Coast Guard Offloads $12 million in Seized Cocaine



The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Napier offloads 430 kilograms of cocaine at Sector San Juan on Aug. 5. U.S. COAST GUARD DISTRICT 7 / Ricardo Castrodad

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The U.S. Coast Guard transferred custody of two suspected smugglers and 430 kilograms of seized cocaine to federal law enforcement at Sector San Juan on Aug. 5 following the interdiction of a go-fast boat in the Caribbean Sea, the Coast Guard's 7th District said in a release.

The interdiction was the result of multiagency efforts in support of U.S. Southern Command's enhanced counter-narcotics operations in the Western Hemisphere, the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force program and the Caribbean Corridor Strike Force. The U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Puerto Rico is leading the prosecution for this case.

The estimated wholesale value of the seized drug shipment is more than $12 million.

"The positive outcome in this case is a reflection of the professionalism and unwavering resolve of the Richard Dixon crew and of our fellow Coast Guardsmen and federal law enforcement partners involved in this case," said Lt. Matthew Monahan, cutter Richard Dixon's commanding officer. "Our collective efforts resulted in preventing 430 kilograms of cocaine from reaching the streets and the apprehension of two smugglers who will now have their day in court."

The interdiction occurred on Aug. 2 afternoon following the detection of a suspicious 30-foot go-fast vessel, with two people aboard, by the crew of a patrolling U.S. maritime patrol aircraft.

The Richard Dixon responded to the sighting and interdicted the go-fast with the assistance of the cutter’s small boat. The cutter’s boarding team located 21 bales of suspected contraband aboard the go-fast that the smugglers attempted to conceal with a blue tarp. The boarding team placed the two men in custody and embarked them aboard the cutter along with the seized contraband.

The seized cocaine, destined for the United States, and two detainees were later transferred to the Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Napier and transported to San Juan, where CCSF federal law enforcement agents received custody.

The Richard Dixon and Joseph Napier are 154-foot fast-response cutters homeported in San Juan.