Coast Guard Repatriates Interdicted Migrants to the Dominican Republic



A vessel transporting 13 migrants, Dominican Republic nationals, was interdicted by a Puerto Rico Police Joint Forces of Rapid Action marine unit the morning on June 11 off the coast of Rincón, Puerto Rico. The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Donald Horsley repatriated the group to the Dominican that afternoon, along with 37 migrants from a second interdiction on June 9. U.S. Coast Guard

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The Coast Guard Cutter Donald Horsley repatriated 50 of 51 migrants to the Dominican Republic navy on June 11 in waters just off Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, following the interdiction of two illegal migrant voyages just off the west coast of Puerto Rico.

Of the 51 interdicted migrants, 49 are reported to be Dominican nationals, while two others are reported to be Haitian. One of the migrants remains in U.S. custody facing criminal immigration charges.

The interdictions are the result of ongoing efforts in support of Operation Caribbean Guard and the Caribbean Border Interagency Group CBIG.

“These interdictions speak to the strong local and federal law enforcement partnerships within the Caribbean Border Interagency Group and our collective resolve to safeguard the nations southernmost maritime border against existing threats,” said Capt. Eric P. King, Sector San Juan commander.

“The efficient coordination between responding agencies led to these successful interdictions and the safe recovery of all 51 migrants. These illegal voyages are extremely dangerous, as

migrants continue to take to the sea aboard grossly overloaded and unseaworthy makeshift vessels with little or no lifesaving equipment onboard.”

Late on June 9, a Puerto Rico Police Joint Forces of Rapid Action marine unit interdicted a 25-foot yola with 38 migrants aboard, 36 men and 2 women, including the two Haitian men, about 3 nautical miles off the coast of Aguada, Puerto Rico. The Coast Guard Cutter Winslow Griesser diverted to the scene and embarked the migrants from the makeshift vessel, while a Coast Guard MH-65 Dolphin helicopter from Air Station Borinquen flew overhead rescue support throughout the transfer.

Early on June 11, a Puerto Rico Police Joint Forces of Rapid Action marine unit interdicted a second yola transporting 13 migrants, about 1 nautical mile off the lighthouse in Rincón, Puerto Rico. The Coast Guard Cutter Reef Shark arrived on scene shortly thereafter and embarked all 13 migrants from the makeshift boat.

The migrant facing potential federal prosecution was transferred to the custody of Border Patrol Agents in Mayagüez, Puerto Rico, on June 11, while the remaining migrants were transferred and transported by the cutter Donald Horsley to the Dominican Republic for their repatriation.

Once aboard a Coast Guard cutter, all migrants received food, water, shelter and basic medical attention. Throughout the interdiction Coast Guard crew members were equipped with personal protective equipment to minimize potential exposure to any possible case of COVID-19. No migrants were reported to be sick or to have any COVID-19 related symptoms.

Winslow Griesser and Donald Horsley are 154-foot fast-response cutters, while Reef Shark is an 87-foot coastal patrol boat. All homeported in San Juan.