

Coast Guard Teams Deploy to American Samoa to Patrol Border, Conduct Boardings



A U.S. Coast Guardsman assigned to a Coast Guard Sector Honolulu boarding team, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Office of Law Enforcement officer and American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources officer speak to the master of a foreign-flagged fishing vessel during a boarding offshore Pago Pago, American Samoa, Feb. 26, 2025. (U.S. Coast Guard photo, courtesy Sector Honolulu)

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HONOLULU – Coast Guard Maritime Safety and Security Team Honolulu personnel and a boarding team from Coast Guard Sector Honolulu deployed to American Samoa from Feb. 10-27 to protect the U.S. maritime border, enforce U.S. laws and regulations, enhance maritime domain awareness and coordinate with agency partners.

During the deployment, team members boarded six U.S.-flagged commercial fishing vessels, six foreign-flagged commercial fishing vessels, and five recreational boating safety boardings, resulting in the termination of one recreational voyage due to deficient safety equipment.

Crews patrolled the U.S. territorial maritime border and the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone surrounding American Samoa, which extends up to 200 miles offshore.

Additionally, MSST Honolulu and Sector Honolulu personnel conducted over 26 hours of training with the American Samoa Department of Homeland Security and American Samoa Marine Patrol, a law enforcement unit within the [American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources](#). Training primarily focused on boarding procedures and weapons proficiency.

“Working closely with partners in American Samoa heightens our awareness of any illicit activities in the area and hones our combined ability to safeguard the maritime border,” said Lt. Cmdr. Nic Iannarone, enforcement division chief, Sector Honolulu. “Teamwork is a key component of taking a stand against threats to our ports and waterways.”

In accordance with the President’s Executive Orders and direction from Adm. Kevin Lunday, the acting commandant of the Coast Guard, the Coast Guard is increasing cutter patrols and operations in American Samoa. The Coast Guard is surging assets to increase presence in key areas to protect America’s maritime borders, territorial integrity, and sovereignty.

Maritime Safety and Security Team Honolulu is a specialized unit of the Coast Guard dedicated to enhancing maritime security and safety in the Pacific region. With a highly trained personnel team equipped to conduct law enforcement operations, port security assessments, and emergency response activities, MSST Honolulu collaborates closely with local,

state, and federal agencies to safeguard vital maritime infrastructure and natural resources.

Sector Honolulu serves a broad expanse of the Pacific that includes 200 nautical miles surrounding the State of Hawaii, the islands and atolls of the Hawaiian Island Chain and American Samoa. The sector's primary missions include ensuring maritime security, conducting search and rescue operations, enforcing environmental protection laws, and facilitating law enforcement activities.