Coast Guard Concludes Maritime Security Ops for Economic Leaders Week

ALAMEDA, Calif. – U.S. Coast Guard members recently completed loading six small boats and accompanying equipment onboard the USS Green Bay in Townsville, Australia, for transport back to the United States.

The loadout follows the Coast Guard's recent deployment to Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea (PNG) where 94 Coast Guard personnel logged more than 2,000 underway hours providing round-the-clock maritime security during the 2018 Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Economic Leaders Week, Nov. 12-18. The high-profile summit was attended by leaders and senior officials from 21 nations, including Vice President Mike Pence representing the United States.

A first-of-its kind Memorandum of Understanding signed by U.S. Ambassador Catherine Ebert-Gray and PNG Police Commissioner Gary Baki provided temporary authority for the Coast Guard to deploy small boats and specialized members as part of an adaptive force package (ADF) that provided port security, waterside protection, and anti-terrorism capabilities prior to and during the summit.

Operating under the control of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, the ADF worked in cooperation with PNG's Joint Security Task Force and the Australian Defense Forces.

The ADF was led by Port Security Unit (PSU) 305, based in Fort Eustis, Virginia, and included Reserve and active-duty service members from PSU 301 based in Cape Cod, Massachusetts, PSU 308 based in Kiln, Mississippi, and PSU 313 based in Everett, Washington, along with Maritime Safety and Security Team (MSST) Honolulu, MSST Seattle, MSST San Francisco and MSST Los

Angeles/Long Beach.

“As a global leader in maritime law enforcement and port security, the U.S. Coast Guard was proud to work with the PNG Joint Security Task Force and our Pacific partners to ensure safety and security throughout the APEC Economic Leaders Week,” said Cmdr. Michael McCarthy, commanding officer of PSU 305.

The deployed service members and their international partners conducted waterway security at three separate maritime restricted areas around Port Moresby including waterways surrounding the APEC Haus, the main venue during the summit, and several cruise ships which served as lodging for global leaders and dignitaries during the summit.

Throughout the deployment the ADF operated from the Royal Australian Navy’s HMAS Adelaide, a 757-ft long Australian amphibious assault ship equipped with a well deck that

allowed for launching and recovering the Coast Guard’s six 32-foot transportable port security boats.

Coast Guard personnel participated with their international partners in a Remembrance Day Ceremony Nov. 11 commemorating the 100th anniversary of World War I on the Adelaide’s helicopter landing deck.

The APEC security mission is one of several recent joint operations conducted by the Coast Guard in the Western Pacific. In August, the service participated in the 17th annual Southeast Asia Cooperation and Training exercise, which brought together service members from navies and coast guards from nine nations to focus on increasing maritime domain awareness through collaborative and coordinated information sharing.

The Coast Guard is also engaged in the Oceania Maritime Security Initiative, with law enforcement detachments deployed

on supporting U.S. Naval vessels such as the USS Shoup, assisting Pacific nations with protecting their exclusive economic zones and combating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

“The United States is a Pacific nation,” said Vice Adm. Linda Fagan, commander, Coast Guard Pacific Area. “We have deep and long-standing ties with our partners in the region, and more importantly, we share a strong commitment to a free and open Pacific, governed by a rules-based international system that promotes peace, security, and shared prosperity.”