Coast Guard Interdicts 10 Cuban Migrants and 2 Suspected Smugglers off Villa Clara Province

A Coast Guard Cutter Raymond Evans small-boat crew approaches a 30-foot go-fast vessel about 12 miles off Villa Clara Province, Cuba, on May 20. U.S. Coast Guard

KEY WEST,
Fla.— The Coast Guard interdicted 10 Cuban migrants and two suspected smugglers
on May 21 about 12 miles off Villa Clara Province, Cuba, the Coast Guard 7th
District said in a release.

Coast Guard
7th District watchstanders received notification of an illegal departure of a
30-foot go-fast vessel with 12 people aboard in the vicinity of Villa Clara
Province.

A Coast Guard
Air Station Miami HC-144 Ocean Sentry aircraft crew located the vessel and
vectored the Coast Guard Cutter Raymond Evans (WPC-1110) crew to the location,
where the crew embarked 10 males and two females. The Evans crew repatriated
the 10 Cuban migrants back to their home. The two suspected smugglers were
transferred into Homeland Security Investigations custody.

"The

Coast Guard maintains a focused and coordinated effort with multiple agency
assets to interdict any attempt to unlawfully immigrate by sea to the United
States," said Rear Adm. Peter J. Brown, commander of Coast Guard 7th District.

The 7th
District, based in Miami, Florida, oversees all Coast Guard operations in South
Carolina, Georgia and Florida as well as Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin
Islands.

Brown is also
the director of Homeland Security Task Force Southeast, a standing multiagency
team that unifies the whole of government effort to monitor, identify, mitigate
and respond to large-scale migration events.

About 290
Cuban migrants have tried to illegally enter the U.S. by sea in fiscal year
2019 compared to 384 in fiscal 2018. These numbers represent the total number
of at-sea interdictions, landings and disruptions in the Florida Straits, the
Caribbean and Atlantic.

Once aboard a
Coast Guard cutter, all migrants receive food, water, shelter and basic medical
attention.