Coast Guard Forces to Provide Maritime Security for APEC Summit

ALAMEDA, Calif. – U.S. Coast Guard service members are scheduled to provide port security for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Economic Leader's Summit Nov. 12-18 in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea (PNG), the Coast Guard Pacific Area said in an Oct. 31 release.

The deployment of Coast Guard personnel comes after U.S. Ambassador to PNG Catherine Ebert-Gray and PNG Police Commissioner Gary Baki signed a first-of-its-kind memorandum of understanding last week authorizing the Coast Guard to enforce security zones near Port Moresby during the summit.

Leaders and senior officials from 21-member nations are scheduled to attend the summit, including Vice President Mike Pence representing the United States.

"APEC Leader's Week marks the culmination of Papua New Guinea's efforts over the past two years as a host of the 2018 summit," said Ebert-Gray. "With dignitaries arriving from the 21 APEC economies, the United States and the U.S. Coast Guard is happy to offer its support in providing safety and security operations to supplement the Joint Security Task Force efforts to protect Papua New Guinea ports, waterways and coastal areas during this significant international event."

The Coast Guard is deploying small boats and nearly 100 specialized members as part of an adaptive force package to provide port security, waterside protection and anti-terrorism capabilities prior to and during the summit. The security teams will work in coordination with PNG Police and partner nations' security forces.

The APEC security mission is one of several recent joint operations conducted by the Coast Guard in the Western Pacific. In August, the service participated in the 17th annual Southeast Asia Cooperation and Training exercise, which brought together service members from navies and coast guards from nine nations to focus on increasing maritime domain awareness through collaborative and coordinated information sharing.

The Coast Guard is also engaged in the Oceania Maritime Security Initiative, with law enforcement detachments deployed on supporting U.S. naval vessels such as the guided-missile destroyer USS Shoup, assisting Pacific nations with protecting their exclusive economic zones and combating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

These deployments support the Coast Guard's broader efforts to strengthen the United States' relationships with partner nations in the Western Pacific, enhancing their maritime capabilities and governance, and supporting regional stability and the security of global maritime commons.

"The United States is a Pacific nation," said Vice Adm. Linda Fagan, U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Area commander. "We have deep and long-standing ties to our partners in the region, and more importantly, we share a strong commitment to a rules-based international system that promotes peace, security and shared prosperity."