

# USCGC Tahoma Returns from 79-Day Counter-Narcotics Patrol



A boat crew from USCGC Tahoma (WMEC 908) conducts training on assisting vessels in distress during the cutter's deployment to the Eastern Pacific Ocean, May 19, 2021. The Tahoma's crew participated in Operation Orion VI, an international naval campaign to combat drug trafficking. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

KITTERY, Maine – The crew of the USCGC Tahoma (WMEC 908) returned to Kittery on Friday after a successful 79-day counter-narcotics and smuggling patrol in the Eastern Pacific, the Coast Guard Atlantic Area said in a June 21 release.

The Tahoma's crew interdicted two vessels, seizing 7,300 pounds of cocaine, worth a combined total of roughly \$105 million, and detained eight suspected drug smugglers.

The crew also coordinated operations with U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment deployed aboard the Canadian Kingston-class coastal defense vessel HMCS Saskatoon (MM 709). The collaboration supported the seizure of an additional 4,000 pounds of cocaine and the detention of four suspected smugglers.

A flight crew and aviation detachment from the Coast Guard's Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron deployed aboard the Tahoma for the patrol. Helicopter Interdiction Squadron crews are the Coast Guard's airborne sharpshooters, specializing in disabling the engines of vessels that refuse to stop with precision rifle fire.

The Tahoma's crew participated in Operation Orion VI, an international naval campaign to combat drug trafficking. During the operation, Tahoma patrolled in coordinated areas with the Colombian coastal patrol vessel Arc Punta Ardita (CPV 147) and rendezvoused for a formation steaming exercise.

“It’s been an extremely successful deployment for us – the crew demonstrated great resilience and perseverance with each challenge, and I am proud to serve with each and every one of them,” said Cmdr. Eric Johnson, commanding officer of Tahoma.

Tahoma is a 270-foot cutter homeported in Kittery. The vessel and 100-person crew execute maritime law enforcement, homeland security, and search and rescue missions supporting U.S. Coast Guard operations throughout the Western Hemisphere.