

Coast Guard Repatriates 64 Migrants to Dominican Republic

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The U.S. Coast Guard repatriated 64 migrants to the Dominican Republic between Feb. 5 and Feb. 6 following the interdiction of an illegal migrant voyage on Feb. 3 about 51 nautical miles north of Punta Cana, the according to the Coast Guard's 7th District.

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 Coast Guard HC-144 Ocean Sentry aircraft sighted the illegal migrant voyage about 51 nautical miles north of Punta Cana. Coast Guard watchstanders at Sector San Juan diverted cutter Donald Horsley, which had arrived on scene and interdicted the 30-foot white migrant boat. The makeshift vessel was transporting 63 Dominican males, including a 17-year-old minor, and one Haitian man.

"In the last 10 days, the U.S. Coast Guard and our Dominican Republic navy partners have worked together to interdict 191 migrants at sea," said Lt. Michael Lopez, Coast Guard liaison officer in the Dominican Republic. "Our collective efforts help safeguard the maritime borders of both nations and the people who risk their lives when they embark grossly overloaded makeshift vessels to attempt the perilous voyage across the Mona Passage."

The crew of the cutter Donald Horsley embarked the migrants and transported them to waters Feb. 5 just off Samaná, Dominican Republic, where the 63 adult migrants were transferred to local authorities aboard a Dominican navy patrol boat. The following day, the Coast Guard Cutter

Joseph Tezanos repatriated the 17-year-old minor in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, where he was received by local authorities.

Once aboard a Coast Guard cutter, all migrants receive food, water, shelter and basic medical attention. Cutters Donald Horsley and Joseph Tezanos are 154-foot fast-response cutters homeported in San Juan.