During deployment, the Omaha conducted eight port visits, including six to partner and allied nations: Singapore, the Philippines, Thailand, Brunei, Malaysia, Guam, the Republic of

the Marshall Islands, and Hawaii.

The Omaha is a fast, optimally-manned, mission-tailored surface combatant that operates in near-shore and open-ocean environments, winning against 21st-century threats. LCS integrate with joint, combined, manned and unmanned teams to support forward presence, maritime security, sea control, and deterrence missions around the globe.

For more news from Commander, Littoral Combat Ship Squadron 1, visit <https://www.surfpac.navy.mil/comlcsron1/> or follow on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/COMLCSRONONE/](http://www.facebook.com/COMLCSRONONE/)

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## **Raytheon Awarded \$74M Navy Contract for RAM Guided Missile Launching System**



From RTX, July 14, 2025

*System is the world's most modern short-range ship self-defense weapon*

LOUISVILLE, Ky., July 14, 2025 /PRNewswire/ – Raytheon, an RTX (NYSE: RTX) business, was awarded a \$74 million contract to produce RAM Guided Missile Launching Systems (GMLS) for the U.S. Navy.

Under the contract, Raytheon will provide several new launcher systems, refurbishments on current systems, and hardware required to support upgrades as well as various spares.

“This contract marks the largest single order of U.S. RAM launchers in over two decades and will ensure our naval assets remain well-protected against anti-ship threats,” said Barbara Borgonovi, president of Naval Power at Raytheon. “Our continued investment in modernizing production capacity enables us to meet the growing global demand for the world’s most modern short range ship self-defense weapon system.”

Celebrating its 50th anniversary next year, the RAM weapon system – which consists of the RAM launcher and missiles – is a bilateral partnership between the U.S. and Germany with Raytheon serving as a prime contractor for U.S. Navy requirements. The system is currently deployed on more than 165 ships in 11 countries ranging from fast patrol boats to aircraft carriers and is being installed on several new U.S. Navy ship classes, including the Arleigh Burke class of guided-missile destroyers.

Majority of work under this contract will be performed in Louisville, Kentucky, and is expected to be completed by 2028.

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# L3Harris Delivers First Overhauled P-8A Poseidon Aircraft to US Navy



L3Harris is performing program depot maintenance along with repair and overhaul for NAVAIR's fleet of 139 aircraft. NAVAIR aircraft perform missions that include maritime patrol, long-range anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface warfare and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. Credit L3Harris Technologies

[Release From L3Harris Technologies](#)

WACO, Texas, July 10, 2025 – L3Harris Technologies (NYSE: LHX) has delivered the first overhauled P-8A Poseidon aircraft to Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) – a key milestone that supports the U.S. Navy's readiness goals.

L3Harris is performing program depot maintenance along with repair and overhaul for NAVAIR's fleet of 139 aircraft. NAVAIR aircraft

perform missions that include maritime patrol, long-range anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface warfare and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. L3Harris will also support foreign military sales of P-8A aircraft.

“We’re keeping the Navy’s fleet mission-ready with this first P-8A delivery,” said Jason Lambert, President, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance, L3Harris. “Our proven expertise in aircraft maintenance enables us to enhance performance and extend fleet longevity.”

L3Harris anticipates up to nine aircraft inductions during the first contract year. The company is currently overhauling seven aircraft, with all on track for delivery this year. Work on the Navy’s P-8A fleet began in 2024 at L3Harris’ aircraft modification facility in Waco and continues through September 2029.

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## **U.S. Navy Accepts Delivery of Final Independence-Variant Littoral Combat Ship, Pierre**



MOBILE, Ala – The future USS Pierre (LCS 38) conducts sea trials in Mobile, Alabama, June 2025. Pierre is the 19th and final ship marking the completion of the Independence-variant littoral combat ship (LCS) construction phase. (Photo courtesy of Austal USA)

[From Program Executive Office Unmanned and Small Combatants \(PEO USC\) Public Affairs](#)

MOBILE, Ala. – The U.S. Navy accepted delivery of the future USS Pierre (LCS 38) from Austal USA's shipyard in Mobile, Alabama, July 11.

Pierre is the 19th and final ship marking the completion of the Independence-variant littoral combat ship (LCS) construction phase—a sustained acquisition effort involving Navy personnel, industry partners, and program management teams for over two decades.

