Coast Guard Offloads More than $148 Million of Illegal Narcotics in Miami



A crew member of the Coast Guard Cutter Dauntless offloads a bale of illegal narcotics at Base Miami Beach, Florida, Dec. 7. The contraband was seized by members of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary Wave Knight and the His Netherlands Majesty's Ship Holland during three separate interdictions in the Caribbean Sea. *U.S. COAST GUARD / Petty Officer 3rd Class Brian Zimmerman*

MIAMI — Coast Guard Cutter Dauntless' crew offloaded more than $148 million of illegal narcotics at Base Miami Beach, Dec. 7, from three separate interdictions in the Caribbean Sea in the past two weeks, the Coast Guard 7th District said Dec. 9.

Following the three interdictions, nine suspected drug smugglers with Dominican Republic and Colombian nationalities were apprehended. The Royal Fleet Auxiliary Wave Knight crew

seized approximately 1,200 pounds of cocaine, and Coast Guard Cutter William Trump and the His Netherlands Majesty's Ship Hollands' crew seized approximately 6,700 pounds of cocaine in two interdictions.

The U.S. Attorney's Offices for the District of Puerto Rico, Southern District of Florida and the Eastern District of Virginia are prosecuting these cases.

"These successful interdictions are the result of professional partnerships between the Coast Guard, RFA Wave Knight, and HNLMS Holland crews," said Hansel Pintos, 7th District spokesperson. "The Coast Guard's strong international partnerships, counter threats in the maritime domain, protect each of our countries from transnational organized crime, and work to stabilize and promote good governance in the region."

This effort is part of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces operation. OCDETF identifies, disrupts and dismantles the highest-level criminal organizations that threaten the United States using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach.

The fight against drug cartels in the Caribbean Sea requires unity of effort in all phases from detection, monitoring and interdictions, to criminal prosecutions by international partners and U.S. Attorneys' Offices in districts across the nation.

During at-sea interdictions, a suspect vessel is initially detected and monitored by allied, military or law enforcement personnel coordinated by Joint Interagency Task Force-South based in Key West, Florida. The law enforcement phase of operations in the Caribbean Sea is conducted under the authority of the Seventh Coast Guard District, headquartered in Miami. The interdictions, including the actual boardings, are led and conducted by members of the U.S. Coast Guard.