Coast Guard Cutter Offloads $67+ Million of Cocaine in San Diego



Rear Adm. Peter Gauiter, the 11th Coast Guard District commander, Cmdr. Daniel Ursino, the Coast Guard Cutter Steadfast commanding officer, and crew of Coast Guard Cutter Steadfast, stand in front of the pallets of cocaine the crew of Steadfast seized, July 26, 2019.U.S. Coast Guard / Petty Officer 2nd Class Jordan Akiyama

SAN DIEGO – The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Steadfast (WMEC-623) offloaded approximately 3,905 pounds of suspected cocaine in San Diego, Oct. 1, the Coast 11th District said in a release.

The drugs, worth an estimated $67 million, were seized in international waters of the Eastern Pacific Ocean and represent two suspected drug smuggling vessel interdictions off the coasts of Mexico, Central and South America in early September by the Steadfast crew.

On April 1, U.S. Southern Command began enhanced counter-narcotics operations in the Western Hemisphere to disrupt the flow of drugs in support of Presidential National Security Objectives. Numerous U.S. agencies from the Departments of Defense, Justice and Homeland Security cooperate in the effort to combat transnational organized crime. The Coast Guard, Navy, Customs and Border Protection, FBI, Drug Enforcement Administration and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, along with allied and international partner agencies, play a role in counter-drug operations.

The fight against drug cartels in the Eastern Pacific Ocean requires unity of effort in all phases from detection, monitoring and interdictions, to criminal prosecutions by

international partners and U.S. Attorneys' Offices in districts across the nation. The law enforcement phase of counter-smuggling operations in the Eastern Pacific Ocean is conducted under the authority of the 11th Coast Guard District, headquartered in Alameda. The interdictions, including the actual boardings, are led and conducted by members of the U.S. Coast Guard.

The Steadfast is a 210-foot medium-endurance cutter that was commissioned in 1968 and is homeported in Astoria, Oregon.