

Coast Guard offloads more than \$211 million in illicit drug interdictions in the Eastern Pacific



The crew of USCGC Thetis (WMEC 910) poses for a group photo behind more than 28,500 pounds of seized drugs worth more than \$211 million at Port Everglades in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, May 29, 2025. The crew seized the illicit drugs in four separate interdictions during a patrol in the Eastern Pacific Ocean. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Diana Sherbs)

From U.S. Coast Guard 7th District, May 29, 2025

MIAMI – U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Thetis' crew offloaded more than 28,500 pounds of cocaine worth an estimated \$211.3 million, Thursday, at Port Everglades.

The seized contraband was the result of four interdictions in the Eastern Pacific by the crew of Coast Guard Cutter Thetis and an embarked MH-65 Dolphin helicopter crew from Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron based out of Jacksonville, Florida.

“I could not be more proud of this crew and what they accomplished this patrol,” said Cmdr. Ryan Kelley, commanding officer of the Coast Guard Cutter Thetis. “The Coast Guard is in the business of saving lives, and every kilogram of these drugs kept off our streets represents lives saved. The more than 33,000 pounds of drugs seized by Thetis this patrol also represents the determination of a crew who continues to find a way to improvise, adapt, and overcome to keep an aging cutter in the fight and accomplish this mission.”

On May 3, a maritime patrol aircraft located two suspicious vessels approximately 170 miles west of Mexico. Thetis’ crew interdicted the vessels and seized 4,630 pounds of cocaine. The Coast Guard transferred 4,608 pounds of cocaine from this case to Ecuadorian government officials to aid them in their prosecution efforts.

On May 5, an embarked helicopter crew aboard the Thetis observed a bale field approximately 475 miles southwest of Colima, Mexico. Thetis’ crew recovered 9,993 pounds of cocaine from the bale field.

On May 6, a crew on an embarked helicopter aboard the Thetis detected two suspicious vessels throwing bales overboard approximately 575 miles southwest of Acapulco, Mexico. Due to an incoming storm, the air crew lost sight of the vessels but led the Thetis crew to three bale fields where 14,559 pounds of cocaine bales were recovered.

On May 10, the Thetis crew spotted a bale field approximately 660 miles south of Acapulco, Mexico. Thetis’ crew recovered 3,984 pounds of cocaine from the bale field.

The following crews also assisted with interdiction operations:

- Joint Interagency Task Force-South (JIATF-S)
- Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron (HITRON)
Jacksonville
- Eleventh Coast Guard District watchstanders

Detecting and interdicting illicit drug traffickers on the high seas involves significant interagency and international coordination. Joint Interagency Task Force-South, in Key West, conducts the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs. Once an interdiction becomes imminent, the law enforcement phase of the operation begins, and control of the operation shifts to the U.S. Coast Guard for the interdiction and apprehension phases. Interdictions in the Eastern Pacific Ocean are performed by members of the U.S. Coast Guard under the authority and control of the Eleventh Coast Guard District, headquartered in Alameda, California.

These interdictions relate to Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces' Strike Force initiatives and 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 Thetis](#) is a 270-foot medium-endurance cutter homeported in Key West under [U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area Command](#).

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