Coast Guard Offloads $338 Million of Cocaine in San Diego



Coast Guardsmen gather together before preparing bails of cocaine to be offloaded from the Coast Guard Cutter Munro in San Diego on Feb. 10. U.S. Coast Guard/Petty Officer 3rd Class Alex Gray

SAN DIEGO – The crew of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Munro offloaded nearly 20,000 pounds of cocaine Feb. 10 seized from known drug-transit zones of the eastern Pacific Ocean worth about $338 million, according to the Coast Guard's 11th District.

Eight interdictions were made between mid-November and mid-January by the joint efforts of the following four separate Coast Guard cutter crews:

- Thetis was responsible for two cases, seizing 6,830 pounds.
- Resolute was responsible for one case, seizing 1,951 pounds.
- Tampa was responsible for two cases, seizing 4,270 pounds.
- Munro was responsible for three cases, seizing 6,680 pounds.

Numerous U.S. agencies from the Departments of Defense, Justice and Homeland Security cooperated in the effort to combat transnational organized crime. The Coast Guard, U.S. Navy, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, FBI, Drug Enforcement Administration, Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Panama Express Strike Force, along with allied and international partner agencies, play a role in counter-drug operations.

The fight against drug cartels in the eastern Pacific requires unity of effort in all phases from detection, monitoring and interdictions, to criminal prosecutions of these cases by U.S. Attorneys in districts within Florida and Texas.

“By disrupting the profits of these cartels, we are reducing their effectiveness and helping our partner nations maintain their stability,” said Rear Adm. Peter Gautier, the 11th District’s commander. “These efforts also provide invaluable information to us that we can then use to stop these drugs further up the supply chain before they begin these dangerous routes at sea.”

These interdictions were in support of Campaign Martillo, a regional initiative targeting illicit trafficking that threatens security and prosperity at the national, regional, and international levels. The law enforcement phase of counter-smuggling operations in the eastern Pacific is conducted under the authority of the 11th Coast Guard District, headquartered in Alameda. The interdictions, including the actual boardings, are led and conducted by members of the Coast Guard.