Coast Guard Cutter Alert Completes Successful Fisheries Patrol



Crew members from the Coast Guard Cutter Alert launch the cutter's small boat July 10, 2021, to conduct vessel boardings during a 60-day fisheries patrol off the coasts of Washington and Oregon. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

ASTORIA, Ore. – The Coast Guard Cutter Alert and its crew returned to homeport in Astoria Aug. 7 after completing a 60-day law enforcement patrol, during which the crew enforced federal law and safety regulations aboard commercial fishing vessels operating within the United States Exclusive Economic Zone off the coasts of Washington and Oregon, the Coast Guard Pacific Area said in an Aug. 9 release.

The two-month patrol focused heavily on albacore tuna fishing and saw law enforcement teams board 31 vessels – many of which have not been boarded in more than 10 years – and issue 22 violations to commercial fishing vessel operators.

"I couldn't be more proud of Alert's hard-working crew," said Cmdr. Matthew Kolodica, commanding officer of the Alert. "It is an honor to be part of a crew that is so passionate and focused on helping Oregon and Washington coastal communities operate safely and sustain their fisheries industries."

The nation's maritime ecosystems are key to the United States' economy and well-being. The Coast Guard plays a critical role in preserving and maintaining healthy populations of marine fish by preventing the decline of protected marine species populations, protecting and promoting the recovery of endangered marine habitats, and partnering with other agencies to enhance and sustain marine ecosystems.

In addition to safety and fisheries enforcement, the ship’s crew also aided in saving a commercial fisherman’s life. The sole person aboard his boat, sinking 160 miles off Grays Harbor, Washington, escaped into the vessel’s life raft before the boat submerged. The cutter was dispatched from another location July 30 to assist. Once on site, the crew served as on-scene coordinator and directed the Coast Guard Cutter Blue Shark, an 87-foot Patrol Boat homeported in Everett, Washington, to launch its small boat and safely recover the man.

Kolodica credited the versatility and success of the deployment – which was under the tactical oversight of the 13th Coast Guard District – to strong partnerships with the district and Coast Guard Air Stations Port Angeles, Astoria and North Bend.