

Coast Guard Interdicts, Returns 23 Migrants



Coast Guard Cutter Winslow Griesser's boat crew is on scene with an illegal migrant voyage Aug. 26, 2021, in the Mona Passage between the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. The migrant group was comprised of 12 Haitians and 11 Dominican nationals, who were returned to the Dominican Republic Aug. 28. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The Coast Guard Cutter Winslow Griesser repatriated 11 Dominican migrants and returned 12 Haitians to the Dominican Republic Saturday, following the interdiction of an illegal voyage in the Mona Passage.

The interdiction is the result of ongoing Coast Guard and Caribbean Border Interagency group partner efforts to deter and stop illegal voyages in the Mona Passage. Since Oct. 1, 2021, the Coast Guard and CBIG federal and state partner agencies have interdicted and or apprehended 2,100 migrants traveling illegally to Puerto Rico.

"We urge any person thinking of taking part in an illegal voyage to not take to the sea," said Cmdr. Beau Powers, Sector San Juan chief of response. "Your life will be at risk, as will the lives of everyone aboard the vessel. The perils are many, including traveling with ruthless smugglers, aboard grossly overloaded makeshift vessels, in dangerous sea states, with little or no lifesaving equipment onboard. Those making this voyage should expect to be returned to their country of origin and also may face prosecution. The dangers are real, please don't trust your life to a smuggler or in a makeshift vessel."

The interdiction took place Aug. 26, after a Customs and Border Protection marine patrol aircraft crew sighted a migrant vessel, approximately 42 nautical miles north of Mona

Island, Puerto Rico. The cutter Winslow Griesser diverted to the scene and interdicted the 25-foot makeshift boat with 11 Dominicans, 11 Haitian adults and one Haitian minor aboard.

The crew of the Winslow Griesser transferred the adult migrants to a Dominican Republic Navy vessel just outside Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, while the minor was transferred to local authorities ashore from the Childrens and Adolescents National Council CONANI.

Once aboard a Coast Guard cutter, all migrants receive food, water, shelter and basic medical attention. The Coast Guard Cutter Winslow Griesser is a fast response cutter homeported in San Juan, Puerto Rico.