[Pierre successfully completed acceptance trials](#) the week of June 9, achieving the highest measured quality score of any LCS in the past 15 years. This performance reflects the notable progress made over the course of the program and the expertise honed by the LCS shipbuilding and acquisition teams.

“The delivery of the final Independence-variant LCS marks the end of a chapter, but not the story,” said Capt. Matthew Lehmann, program manager of the LCS Program Office. “The LCS program, for all its complexities, has pushed the boundaries of naval design and operational concepts. The LCS represents a bold vision for a more agile and adaptable Navy. We are seeing the Fleet operating these ships with the advanced mission packages they were designed for and they are continuing to evolve those operational concepts as more unmanned technologies come online.”

Following commissioning later this fall, the ship will be homeported in San Diego, California, –supporting forward presence, maritime security, sea control, and deterrence in key operational theaters.

“Pierre is more than just the last number – it represents the hard work of manufacturers, suppliers and builders from across the nation culminating in a warship that will serve as the Navy’s most versatile workhorse for years to come,” said Melissa Kirkendall, acting program executive officer for Unmanned and Small Combatants (PEO USC). “The legacy of Pierre and her sister littoral combat ships is the vibrant shipbuilding industrial base that we now have in the mid-tier yards that are now constructing the Navy’s next-generation warships.”

LCS is a fast, agile, mission-focused warship designed to operate in near-shore environments to counter 21st-century threats. It is a class of small surface combatants armed with capabilities to defeat challenges in the world’s littorals. LCS can operate independently or in high-threat scenarios as part of a networked battle force that includes larger, multi-mission surface combatants such as cruisers and destroyers.

PEO USC designs, develops, builds, maintains, and modernizes the Navy’s unmanned maritime systems; mine warfare systems; special warfare systems; expeditionary warfare systems; small boats/craft; and small surface combatants.

For more news from PEO USC, visit: <https://www.navsea.navy.mil/Media/News/>

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# Crowley Adds Newest LNG Ship to Fleet Expanding Caribbean and Central American Service



[Release from Crowley](#)

*Tiscapa Will Offer Service Connecting U.S. and Dominican Republic*

(JACKSONVILLE, Fla.; July 10, 2025) Crowley's newest, LNG-powered containership *Tiscapa* began its inaugural service today, adding faster, bigger options for timely ocean cargo transport around the U.S., Caribbean and Central America.

Like its sister ships in the Avance Class, *Tiscapa* features container capacity for 1,400 TEUs (20-foot equivalent units), including 300 refrigerated units. This ship was specifically designed to quickly and frequently deliver cargo while using lower

emission liquefied natural gas (LNG) for fuel.

“The addition of *Tiscapa* to our fleet marks another milestone in Crowley’s commitment to delivering efficient and reliable logistics solutions across the region,” said Andrew Davis, vice president of operations for Crowley Logistics. “With its LNG-powered design and expanded capacity for dry and refrigerated goods, *Tiscapa* enhances our ability to provide faster, dependable service for customers moving essential goods throughout the U.S. and Caribbean Basin.”

*Tiscapa* departed from the Port of Jacksonville, Florida, for its first commercial voyage serving the Caribbean Basin. Following a transition period of service for the region, *Tiscapa* will begin providing regular service between the U.S., Dominican Republic and Central America, offering direct market connections for goods such as medical devices, household goods, food and perishables

This follows sister ships *Quetzal* and *Copán*, which are also strategically built to serve El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, and the growing trade between the U.S. and Central America.

Avance Class ships, operated under charter from Eastern Pacific Shipping, are named to honor the cultural aspects of Central America, where Crowley has operated shipping and logistics services for more than 60 years. Located in the capital city of Managua in Nicaragua, *Tiscapa* is a lagoon of volcanic origin that formed over 10,000 years ago. The area surrounding it contains pre-Columbian remains and a massive Augusto Sandino statue, an iconic symbol of the city.

The fourth and final Avance Class ship, *Torogoz*, which is named for the national bird of El Salvador, is due to enter service this August.

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# 21st Iteration of Pacific Partnership Prepares for Indo-Pacific Mission Aboard USS Pearl Harbor



[From Lt. Cmdr. Andrew Bertucci](#)

JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, Hawaii – Pacific Partnership 2025 (PP-25) officially kicks off with the arrival of the Harpers Ferry-class dock landing ship USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52) at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, led by Rear Admiral Todd F. Cimicata,

U.S. Pacific Fleet Executive Agent for Pacific Partnership, and the mission commander, U.S. Navy Captain Mark B. Stefanik.

