

Coast Guard, partners conclude Operation Ika Moana in Samoa



Boats crews comprising Samoan Police Maritime Wing officers, U.S. Coast Guard Mobile Training Team members, and Operation Ika Moana participants conduct training offshore Apia, Samoa, Aug. 12, 2025. During Operation Ika Moana, patrol boat crews from six Pacific Island nations participated in underway training focused on boarding team and search and rescue techniques. (U.S. Coast Guard photo)

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HONOLULU – The U.S. Coast Guard concluded participation in Operation Ika Moana, a maritime surveillance initiative hosted by the [Samoan Police Maritime Wing](#) in conjunction with

the [Pacific Maritime Security Program](#) in Apia, Samoa, Aug. 8-14.

The exercise included representatives from Tuvalu, Kiribati, Tonga, Fiji, Vanuatu, and Cook Islands. Partners from Timor-Leste, Palau, Nauru, the Republic of Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, and Solomon Islands also observed the operation.

Operation Ika Moana is a collaborative maritime surveillance initiative intended to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing and transnational crimes across Oceania, such as drug and human trafficking.

The operation brought together national and regional partners to conduct coordinated patrols, surveillance, joint exercises and crew exchanges.

“Ika Moana provided the U.S. Coast Guard a unique opportunity to work with maritime security professionals from many Pacific Island coast guards, navies and marine police units,” said James Duval, maritime security cooperation director, Coast Guard Office of International Affairs. “We have several common missions, challenges and objectives and have benefitted from the opportunity to discuss, share and contrast our individual techniques. This interaction will help us all continue to refine our skills to best serve the people of our nations.”

The Coast Guard Mobile Training Team delivered classroom and underway training for participating patrol boats focusing on boarding team and search and rescue techniques.

“By partnering with regional maritime law enforcement agencies, the Coast Guard seeks to strengthen global maritime governance to preserve sovereignty,” Lt. Cmdr. James Bruce with the [International Mobile Training Branch](#) at Coast Guard Training Center Yorktown. “We value partnership opportunities focused on our shared objective of rooting out illicit activities and eradicating threats to our collective prosperity.”

The Pacific Maritime Security Program and the Coast Guard share a formal collaborative partnership to coordinate bilateral and joint training with Pacific Island Country partners.

The Coast Guard Mobile Training Team is a deployable unit that fosters international cooperation and strengthens maritime partnerships by exporting formal U.S. Coast Guard training and providing technical assistance to partner nations around the globe. Every year, they train over 2,400 international partners in more than 40 countries.