

Coast Guard, partners complete Operation Koa Kai off the Island of Hawaii



[Release from U.S. Coast Guard 14th District](#)

Nov. 1, 2023

HONOLULU – The U.S. Coast Guard completed Operation Koa Kai, a comprehensive month-long maritime security and safety operation conducted throughout October off the Island of Hawaii.

The annual operation, carried out in collaboration with the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) and the

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office of Law Enforcement, focused on safeguarding the coastal waters and maritime assets, ensuring the well-being of both residents and visitors to the region.

Operations completed include:

- 137 underway hours with 19 joint patrol hours
- Two search and rescue responses
- 26 maritime security and response operation patrols
- 11 small vessel security boardings (SVSB)
- Three high-capacity passenger vessel escorts
- 24 Response Boat-Small boardings and nine uninspected passenger vessel boardings
- Dockside inspections conducted in collaboration with the Marine Safety Team (MST) Hawaii for certificate of inspection verification.

“This operation exemplifies the commitment of our Coast Guard personnel and partner agencies to the security and safety of Hawaii’s maritime domain,” said Chief Warrant Officer Omar Perez, a Coast Guard Sector Honolulu enforcement officer. “Our combined efforts are essential in maintaining maritime security and safeguarding lives in the waters off the Big Island of Hawaii.”

While taking part in Operation Koa Kai, the Coast Guard Maritime Safety & Security Team 91107 Honolulu (MSST) provided safety zone enforcement for the 2.4-mile swim course included in the Ironman World Championship Women’s Race held in Kailua-Kona. The MSST played a pivotal role in a collaborative interagency effort, joining forces with agencies such as the Federal Bureau of Investigations, Department of Homeland Security Federal Air Marshals, Department of Defense, Hawaii Police Department, Hawaii Sheriff’s Office, Hawaii Conservation Officers, Hawaii Fire Department, and the Ironman Public Safety/Emergency Management department. This

partnership, characterized by meticulous mission planning and preparation, was aimed at ensuring the safety of all athletes, spectators, staff, and volunteers during the high-profile event.

Operation Koa Kai reflects the Coast Guard's mission to protect and serve the maritime community, ensuring the smooth flow of commerce, maintaining maritime safety, and responding promptly to emergencies.

Agencies involved in Operation Koa Kai include:

- U.S. Coast Guard Maritime Safety & Security Team Honolulu (MSST)
- U.S. Coast Guard Marine Safety Team (MST) Hawaii
- NOAA Office of Law Enforcement (OLE)
- DLNR Hawaii Division of Conservation and Resource Enforcement
- Kona Police Department