Newest National Security Cutter Makes Second Cocaine Seizure in Five Days as 4,600 Pounds Are Interdicted



Crew members from the Coast Guard Cutter Midgett sit atop a low-profile go-fast vessel interdicted by the crew July 31. The crew seized more than 4,600 pounds of cocaine from the suspected drug-smuggling vessel. U.S. Coast Guard

ALAMEDA, Calif. – Crews aboard the precommissioned U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Midgett (WMSL-757) interdicted a suspected low-profile go-fast vessel July 31 and seized more than 4,600 pounds of cocaine during a boarding in international waters of the eastern Pacific Ocean, the Coast Guard Pacific Area said in a release.

This was the second at-sea cocaine seizure made by Midgett's crew within five days.

Midgett's crew seized more than 2,100 pounds of cocaine July 25 from a low-profile go-fast boat, the cutter's first cocaine seizure ever since departing the Pascagoula, Mississippi, shipyard in June following acceptance by the Coast Guard.

The July 25 and July 31 boardings resulted in a combined seizure of more than 6,700 pounds

of cocaine with an estimated street value of over $89 million.

Low-profile
go-fast vessels are built by cartels for smuggling large quantities of
contraband by riding low in the water to avoid detection. They are designed to
be quickly sunk by using their integrated scuttling valves, a dangerous
practice that jeopardizes the safety of smugglers and the Coast Guard boarding
teams.



The cabin of a low-profile go-fast vessel interdicted by crew members from the Coast Guard Cutter Midgett on July 31. U.S. Coast Guard

Nearly 80%
of all known illegal narcotics coming into North America are smuggled by
international cartels through the eastern Pacific corridor, an area greater in
size than the continental United States. The profits from cocaine manufacture allow
drug cartels to diversify and fund other illicit trafficking activities such as
the smuggling of opioids, synthetics, methamphetamines, people and weapons.

One metric
ton of cocaine (2,204.6 pounds or 1,000,000 milligrams) is equal to 20 million
individual doses upon arrival in the United States. The Coast Guard removed more
than 2 million pounds (923 metric tons) of cocaine with an uncut wholesale
value of more than $27 billion over the last five years.

“The national security cutter gets you further, faster and delivers more capability once on scene than any other cutter in the history of our service,” said Capt. Alan McCabe, Midgett’s commanding officer. “I am incredibly proud of the crew’s efforts who made these two seizures possible, and we are eager to conduct future operations throughout the Pacific.”

Midgett, the Coast Guard’s eighth national security cutter, is sailing toward its future homeport in Honolulu, where it will be commissioned Aug. 24 along with its sister ship, the Coast Guard Cutter Kimball (WMSL-756), in a ceremony presided over by Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Karl Schultz.