

# Coast Guard Cutter Waesche Completes Bering Sea Patrol



During a brief stop for logistics in Dutch Harbor, Alaska, a bald eagle made Coast Guard Cutter Waesche's dual point davit its home for the afternoon. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

ALAMEDA, Calif. – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Waesche returned to homeport in Alameda Jan. 29 following a 77-day Bering Sea patrol, during which the cutter and crew served as the ready asset for homeland defense and search and rescue, supporting the \$5.9 billion commercial fishing industry.

This was the Waesche's first deployment since a major machinery space fire left the cutter at the pier for 10 months for dockside repairs and planned system upgrades.

The Waesche provided presence amongst Bering Sea fishing

fleets and enforced compliance with applicable fisheries regulations, monitored the U.S.-Russian Maritime Boundary Line, and conducted rigorous training exercises. Augmenting the cutter's own capabilities were an embarked MH-65 helicopter and aviation detachment from Air Station Kodiak, as well as a ScanEagle drone. The helicopter supported two medical evacuations from a remote town in the Aleutian Islands.

The cutter and crew traveled more than 12,000 miles since departing Alameda Nov. 13, spanning the U.S. West Coast, Bering Sea, Aleutian Islands, and Gulf of Alaska. Members honed essential competencies through extensive damage control drills, helicopter operations, major and minor caliber gunnery exercises, and small boat operations.

The drills culminated in the Tailored Ship's Training Availability in San Diego. There, crewmembers demonstrated their knowledge and abilities while being evaluated by the Coast Guard's Afloat Training Organization. For many members of the crew, their skills are not only rooted in the significant training conducted aboard over the course of the deployment, but also from experience gained while combatting actual damage sustained during the Waesche's machinery space fire.

Supplementing the Waesche's extensive suite of military communications was a prototype underway Wi-Fi network added prior to this patrol and championed by the Sea Duty Readiness Council and the Office of Cutter Forces.

"The addition of Wi-Fi underway has been a game changer for family connectivity, where crew members are able to easily text or call home and participate in major life events such as buying a home or being there on video Christmas morning as kids open presents," said Commanding Officer Capt. Jason Ryan.