Cutter Munro Returns After Counter-Drug Patrol; $115 Million in Cocaine Seized



Lt. j.g. Michelle McGill serves as landing signal officer aboard the Coast Guard Cutter Munro as security response team members conduct fast-rope exercises from a U.S. Navy MH-60S Sea Hawk helicopter off the coast of San Diego on Dec. 16. U.S. Coast Guard/Ensign Brooke Harkrader

ALAMEDA, Calif. – The Coast Guard Cutter Munro returned home on March 1 after a 78-day deployment, during which the crew seized an estimated $115 million worth of cocaine from suspected smugglers in the eastern Pacific Ocean, according to a Coast Guard Pacific Area release.

The crew patrolled known drug-transit zones of the eastern Pacific from late December to mid-January and interdicted three suspected drug-smuggling vessels that carried 6,680 pounds of pure cocaine.

The cocaine seized by Munro's crew and three other Coast Guard cutters was part of a nearly 20,000-pound haul of the drug offloaded in San Diego on Feb. 11.

This patrol was Munro's second deployment to the eastern Pacific since the cutter's 2017 commissioning. Last July, Vice President Mike Pence attended Munro's offload of more than 39,000 pounds of cocaine and 933 pounds of marijuana worth more than $500 million. That offload included contraband found aboard a self-propelled, semi-submersible vessel interdicted by Munro's crew on June 18 that was carrying more than 17,000 pounds of cocaine.

Following February’s offload, the crew began a multiweek tailored ship’s training availability – a set of drills, inspections and exercises that assess a ship’s mission readiness and damage control capabilities. The crew passed all 136 required drills, with an overall average of 97%.

“I truly could not have asked for a better crew with whom to share these memories, but we didn’t do this alone,” said Capt. Jim Estramonte, the Munro’s commanding officer. “Through all our adventures, the friends and family members of Munro’s crew have supported us. It is their hard work at home that allows us to serve. Their sacrifice does not go unnoticed. So thank you to all those who make our success possible.”

Munro is one of four national security cutters homeported in Alameda. These Legend-class cutters are 418 feet long, 54 feet wide and have a 4,600 long-ton displacement. They have a top speed in excess of 28 knots, a range of 12,000 nautical miles, endurance of up to 90 days and can hold a crew of nearly 150.