

Coast Guard Cutter Tampa Returns Home After 67-Day Counterdrug Patrol



The Coast Guard Cutter Tampa (WMEC 902) returns home to Portsmouth, Virginia, Nov. 21, 2025, following a 67-day deployment. Tampa's crew deployed in support of counterdrug operations in the Eastern Pacific. (U.S. Coast Guard photo Petty Officer 3rd Class Mason Svitenko)

[From U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area](#)

PORTSMOUTH, Va. – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Tampa (WMEC 902) returned to their homeport in Portsmouth, Friday, following a 67-day deployment to the Eastern Pacific Ocean in support of the counterdrug mission “Operation Pacific Viper.”

Tampa's crew deployed in support of Joint Interagency Task Force – South and conducted counterdrug missions in the Coast Guard's Eastern Pacific area of responsibility. While at sea,

Tampa's crew successfully contributed to protecting Americans by countering transnational criminal organizations and preventing dangerous and illegal narcotics from reaching the United States. The crew worked alongside Coast Guard Cutter Stone (WMSL 758) and their embarked Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron.

On Oct. 8, approximately 270 nautical miles southeast of the Galapagos Islands, Tampa intercepted a 40-foot low-profile vessel suspected of carrying illicit narcotics. Tampa's crew intercepted three suspected smugglers, transferring them to Stone. After recovering about 620 kilograms of the cocaine, the boarding team disembarked because the vessel became unseaworthy after it started taking on water. Tampa's crew conducted a controlled sinking to prevent the vessel from becoming a hazard to navigation.

Tampa made port calls in San Cristobal, Galapagos Islands, hosting members of the Ecuadorian coast guard for tours, and in Panama City, Panama. On Nov. 2, the crew anchored near Isla de Cocos, Costa Rica, exchanging professional experiences with Costa Rican park rangers. This exchange strengthened international relations with Costa Rica and demonstrated the Coast Guard's commitment to building partnerships throughout the region.

"I am extremely proud of our crew's dedication and professionalism during this challenging deployment," said Cmdr. Joshua DiPietro, commanding officer of Tampa. "The Tampa crew displayed exceptional seamanship, tactical expertise and cultural sensitivity while operating across two oceans. Their efforts directly contributed to disrupting criminal networks, keeping dangerous narcotics from reaching American communities and strengthening vital partnerships with our regional partners."

Tampa is a 270-foot Famous-class medium endurance cutter commissioned in 1984. The cutter's primary missions include

counterdrug and migrant interdiction operations, enforcement of federal fishery laws, and search and rescue operations in support of Coast Guard missions throughout the Western Hemisphere. Tampa operates under U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area, based in Portsmouth, Virginia.