Coast Guard Cutter James Returns Home Following South Atlantic Ocean Deployment to Counter Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing



The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter James (WMSL 754) and the Brazilian navy Amazonas (P 120) conduct a passing exercise at sea in the southern Atlantic Ocean, May 25, 2024. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Logan Kaczmarek)

NORTH CHARLESTON, S.C. – The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter James (WMSL 754) returned to their home port in North Charleston, July 11, after completing a 98-day patrol in the South Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea.

James' crew patrolled in support of Operation Southern Cross, promoting maritime governance with partners in the South

Atlantic by working to illuminate and monitor illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing (IUU-F) activity in the region.

While on patrol, James interacted with partners in Uruguay, Argentina and Brazil, strengthening relationships by focusing on shared interests in countering illicit maritime activity. Through several subject matter expert (SME) exchanges and joint engagements, James demonstrated counter IUU-F capabilities to promote the rules-based order and advance White House initiatives to further advance Atlantic Cooperation.

During the patrol, James' crew conducted port visits to Montevideo, Uruguay; Buenos Aires, Argentina; and Rio de Janeiro and Fortaleza, Brazil. At each city, Coast Guard personnel engaged with their international counterparts to promote partnership. Notably, James' command cadre met with senior leadership from the Uruguay Navy, the Argentine Prefectura Naval, and the Brazilian Navy, holding roundtable discussions to tackle the global impacts of IUU-F while devising strategies to enhance maritime domain awareness, improve information sharing and combat the threat together.

Additionally, James' small unmanned aircraft system (UAS)-contracted team presented their system and capabilities to senior naval leadership, illustrating the sizable benefits of UAS in detecting and monitoring IUU-F activity. The visits included community relations events and tours of the ship, and culminated in diplomatic receptions aboard James, bringing together key civilian and military leaders from each respective country.

Showcasing law enforcement expertise and dedication to joint efforts against illicit maritime activity, James' crew organized and hosted in-port SME exchanges and at-sea mock boarding engagements with the Argentine Prefectura Naval and the Brazilian Navy. James crew members conducted a mock

counter-IUU-F engagement with the Argentine Prefectura vessel Mantilla (GC-24), demonstrating the procedures of a high seas boarding inspection on a foreign-flagged fishing vessel. James also organized multiple demonstrations of visit, board, search and seizure procedures to exercise interoperability with the Brazilian Navy.

During the cutter's visit to Buenos Aires, James's crew received a presidential welcome from Argentina's President Javier Milei. Coast Guard Capt. Donald Terkanian welcomed President Milei on board and provided him with a tour of James. This historic event initiated several other key engagements with Argentina's Vice President Victoria Villarruel, senior military and civilian leaders.

During the deployment, James' crew members also had the unique opportunity to join U.S. Navy Carrier Strike Group 10 to execute Operation Southern Seas 2024 with the Brazilian Navy and celebrate the bicentennial of U.S.-Brazilian diplomatic relations. Promoting interoperability with the Brazilian Navy and simultaneously advancing the Tri-Service Maritime Strategy through U.S. sea-service engagement, James completed formation steaming and close quarters maneuvering exercises with Brazilian Navy frigates BNS União (F 45) and BNS Independência (F 44) alongside the USS George Washington (CVN 73) and USS Porter (DDG-78). James conducted a joint live-fire exercise, utilizing its onboard 20mm close-in-weapon system to engage a target flare in tandem with Independência, União and Porter. Finally, James and Independência exchanged crewmembers for five days.

After departing the Southern Atlantic Ocean, James patrolled the Caribbean Sea to execute Operation Martillo in support of Joint Interagency Task Force-South, collaborating with fellow Coast Guard units as well as the Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, and international partners to counter illicit trafficking in the region.

James is a 418-foot, Legend-class national security cutter. The cutter’s primary missions are counter-drug operations and defense readiness. James falls under the command of the Coast Guard Atlantic Area in Portsmouth, Virginia. 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 Sea, Eastern Pacific Ocean, and South Atlantic Ocean to combat transnational organized crime and illicit maritime activity.