

U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Kimball returns home following 85-day Bearing Sea patrol



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HONOLULU – The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Kimball (WMSL 756) returned home to Honolulu, Wednesday, after an 85-day multi-mission patrol covering 14,000 nautical miles spanning from the Hawaiian Islands to north of the Arctic Circle.

The crew provided search-and-rescue coverage and conducted living marine resources (LMR) and counter Illegal Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing operations during the patrol

following their actions responding to the Maui wildfires.

Kimball departed August 8 for the Aleutian Island chain and later that evening, the cutter received a report of people in the water attempting to escape a raging wildfire on Maui. The cutter shifted to the tactical control of Sector Honolulu and altered course to support the mass search and rescue efforts. Arriving on scene within hours, Kimball assumed the role of On Scene Commander of Coast Guard Station Maui, Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Gerczak (WPC 1126), and Air Station Barbers Point MH-65s, who collectively searched 790 square nautical miles, saved 17 lives, and assisted approximately 40 survivors ashore. During Kimball's three days on scene, their crew launched two cutter small boats for over 25 combined hours and deployed the cutter's UAS drone for over 8 hours of flight time, conducting search and rescue and damage assessment support.

After being relieved by Juniper, Kimball's crew transited north to support the Coast Guard's 17th District by providing search-and-rescue coverage and conducting LMR and counter IUU-Fishing patrols spanning the Northern Pacific Ocean, Bering Sea, and the American Arctic.

Operating under Operation Alaskan Groundfish Enforcer, Kimball ensured compliance with all federal fisheries conservation laws and safety requirements by completing 10 LMR boardings on fishing vessels in the Bering Sea. Kimball issued eight citations and one termination for gross violation of U.S. and international regulations. This resulted in the Kimball escorting the fishing vessel back to the nearest port and ensured they corrected their discrepancies.

As the sole U.S. military asset in the Bering Sea, Kimball diverted [to provide presence](#) alongside the U.S. domestic fishing fleet in the remote region of the U.S. Arctic upon receiving intelligence of a Russian military exercise within

the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Kimball's presence ensured the safety of 23 mariners while they worked within the U.S. EEZ near Russian warships as part of Operation Frontier Sentinel.

"I couldn't be prouder of Kimball's crew," said Capt. Bob Kinsey, Kimball's commanding officer. "They were able to showcase the true value that the national security cutter brings to such a dynamic area of responsibility. The crew's diversity of skill harnessed our Coast Guard authorities and capabilities to provide tangible lifesaving results, from responding to the tragic fires in Maui to providing an influential presence in the Chukchi Sea and American Arctic to preserving the livelihoods of our Bering Sea fishermen through the enforcement of federal safety and living marine resources laws."

To ensure crew preparation and proficiency, Kimball conducted numerous flight operations with MH-65 Dolphin and HH-60 Jayhawk helicopters and aircrews from U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Kodiak, resulting in the qualification of eight pilots and recertification of Kimball's crew.

While in Dutch Harbor, Alaska, Kimball's crew engaged with the local community by participating in sports at the community center, conducted cutter tours, and volunteered for community events. Notably, Kimball assisted the Museum of the Aleutians in relocating fragile gray whale fossils for a new exhibit. Kimball also met with the mayor of Dutch Harbor to discuss how the Coast Guard and the town can continue strengthening their relationship.

Commissioned in 2019, Kimball is the Coast Guard's seventh national security cutter. National security cutters are the largest and most technologically sophisticated cutters in the Coast Guard's white-hull fleet. National security cutters can operate in the most demanding open ocean environments,

including the Bering Sea's hazardous fisheries and the Southern Pacific's vast approaches, where much of the American narcotics trafficking occurs. With robust command, control, communication, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance equipment, stern boat launch and aviation facilities, as well as long-endurance station keeping, National security cutters are an afloat operational-level headquarters for complex law enforcement and national security missions involving multiple Coast Guard and partner agency participation.