

Cutter Returns Home After Seizing \$21.5 Million in Cocaine During Patrol



A Coast Guard Cutter Steadfast boarding team searches a suspected smuggling vessel on March 15 interdicted by the crew, resulting in 1,252 pounds of cocaine seized, worth an estimated \$21.5 million, and three suspected smugglers detained. U.S. Coast Guard

ASTORIA, Ore. – The crew of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Steadfast returned home on April 17 to Astoria following a 65-day counter-narcotic patrol to the eastern Pacific Ocean, the Coast Guard Pacific Area reported.

The cutter intercepted and boarded five suspected smuggling vessels, including one go-fast-style panga, while patrolling

international waters off the coasts of Mexico and Central America. Steadfast's crew apprehended three suspected smugglers and seized 1,252 pounds of cocaine worth an estimated \$21.5 million.

"I am inspired daily by the tenacity and professionalism of this crew," said Cmdr. Dan Ursino, the Steadfast's commanding officer. "Their resilience to remain focused, in light of the global health crisis and uncertainty back home, has been nothing short of remarkable. Knowing the importance and impact of keeping these harmful substances from reaching our streets help to keep us going."

On April 1, U.S. Southern Command began enhanced counter-narcotics operations in the Western Hemisphere to disrupt the flow of drugs. Numerous U.S. agencies from the Departments of Defense, Justice and Homeland Security cooperated in the effort to combat transnational organized crime. The Coast Guard, U.S. Navy, Customs and Border Protection, FBI, Drug Enforcement Administration and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, along with allied and international partner agencies, play a role in counter-drug operations.

Steadfast also continued to participate in the Columbia River Maritime Museum's Mini Boat Project, which connects students from local Oregon elementary schools with their peers in Japan. Students learn about the significance of ocean currents and weather while building miniature boats to send across the ocean to one another. During this patrol, Steadfast launched two boats, Boat-A-Lohti and Philbert, about 200 miles off the southern tip of Baja, Mexico. Follow along [here](#).

Commissioned in 1968, Steadfast is one of two Reliance-class cutters homeported in Astoria. Reliance-class cutters are 210-foot long, 34-foot wide and have a 1,100 long-ton displacement. The ships hold a crew of 76 and have served the nation for more than 50 years.