

Coast Guard Offloads More Than \$54 million in Illegal Narcotics Interdicted in Caribbean Sea



Bales of illegal narcotics, worth an estimated \$54 million, are staged for an offload by crew members of U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Diligence (WMEC 616) in Port Everglades, Florida, Sept. 23, 2024. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Eric Rodriguez)

Sept. 10, 2024

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Coast Guard 7th District, Sept. 10, 2024

MIAMI – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Diligence offloaded more than 4,125 pounds of cocaine with an assessed street value of approximately \$54 million in Port Everglades, Monday.

Coast Guard crews, working alongside interagency and international partners, seized the illegal drugs in the international waters of the Caribbean Sea during three separate interdictions.

The following assets and crews were involved in the interdictions:

- Royal Navy ship HMS Trent (P 244)

- U.S. Coast Guard Tactical Law Enforcement Team Pacific (PAC-TACLET)

- U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Napier (WPC 1115)

- U.S. Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations (CBP-AMO)

- Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-South)

Along with the illicit narcotics, 11 suspected smugglers were apprehended and will face prosecution in federal courts by the U.S. Department of Justice.

“I am extremely proud of our crew’s tenacity and professionalism, coupled with outstanding coordination with Coast Guard aircrews, during this complex counter-drug mission,” said Lt. Matthew Carmine, Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Napier commanding officer. “Their steadfast efforts, along

with those of foreign allies and partner agencies, continue to prove vital to countering drug trafficking organizations and safeguarding the people of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.”

Detecting and interdicting illicit drug traffickers on the high seas involves significant interagency and international coordination. The Joint Interagency Task Force South in Key West, Florida conducts the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs. Once interdiction becomes imminent, the law enforcement phase of the operation begins, and control of the operation shifts to the U.S. Coast Guard throughout the interdiction and apprehension. Interdictions in the Caribbean Sea are performed by members of the U.S. Coast Guard under the authority and control of the Coast Guard’s Seventh District, headquartered in Miami.

These interdictions relate to Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces’ (OCDETF) 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>.

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