

Coast Guard Offloads More Than \$185 Million in Illegal Narcotics During Fleet Week Miami



U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk (WMEC-913) crewmembers pose with approximately 18,000 pounds of illegal narcotics at Port Everglades in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, May 10, 2024. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Ryan Estrada)

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MIAMI – The crew of U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk (WMEC 913) offloaded more than 13,803 pounds of cocaine and 3,736 pounds of marijuana with a combined estimated street value of approximately \$185 million in Port Everglades, Friday.

Coast Guard crews, working alongside interagency and

international partners, interdicted the illegal drugs in the international waters of the Caribbean Sea and Atlantic Ocean during six separate cases.

“Our offload today represents the combined efforts of U.S. and allied military units from a Caribbean coalition of partners working together to deny drug trafficking organizations access to maritime smuggling routes,” said Cmdr. David Ratner, commanding officer of USCGC Mohawk. “I am especially proud of the hard work of the Mohawk crew, and grateful for the opportunity to operate with interagency and NATO partners in support of our National Security.”

The following assets and crews were involved in the interdictions:

- USCG Cutter Mohawk (WMEC 913)
- USCG Tactical Law Enforcement Team South (TACLET-South)
- USS Leyte Gulf (CG 55)
- U.S. Navy Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron 50 (HSM 50)
- Royal Netherlands Navy ship HNLMS Groningen (P 843)
- Royal British Navy ship HMS Trent (P 244)
- Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-South)
- Joint Task Force – East (JTF-E)
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations (CBP-AMO)

Along with the illicit narcotics, 10 suspected smugglers were apprehended and will face prosecution in federal courts by the U.S. Department of Justice.

The offload included contraband seized by Coast Guard law enforcement detachments deployed aboard HMS Trent, HNLMS Groningen, and USS Leyte Gulf, whose crew interdicted a self-propelled semi-submersible vessel in March. You can read more about that case [here](#).

The fight against transnational criminal organizations requires a unity of effort in all phases, from detection and monitoring to interdiction and apprehension, through to criminal prosecutions by international partners and U.S. Attorneys' Offices in districts across the nation.

The Joint Interagency Task Force South in Key West, Florida, conducts the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs. The law enforcement phase of counter-smuggling operations in the Caribbean is conducted under the authority of the [Coast Guard 7th District](#), headquartered in Miami. The interdictions, including the actual boardings, are led and conducted by members of the U.S. Coast Guard.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations deployed a National Air Security Operations MQ-9 Unmanned Aircraft System to Puerto Rico in coordination with JTF-E and JIATF-S reinforcement of the Eastern Caribbean Campaign, resulting in tremendous success. JTF-E's Eastern Caribbean Campaign is a divergence from conventional strategies with a multi-dimensional view on security threats predominating in the region. The deployment highlighted threats emanating from the Eastern Caribbean contributing to the seizure of 25 metric tons of narcotics.

These interdictions relate to Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) designated investigations. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level criminal organizations that threaten the United States using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach. Additional information about the OCDETF program can be found at <https://www.justice.gov/OCDETF>.

USCGC Mohawk is a 270-foot, medium endurance cutter homeported in Key West, Florida with a crew of 100. The cutter's primary missions are counter drug operations, migrant interdiction operations, enforcement of federal fishery laws, and search

and rescue in support of Coast Guard operations throughout the Western Hemisphere. Sister ship USCGC Seneca (WMEC 906) homeported in Portsmouth, Virginia, is participating in the inaugural Fleet Week Miami and is hosting free public tours. Visit the Fleet Week Miami website for more information: [Fleet Week Miami](#).

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