Coast Guard Repatriates 14 Migrants to the Dominican Republic



Coast Guard Cutter Heriberto Hernandez transfers 16 Dominican migrants to the Coast Guard Cutter Richard Dixon on July 12 for their repatriation to the Dominican Republic. U.S. Coast Guard

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The Coast Guard Cutter Richard Dixon (WPC-1113) repatriated 14 Dominican migrants to a Dominican navy patrol vessel Saturday near Samaná, Dominican Republic, following the interdiction of an illegal migrant voyage June 11 off the coast of Añasco, Puerto Rico.

Two other Dominican men traveling in the group remain in federal custody facing possible prosecution by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Puerto Rico on potential charges of attempted illegal re-entry into a U.S. territory.

The interdiction is the result of ongoing efforts in support of Operation Unified Resolve, Operation Caribbean Guard and the Caribbean Border Interagency Group (CBIG). Since October 2018, the Coast Guard and CBIG partner federal and state agencies have interdicted over 1,550 migrants at sea near Puerto Rico.

Coast Guard Sector San Juan Command Center watchstanders were contacted on the morning of June 11 by Puerto Rico Police, who notified that a Joint Forces of Rapid Action (FURA) marine unit had just interdicted a 20-foot migrant boat half a mile off the coast of Añasco.

Coast Guard watchstanders diverted the Coast Guard Cutter Heriberto Hernandez (WPC-1114) to the scene. Once there, Heriberto Hernandez crew members safely embarked all 14 men and two women from the makeshift vessel.

“We commend our Puerto Rico Police partners who prevented this illegal voyage from making landfall as well as their close collaboration with the Hernandez crew in safely removing all the migrants from a dangerous situation,” said Lt. Andrew Russo, commanding officer of Heriberto Hernandez. “These illegal migrant voyages are very dangerous, often aboard unsafe and unseaworthy vessels, which present a life-threatening situation to everyone aboard.”

Once aboard a Coast Guard cutter, all migrants receive food, water, shelter and basic medical attention.

The cutter Heriberto Hernandez later transferred the migrants to the cutter Richard

Dixon for their repatriation to the Dominican Republic. The two migrants facing prosecution are in custody of Ramey Sector Border Patrol agents in Puerto Rico.

The Heriberto Hernandez and Richard Dixon are 154-foot fast-response cutters homeported in San Juan, Puerto Rico.