

Coast Guard Cutter Thetis Returns to Key West After 3-Month Africa Patrol



Petty Officer 1st Class Joel Gibney of the Thetis hugs his family on May 23 after the cutter pulled into Key West following a three-month deployment in support of U.S. Africa Command. U.S. Coast Guard/Petty Officer 2nd Class Jonathan Lally

KEY WEST,

Fla. – The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Thetis (WMEC-910) returned to their

homeport in Key West, Florida, on May 23 after a three-month U.S. Africa

Command patrol, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a release.

The Thetis

crew concluded their patrol, in which they conducted multiple joint law-enforcement

exercises and operations with West African countries with U.S. Africa Command

and U.S. 6th Fleet to maintain and strengthen international partnerships and

maritime security.

“By

conducting joint maritime law-enforcement operations, we were able to establish

best practices providing the West African navies and coast guards with the

tools to enforce their laws and secure their maritime borders,” said Cmdr.

Randall Chong, commanding officer of the Thetis. “The U.S. Coast Guard’s

involvement in the African Maritime Law Enforcement Partnership has had a positive impact on the region, and I am proud of all the hard work my crew has put into this mission.”



The crew of Thetis on May 8 during a visit in Funchal, Portugal’s Madeira Island. U.S. Coast Guard/Petty Officer 2nd Class Jonathan Lally Thetis crew members and U.S. Coast Guard Tactical Law Enforcement Team South worked to build, strengthen and maintain relationships with the African nations of Cabo Verde, Nigeria, Côte d’Ivoire, São Tomé and Príncipe, Togo and Benin. Together, they conducted joint maritime safety, security and law enforcement training and missions in support of Africa Maritime Law Enforcement Partnership 2019 operations.

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Cmdr. Randall Chong, commanding officer of the Thetis

While at sea, the crew conducted joint fisheries and law-enforcement boardings with Nigerian navy and Cabo Verde coast guard law-enforcement teams. The Thetis crew saved the lives of two men who were lost at sea for three days and safely transferred them to the Sierra Leone maritime authority. The crew also

rescued two

loggerhead sea turtles that were entangled in fishing nets in the Gulf of Guinea.



A sign with the hands of family members of the crew of the Thetis welcomes the cutter home on May 23. U.S. Coast Guard/Petty Officer 2nd Class Jonathan Lally

Thetis is the

first U.S. Coast Guard cutter to support U.S. 6th Fleet and deploy to U.S.

Africa Command since 2012.

U.S. 6th

Fleet, headquartered in Naples, Italy, conducts a full spectrum of joint and

naval operations, often in concert with allied and interagency partners, to

advance U.S. national interests, security and stability in Europe and Africa.

The Thetis is a multimission

270-foot medium-endurance cutter whose missions include illegal drug and

migrant interdiction as well as search and rescue. The Thetis patrols

throughout the Caribbean basin, eastern Pacific and Atlantic seaboard.