

Coast Guard Cutter Arrives in Japan Following an Onboard Fire



Fire teams on board the Coast Guard Cutter Waesche combat a fire onboard the cutter in the Western Pacific Ocean, September 19th 2020. Coast Guard / Petty Officer 3rd Class Aidan Cooney

ALAMEDA, Calif. – The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Waesche (WMSL 751) arrived at Yokosuka, Japan today after combating a shipboard engineering fire on Sept. 20, during a scheduled deployment to the U.S. 7th Fleet’s area of operations, the Coast Guard Pacific Area said in a Sept. 22 release.

Black smoke was reported at 5:18 p.m. (local time) Sunday, and investigations revealed fires in the exhaust stack and nearby spaces.

After 90 minutes of firefighting, the fires were confirmed extinguished.

Five crew members reported minor injuries sustained during firefighting efforts and were treated by the onboard medical team.

The extent of the damages and cause of the fire are currently under investigation. While at Fleet Forces Yokosuka, the cutter will undergo further inspection and potentially repairs.

“The rapid response and courageous efforts from the crewmembers aboard Waesche to quickly contain and extinguish the fire are a testament to the bravery and skill of this crew,” said Capt. Jason Ryan, Waesche’s commanding officer.

The cutter is under the tactical control of U.S. 7th Fleet as

part of routine presence operations in support of the United States' commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific.

In 2019, [Coast Guard Cutter Bertholf](#) and [Stratton](#) deployed for a combined 326 days to the Western Pacific.

Both cutters enforced [United Nations Security Council resolutions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea](#) by monitoring and gathering intelligence on vessels conducting ship-to-ship transfers in the East China, South China, and Yellow Seas.

Bertholf and Stratton also engaged in professional exchanges and capacity-building exercises with partner navies and coast guards while visiting ports in Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, Fiji, Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

Bertholf made history during its patrol as the first Coast Guard cutter to transit the Taiwan Strait March 24-25, 2019.

Stratton's crew [combated illegal fishing](#) by conducting seven high seas fisheries boardings under the authority of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission while transiting between the Philippines and Guam.

The Coast Guard's ongoing deployment of resources to the Indo-Pacific directly supports U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives. The service's unique capabilities, mission sets, and longstanding partnerships strengthen maritime governance, security, and the rule of law throughout the region.

Waesche is the Coast Guard's second 418-foot Legend-class national security cutter and one of four homeported in Alameda. National security cutters have a crew of more than 150 and are among the largest and most technologically sophisticated vessels in the Coast Guard's fleet.