The PP-25 team, embarked aboard the Harpers Ferry-class dock landing ship USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52), arrived at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam to make final preparations ahead of its upcoming port visits throughout the Indo-Pacific region. The PP-25 team will conduct medical exchanges, engineering projects, community outreach, and disaster preparedness engagements with host nation partners.

“Pacific Partnership is a testament to what we can achieve together,” said Cimicata. “By working alongside our allies and partners, we strengthen regional capacity and resilience and lay the foundation for a collective response to crises. It’s about preparing in calm to respond in crisis.”

This year’s PP-25 mission will include mission stops in Papua New Guinea, Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, Samoa, and Vanuatu. Prior to the USS Pearl Harbor’s departure, separate fly-in missions were conducted in the Philippines, Fiji, and Tonga in June.

“This enduring mission provides us the opportunity to build on our relationships, share expertise, and learn from one another,” said Stefanik. “Our shared experiences help create more resilient communities, and I’m proud to lead a team committed to strengthening partnerships across the Indo-Pacific.”

Pacific Partnership brings together more than 1,500 personnel from the United States and participating nations including Australia, Canada, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Singapore, and the United Kingdom. Activities will include engineering projects at schools and clinics, medical subject matter expert exchanges, and performances by the Pacific Partnership Band, composed of musicians from the U.S. Pacific Fleet and partner nations.

The mission team will work alongside allies and partners to strengthen relationships, bolster host nation capacity to provide essential humanitarian services, and support efforts to reduce the

risk of, prepare for, and respond to disasters.

Every day, the U.S. Pacific Fleet operates to protect the security, freedom, and prosperity for the U.S. and our allies and partners. The U.S. Pacific Fleet continues to advance a shared vision, alongside our allies and partners, of a free, open, and secure Indo-Pacific.

Now in its 21st iteration, the Pacific Partnership series is the largest annual multinational humanitarian assistance and disaster management preparedness mission conducted in the Indo-Pacific. Pacific Partnership works collaboratively with host and partner nations to enhance regional interoperability and disaster response capabilities, increase security and stability in the region, and foster new and enduring friendships in the Indo-Pacific.

For updates and multimedia from Pacific Partnership 2025, follow #PacificPartnership, #PP25, and #PacificPartnership25 on social media or visit: <https://www.dvidshub.net/feature/PacificPartnership>

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## **NCIS Deploys Special Agents Aboard DDGs Patrolling Southern Border**



[Release From U.S. Fleet Forces Command](#)

SAN DIEGO –The Navy deployed two Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyers in mid-March to conduct border security objectives in support of the U.S. Northern Command southern border mission: the USS Gravelly (DDG 107) to the Gulf of America and the Caribbean, and the USS Stockdale (DDG 106) to the Pacific Ocean. Earlier this summer, the USS Cole (DDG 67) relieved the USS Gravelly after 83 days of service to the mission.

Among the crew onboard these ships have been NCIS Special Agents who provide law enforcement and counterintelligence capabilities related to counternarcotics and combating transnational organized crime.

These Special Agents collaborate with law enforcement and intelligence community partners to synthesize data that enhances Navy leadership's understanding of the operational environment and increases the probability of successful counternarcotics interdictions.

Such counternarcotics interdictions have included, among others, the seizure of over 6,000 pounds of cocaine by the USS Gravelly in May. A subsequent seizure netted over 11,000 pounds of cocaine and 7,200 pounds of marijuana. The USS Cole, partnering with the Royal

Canadian Navy, was involved in the seizure of over 540 pounds of cocaine in June.

The ships operate with an embarked U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LDET) that, combined with NCIS Special Agents enhance maritime security and support interagency collaboration in the region through presence operations.

These deployments are unique in scope and duration compared to the traditional Special Agent Afloat deployments that NCIS has been conducting aboard U.S. Navy ships since the early 1970s. The Special Agent Afloat program deploys agents for year-long deployments aboard aircraft carriers, hospital ships, and amphibious assault ships. NCIS law enforcement and counterintelligence support to these ships enables the Navy to operate with optimal readiness and lethality to protect the United States and advance its interests globally.