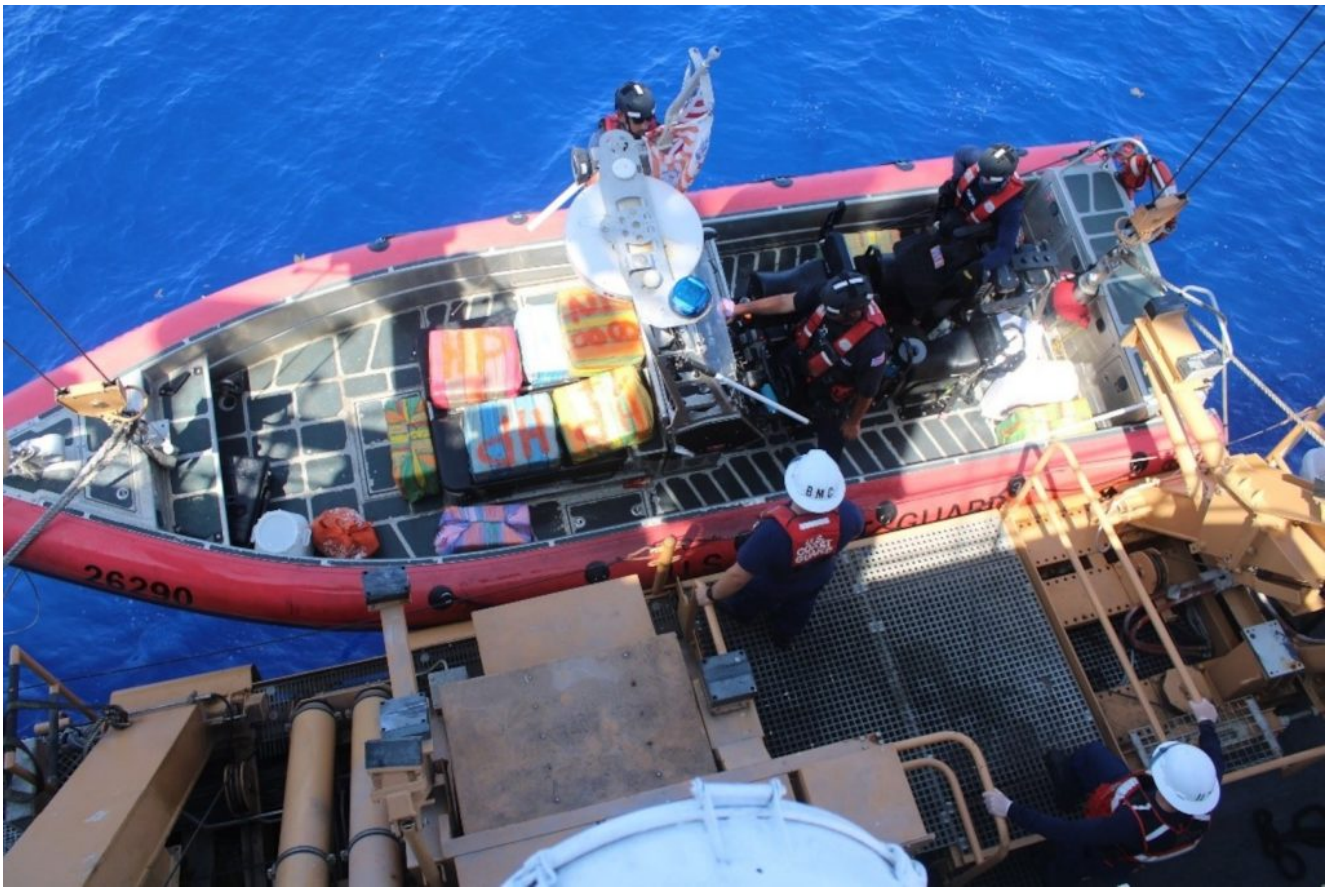
Coast Guard Cutter Valiant returns home after $30 million drug seizure, rescue of 2



Release from U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area

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Oct. 16, 2023

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U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area

MAYPORT, Fla.– The crew of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Valiant (WMEC 621) returned home, Thursday, to Naval Station Mayport

after completing a 49-day deployment in the Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea, and Florida Straits.

Patrolling in support of the Homeland Security Task Force – Southeast's Operation Vigilant Sentry and Joint Interagency Task Force-South, in the Seventh Coast Guard District's area of responsibility, Valiant's crew conducted maritime safety and security missions.

During the patrol, Valiant assisted two lives at sea during two separate search and rescue cases.

The cutter's crew also conducted counterdrug operations, interdicting one go-fast vessel with over 97 pounds of cocaine and assisting international partners, the Royal Netherlands Navy patrol vessel HNLMS Groningen (P843), with two additional interdictions. Throughout the patrol, Valiant seized or assisted in the seizure of more than $30 million in illegal narcotics.

Valiant's crew later transitioned to migrant interdiction operations and embarked and cared for over 50 migrants in the Florida Straits.

"Valiant's crew had an exceptional patrol," said Lt. Kristian Sova, Valiant's operations officer. "We participated in multiple Coast Guard mission sets, combatting the illegal trafficking of drugs and saving lives at sea. We look forward to getting home and celebrating with our families."

Detecting and interdicting illegal drug traffickers on the high seas involves significant interagency and international coordination. JIATF-South in Key West, Florida, conducts 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 process. Interdictions in the Caribbean Sea are performed by members of the U.S. Coast Guard

under the authority and control of the Coast Guard's Seventh District, headquartered in Miami.

Valiant is a 210-foot, Reliance-class medium endurance cutter. The cutter's primary missions are counter-drug operations, migrant interdiction, enforcement of federal fishery laws, and search and rescue in support of U.S. Coast Guard operations throughout the Western Hemisphere.

For more information on Valiant, visit https://www.atlanticarea.uscg.mil/Area-Cutters/CGCVALIANT/.

For information on how to join the U.S. Coast Guard, visit GoCoastGuard.com to learn about active duty, reserve, officer, and enlisted opportunities. Information on how to apply to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy can be found here.