Coast Guard Cutter Venturous Returns Home After 62-Day Patrol



The Coast Guard Cutter Venturous, shown here returning from its November 2018 patrol. U.S. COAST GUARD / Michael De Nyse

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PETERSBURG, Fla. – The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Venturous (WMEC-625)
returned home to St. Petersburg June 27 following a 62-day patrol in the
Caribbean Sea, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a release of the same date.

Venturous'
crew spent the first three weeks of the patrol at Naval Station Mayport for
their biennial Tailored Ship's Training Availability, which is designed to test
the crew's ability to respond to various operations and shipboard emergencies.

After
departing Mayport, the Venturous crew transited over 7,000 miles while
operating in the Caribbean Sea enforcing international laws and treaties in
support of the Coast Guard's Western Hemisphere Strategy by countering
transnational organized criminal networks and deterring human smuggling while
safeguarding life at sea.

On June 12th,
the crew of the Venturous partnered with rotary and fixed wing

aircraft from
Coast Guard Air Stations Clearwater and Miami and Royal Bahamian Defense Forces
interceptor and rescued 177 Haitian migrants from an overloaded 40-foot vessel
approximately 20 nautical miles southwest of Providenciales, Turks and Caicos.

> *"From responding to Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017, to completing four consecutive deployments through the Panama Canal to the Eastern Pacific Ocean, to preventing over nine tons of illicit narcotics, valued at over a quarter billion dollars, from reaching our shores, and rescuing 189 migrants and 10 fishermen from the perils of the sea, the crew of Venturous truly upheld her motto, Nemo Supra, None Better."*
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> *Cmdr. Matthew Chong, commanding officer of the Venturous*

The Venturous
crew utilized both of the over the horizon cutter boats to safely offload all
177 migrants from the vessel, which was slowly flooding due to its severely
overloaded state and choppy seas. The Royal Bahamian Defense Forces interceptor
provided security on the vessel and the Air Station Clearwater MH-60 Jayhawk
helicopter provided overflight coverage as Venturous embarked the migrants.
Once aboard Venturous, crewmembers provided the migrants with food, water,
shelter and basic medical care.

On two other
occasions, Venturous intercepted overloaded vessels closer to shore and
directed them to return back to port rather than face the

dangerous journey in
open waters.

Six cadets
from the Coast Guard Academy also joined Venturous during the deployment and
worked alongside the crew while earning various shipboard qualifications and
gaining valuable operational experience that will aid in their development as
future Coast Guard officers.

Additionally,
Venturous hosted two ship riders from the Cayman Islands. While on board, the
ship riders attended operations briefings and engaged with crewmembers to
exchange best practices to fight human and narcotics trafficking networks while
strengthening the strategic partnership with an important regional ally.

“As I
complete my final patrol on Venturous, I can’t help but look back on the past
two years with immense pride and awe in all that our crew accomplished.” said
Cmdr. Matthew Chong, commanding officer of the Venturous. “From responding to
Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017, to completing four consecutive deployments
through the Panama Canal to the Eastern Pacific Ocean, to preventing over nine
tons of illicit narcotics, valued at over a quarter billion dollars, from
reaching our shores, and rescuing 189 migrants and 10 fishermen from the perils
of the sea, the crew of Venturous truly upheld her motto, Nemo

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The Venturous
is a 210-foot Reliance-class cutter, homeported in St. Petersburg and has a
crew of 76. Medium endurance cutters, like the Venturous, are slated for
replacement by a new class of cutter – the Offshore Patrol Cutter (OPC). With
the ability to operate more than 50 miles from land, the OPC will be a
multi-mission asset, providing surface and air pursuit capabilities and
interoperability with other military and federal partners.