

Coast Guard Interdicts Suspected Smuggler, 11 Cuban Migrants 41 Miles South of Key West



KEY WEST, Florida – The Coast Guard interdicted 11 migrants and a suspected smuggler April 12 about 41 miles south of Key West attempting to illegally enter the United States, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a release.

Coast Guard 7th District watchstanders received a notification from Cuban border security reporting an illegal vessel departure with an unknown number of passengers aboard.

The Coast Guard Cutter Isaac Mayo (WPC-1112) crew arrived on scene after a Customs and Border Patrol Air and Marine Operations aircraft crew sighted the 30-foot center console with four adult Cuban males, five Cuban adult females, one Cuban minor aboard and embarked them with no medical concerns.

The 10 Cuban nationals were transferred to the Coast Guard Cutter Charles Sexton (WPC-1108) and will be transferred back to their home. The suspected smuggler and a male migrant were taken into custody.

“The waters of the Caribbean and Florida Straits are dangerous for migrants on illegal voyages, in vessels with little or no safety gear,” said Lt. Otis Leonard, duty enforcement officer at Coast Guard 7th District. “The Coast Guard and its partner agencies continue to maintain a strong presence along our maritime border and will continue to interdict and rescue those who embark on these illegal and ill-advised voyages.”

Coast Guard Cutters Charles Sexton and Isaac Mayo are 154-foot

fast-response cutters homeported in Florida.