

Coast Guard Offloads \$5.4M in Seized Cocaine Following Interdiction off Puerto Rico



The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Napier offloaded approximately 725 pounds of seized cocaine worth an estimated \$5.4 million to Coast Guard Investigative Service and Drug Enforcement Agency Special Agents custody in San Juan, Puerto Rico, May 7, 2025. The interdiction occurred April 28, 2025, in waters north of Aguadilla, Puerto Rico, and is the result of multi-agency efforts in support of the Caribbean Corridor Strike Force. (U.S. Coast Guard photo)

From U.S. Coast Guard 7th District, May 7, 2025

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Napier offloaded approximately 725 pounds of seized cocaine worth an estimated \$5.4 million to Coast Guard Investigative Service and Drug Enforcement Agency Special Agents custody in San Juan, Wednesday.

The interdiction is the result of multi-agency efforts in support of the Caribbean Corridor Strike Force. The Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Napier crew transferred custody of five suspected smugglers apprehended in this case, Dominican Republic nationals, to the Dominican Republic Navy off Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, Saturday.

During the night of April 28, 2025, the crew of a Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations multi-role enforcement aircraft detected a suspicious 35-foot go-fast vessel in international waters north of Aguadilla, Puerto Rico. Coast Guard watchstanders in Sector San Juan diverted the cutter Joseph Napier to interdict the suspect vessel. Once on-scene, the cutter Joseph Napier crew launched the cutter's Over the Horizon boat to carry out the interdiction. During the pursuit, the suspected smugglers attempted to flee the scene while jettisoning suspected contraband cargo overboard. Shortly thereafter, the cutter boat crew stopped and gained compliance from the suspect vessel. Following the interdiction, cutter Joseph Napier's crew recovered eight bales, seven of which had been jettisoned overboard, and they apprehended the five persons onboard. The seized contraband tested positive for cocaine.

"This was an excellent case that would not have been possible without the support provided by Customs and Border Protection Caribbean Air and Marine Branch," said Lt. John M. Groen, Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Napier commanding officer. "Their flight remained on scene for several hours and communicated flawlessly with the pursuit team. I am so incredibly proud of the entire Joseph Napier crew's outstanding performance. The interdiction highlights Sector San Juan and the Seventh Coast Guard District's unwavering commitment to combat drug trafficking organizations and secure America's maritime borders."

The specific mission of the Caribbean Corridor Strike Force (CCSF) is to identify, disrupt, and dismantle Transnational Criminal Organizations. The CCSF is comprised of agents and officers from the Drug Enforcement Administration, Federal Bureau of Investigation, United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement-Homeland Security Investigations, United States Coast Guard Investigative Service, and United States Marshals Service, and the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Puerto Rico.

U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Napier is 154-foot Sentinel-class fast response cutter homeported in San Juan, Puerto Rico.