

Coast Guard Repatriates 26 Migrants to the Dominican Republic



The Coast Guard Cutter Heriberto Hernandez repatriated 26 migrants, 22 men and four women, to the Dominican Republic on Dec. 9, 2019. U.S. Coast Guard

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The Coast Guard Cutter Heriberto Hernandez repatriated 26 migrants to the Dominican Republic on Dec. 9 following the interdiction of an illegal migrant voyage on Dec. 7 in the Mona Passage, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a release.

The interdiction was the result of ongoing efforts in support of Operation Caribbean Guard and the Caribbean Border Interagency Group (CBIG).

The crew of a Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Air and Marine Operations marine patrol aircraft sighted the illegal migrant voyage, about 35 nautical miles south of Mona Island. The Coast Guard Cutter Reliance diverted to the scene and interdicted the 25-foot migrant boat with 22 Dominican men and four women aboard.

“I’m extremely proud of our crews and our CBP partners who did an excellent job responding to this case and rescuing all 26 occupants aboard this grossly overloaded makeshift vessel,” said Cmdr. Beau Power, Sector San Juan chief of response.

“The migrants were not wearing lifejackets and they were observed continuously bailing out water from their boat. Unfortunately, this is a common representation of what an illegal migrant voyage looks like each and every day, the conditions of the voyage are extremely dangerous and the migrants are always at risk of losing their lives at any given

moment.”

The crew of the Reliance transferred the migrants to the Heriberto Hernandez for their repatriation. The migrants were transported to Dominican Republic waters just off Samaná, where they were transferred to a Dominican Republic navy patrol boat.