

U.S. Coast Guard Ships Depart Puerto Rico on Mission to Strengthen Trans-Atlantic Ties



Vice Adm. Steven Poulin, commander, U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area, and Command Master Chief Devin Spencer, visit the crew of the Sentinel-class fast response cutter USCGC Charles Moulthrop (WPC 1141) in Puerto Rico prior to beginning their transit across the North Atlantic to Europe, March 31, 2021. The Moulthrop and USCGC Robert Goldman (WPC 1142) crews will continue to their new homeport of Manama, Bahrain, with brief stops for logistics and relationship building. Planning for the escort and deployment began last year to ensure smooth delivery of the fast response cutters, replacing the Island-class ships currently in operation under the U.S. Navy's 5th

Fleet command. *U.S. COAST GUARD/ Lt. Dana Wanjon*

ATLANTIC OCEAN – The Legend-class national security cutter USCGC Hamilton (WMSL 753) with the Sentinel-class fast response cutters USCGC Charles Moulthrop (WPC 1141) and USCGC Robert Goldman (WPC 1142) departed Puerto Rico on April 1 to transit the North Atlantic to Europe, Coast Guard Atlantic Area announced April 2.

“U.S. Coast Guard cutters have a long history of protecting America’s interests at home and abroad. This historic deployment demonstrates how we can strengthen our national security by extending the Coast Guard’s global reach and firming our commitments to allies and partners in the region,” Capt. Timothy Cronin, commanding officer, USCGC Hamilton.

Hamilton is escorting the fast response cutters across the Atlantic before conducting a patrol in the U.S. Navy’s 6th Fleet area of responsibility to maintain maritime security alongside NATO allies and partners. The Moulthrop and Goldman crews will continue to their new homeport of Manama, Bahrain, with brief stops for logistics and relationship building. Planning for the escort and deployment began last year to ensure smooth delivery of the fast response cutters, replacing the Island-class ships currently in operation under the U.S. Navy’s 5th Fleet command.

“Our primary goal for the fast response cutters is to complete the 9,000-mile voyage to homeport safely and efficiently. In addition, we will capitalize on opportunities to strengthen international partnerships promoting security and prosperity throughout some of the world’s busiest maritime trade routes,” Lt. Cmdr. Steven Hulse, commanding officer, USCGC Charles Moulthrop.

“We expect to showcase the capabilities of the fast response cutter, and the U.S. Coast Guard to advance the shared maritime strategy for security with the U.S. Navy and naval partners in the region, while concurrently engaging with them

on the more traditional U.S. Coast Guard missions of search and rescue, maritime law enforcement, and illegal fisheries enforcement,” said Lt. Cmdr. Samuel Blase, commanding officer, USCGC Robert Goldman.

The U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard operate forward, from the littoral to the open ocean, ensuring stability and open sea lanes across all maritime domains. U.S. Coast Guard operations in U.S. 6th Fleet demonstrate the country’s commitment, flexibility and capability to operate and address security concerns throughout Europe and Africa, the Coast Guard said.

“The U.S. Coast Guard is a member of the joint force, a key and always-ready instrument to further national security objectives globally,” said Vice Adm. Steven Poulin, commander, U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area. “It’s been almost two decades since we sent the Island-class patrol boats to Bahrain. As we seek to modernize our asset support to the U.S. Navy in the Arabian Gulf, this is an excellent opportunity to advance partnerships and learn from our allies in the region.”

Hamilton is the fourth ship in its class. The Legend-class is the largest current cutter class of the U.S. Coast Guard. These vessels support various missions, including environmental protection, search and rescue, fisheries, port security, counterterrorism, law enforcement, drug interdiction, defense operations and other military operations.

Moulthrop and Goldman are the first two of six Sentinel-class ships headed to U.S. Patrol Forces Southwest Asia. Established in 2002 to support Operation Iraqi Freedom, PATFORSWA played a critical role in maritime security and maritime infrastructure protection operations. It is the U.S. Coast Guard’s largest unit outside of the United States.

PATFORSWA is currently providing U.S. Navy’s 5th Fleet and U.S. Central Command with combat-ready assets, using its

unique access to foreign territorial seas and ports, formulating strong and independent relationships with patterns throughout the Arabian Gulf, and leveraging the full-spectrum, flexible vessel boarding capabilities and maritime country engagements on the shore.

U.S. 6th Fleet, headquartered in Naples, Italy, conducts the full spectrum of joint and naval operations, often in concert with allied and interagency partners, to advance U.S. national interests and security and stability in Europe and Africa.

Based in Portsmouth, Virginia, U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area oversees all Coast Guard operations east of the Rocky Mountains to the Arabian Gulf. Also, they allocate ships to deploy to the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific to combat transnational organized crime and illicit maritime activity.