Coast Guard Cutter Midgett Returns to Hawaii Following 79-day Counterdrug Patrol



Crew members of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Midgett (WMSL 757) stand at parade rest on the flight deck of the cutter in San Diego, Sept. 25, 2025. The Midgett's crew prepared to offload drugs interdicted in the Eastern Pacific during counter-narcotic patrols, eliminating 21,126 pounds of cocaine worth an estimated $156 million in value. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Roberto A. Nieves Felix)

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HONOLULU – The Coast Guard Cutter Midgett (WMSL 757) crew returned to their Honolulu home port Friday after a 79-day deployment to the Eastern Pacific Ocean in support of the counterdrug mission "Operation Pacific Viper."

While patrolling international waters off the Pacific coasts

of Mexico and Central America, Midgett's crew apprehended 19 suspected drug smugglers and interdicted four suspected drug smuggling vessels, preventing 21,126 pounds of cocaine, with an estimated value of more than $156.4 million, from reaching U.S. shores.

The drugs **were offloaded in San Diego** on September 25 by the Midgett crew and multiagency partners. The Midgett deployed to the region under the tasking of Joint Interagency Task Force – South (JIATF-S) in support of the Coast Guard's Operation Pacific Viper.

During the deployment, Midgett's crew conducted counterdrug missions in the Coast Guard's Southwest District area of responsibility countering transnational criminal organizations and preventing illegal narcotics from reaching the United States. The trafficking of illegal drugs poses an urgent threat to the American people, and the men and women of the U.S. Coast Guard do everything in their power to interdict drugs before they reach our shores and our citizens.

Detecting and interdicting narco-terrorism on the high seas involves significant interagency and international coordination. Joint Interagency Task Force-South based in Key West conducts the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs. Once interdiction becomes imminent, the law enforcement phase of the operation begins, and control of the operation shifts to the U.S. Coast Guard throughout the interdiction and apprehension. Interdictions in the Eastern Pacific Ocean are performed by members of the U.S. Coast Guard under the authority and control of the Coast Guard's Southwest District, headquartered in Alameda, California.

Midgett's crew worked alongside other Coast Guard units including law enforcement personnel from Tactical Law Enforcement Team South (TACLET SOUTH), Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron (HITRON) crews, contractors operating V-BAT

Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), and Department of War assets. Notably, the ship **achieved a significant milestone with HITRON**—accomplishing their 1,000th interdiction of suspected drug smuggling vessels.

“This deployment showcased the power of partnerships in combating transnational crime,” said Capt. Brian Whisler, Midgett’s commanding officer. “From HITRON and TACLET SOUTH to the entire JIATF-S team, the Midgett crew worked seamlessly with our partners to achieve significant results. I am deeply impressed by the dedication and skill of every member of this crew, who consistently exceeded expectations during challenging circumstances. We are incredibly proud of our contribution to Operation Pacific Viper and remain steadfast in our commitment to control, secure, and defend our borders and maritime approaches.”

Midgett, commissioned in 2019, is the eighth Legend-class national security cutter and is one of two homeported in Honolulu. The cutter’s primary missions are counter-drug operations and defense readiness.