

Coast Guard Cutter Tahoma Returns Home after \$12.5 Million Drug Bust



The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Tahoma works with an armed helicopter interdiction tactical squadron during a counter-drug patrol on Feb. 1 in the eastern Pacific Ocean. U.S. Coast Guard/Petty Officer 3rd Class Ryan L. Noel

BOSTON – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Tahoma returned to Kittery, Maine, on March 12 after a 70-day counter-drug patrol in the eastern Pacific Ocean, the Coast Guard 1st District said in a release.

Tahoma's crew seized about 700 pounds of cocaine, valued at \$12.5 million while working with an armed Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron MH-65 aircraft on board.

The crew of Tahoma worked with several other Coast Guard units in the area to detain 27 suspected narcotics traffickers, and interdict 9,600 pounds of cocaine and 640 pounds of marijuana.

Tahoma's crew transited through the Panama Canal to conduct counter-drug operations under the tactical control of the Joint Interagency Task Force South in support of Operation Martillo. The operation involves 20 participating nations working together to counter transnational organized crime networks and illicit trafficking in the waters along Central America.

"The crew was outstanding in executing the counter-drug mission in support of Operation Martillo," said Cmdr. Michael Sarnowski, commanding officer of Tahoma. "I sincerely appreciate the contributions and professionalism from our

detached teams while on this deployment.”

Tahoma is a 270-foot medium-endurance cutter with a crew complement of 100. They conduct maritime enforcement and homeland security missions in support of Coast Guard operations throughout the Western Hemisphere.