

Coast Guard takes delivery of 19th HC-130J long range surveillance aircraft



HC-130J CGNR 2019 departs the Lockheed Martin Aeronautics facility in Marietta, Georgia, on April 14, 2026, for the Coast Guard Aviation Projects Acquisition Center in Elizabeth City, North Carolina, where warranty and logistics flights were conducted before the aircraft's induction into the missionization process. (U.S. Coast Guard photo courtesy of Lockheed Martin Aeronautics) June 5, 2026

WASHINGTON – The Coast Guard accepted delivery of its 19th HC-130J Super Hercules long range surveillance aircraft, designated CGNR 2019, from Lockheed Martin Aeronautics in Marietta, Georgia, on April 10, 2026.

The aircraft entered the year-long missionization effort needed to make it fully mission-ready on June 3, following completion of warranty and logistics flights by the Coast Guard Aviation Projects Acquisition Center in Elizabeth City,

North Carolina.

The acquisition of CGNR 2019 is part of a broader, ongoing modernization of the Coast Guard's aviation fleet. The HC-130J serves as the long-range search and rescue variant of the C-130J. Compared to the legacy HC-130H model, the new HC-130J aircraft features a more advanced engine and propellers, yielding a 20 percent increase in speed and altitude, as well as a 40 percent increase in range. Notably, this is the first C-130J aircraft delivered to the Coast Guard in which a Block 8.1 upgrade – providing enhanced approach and landing systems, expanded diagnostics, and civil GPS – was installed during baseline production at Lockheed Martin.

These enhancements allow the aircraft to travel further, stay on scene longer, and respond more rapidly to emergencies.

“Every new HC-130J we add to the fleet drastically expands our operational reach and maritime domain awareness,” said Rear Adm. Mike Campbell, Director of Systems Integration (CG-SI) and Assistant Commandant for Aviation (CG-AIR). “CGNR 2019 represents our ongoing commitment to providing our aircrews with the most advanced command and control platforms available to execute our complex, demanding missions across the globe.”

With an extended endurance of over 20 hours, the HC-130J plays a vital role in executing the Coast Guard's most demanding traditional missions. These include search and rescue, drug and migrant interdiction, law enforcement, cargo and personnel transport, and securing U.S. maritime borders and approaches. Furthermore, its advanced command, control, communications, computers, cyber, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C5ISR) equipment allows it to serve as a vital command and control platform, identifying objects and seamlessly sharing real-time data with operational forces and cooperating agencies.

The missionization process, executed by L3Harris Integrated

Mission Systems in Waco, Texas, integrates specialized equipment necessary to execute Coast Guard missions, including the Minotaur Mission System Suite. This advanced open-architecture system provides real-time tracking and Rescue 21 integration to enhance the common operating picture and maritime domain awareness. The aircraft will also be equipped with an advanced electro-optical/infrared (EO/IR) sensor turret and a 360-degree, belly-mounted, multi-mode surface search radar, a feature that was first used on the Coast Guard's HC-130J configuration.

The expansion of the HC-130J fleet is heavily supported by the Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25) budget reconciliation. This investment will enable the Coast Guard to expand HC-130J operations to two additional air stations, bringing the total number of funded aircraft to 25. Using the historic \$25 billion investment provided by the FY25 budget reconciliation, the Coast Guard has already ordered over \$13 billion in new fleet assets and capabilities, demonstrating the Service's commitment to modernizing acquisition and delivering next-generation technology.

The Coast Guard currently operates the HC-130J out of three air stations: Elizabeth City, North Carolina; Kodiak, Alaska; and Barbers Point, Hawaii. After completing its missionization process in mid-2027, CGNR 2019 will be fully operational as an HC-130J and will support the transition of Air Station Sacramento, California, from C-27J to HC-130J operations.

Coast Guard, partners seize

**vessel off Cape Florida
loaded with 6.7M worth of
cocaine**



A U.S. Coast Guard Station Miami Beach law enforcement boat crew along with Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations and CBP Office of Field Operations officers seize approximately 900 pounds of cocaine from a suspected drug

smuggling vessel at Coast Guard Station Miami Beach, May 29, 2026. Coast Guard Station Miami Beach's crew interdicted the suspected drug smuggling vessel one mile east of Cape Florida, with approximately \$6.7 million worth of cocaine. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Eric Rodriguez)
From U.S. Coast Guard Southeast District, May 29, 2026

MIAMI – A U.S. Coast Guard Station Miami Beach law enforcement boat crew along with Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations and CBP Office of Field Operations officers seized approximately 900 pounds of cocaine, worth approximately \$6.7 million, from a suspected drug smuggling vessel one mile east of Cape Florida, Sunday.

Federal agents from the Drug Enforcement Agency Miami Division took custody of three suspected smugglers and narcotics for further investigation.

"The Coast Guard and our federal, state and local law enforcement partners remain vigilant in our shared efforts to keep our maritime borders safe by preventing illicit narcotics from reaching our communities," said Lt. Matthew Ross, Coast Guard Station Miami Beach commanding officer. "I couldn't be more proud of the professionalism of our law enforcement crews and our continued collaboration with our partners to safeguard American lives."

We are part of a whole-of-government approach to secure our borders by dismantling Foreign Terrorist Organizations and Transnational Criminal Organizations, including narco-trafficking and human smuggling operations.

The Coast Guard is the United States' lead federal agency for maritime drug interdiction. We are part of the Department of Homeland Security team protecting our nation and are at all times a military service and part of the joint force defending it. As a member of the joint force, a law enforcement organization, a regulatory agency and a member of the U.S. intelligence community, the Coast Guard employs a unique mix

of authorities to ensure the safety and integrity of the maritime domain to protect the economic and national security of the nation.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection is America's frontline: the nation's largest law enforcement organization and the world's first unified border management agency. The 67,000+ men and women of CBP protect America on the ground, in the air, and on the seas. We enforce safe, lawful travel and trade and ensure our country's economic prosperity. We enhance the nation's security through innovation, intelligence, collaboration, and trust.

Coast Guard Cutter Waesche Returns to Alameda After Successful 113-Day Patrol



USCGC Storis (WAGB 21) and USCGC Waesche (WMSL 751) conduct

a proof-of-concept fueling-at-sea evolution while moored in Dutch Harbor, Alaska, May 1, 2026. The evolution marked a successful operation as first of its kind with a new Polar Asset. (U.S. Coast Guard photo via shipboard drone by Lt. j.g. Genzo Matua Gonzales) May 22, 2026
From U.S. Coast Guard Arctic District, May 22, 2026

ALAMEDA, Calif. – The crew of U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Waesche (WMSL 751) returned to their homeport in Alameda Friday after concluding a 113-day patrol in the Bering Sea. The cutter traveled 18,685 nautical miles conducting a broad range of operations including maritime law enforcement, search and rescue and the integration of new capabilities, all while projecting U.S. presence in the high north environment.

The Waesche crew rescued five mariners from the fishing vessel Ocean Bay after it ran aground and began taking on water near Umnak Island, Alaska. The cutter provided on scene support while an Air Station Kodiak MH-60T Jayhawk helicopter crew hoisted the fishermen to safety. Additionally, the Waesche provided communications and oversight during the aerial rescue of two hikers stranded in the Dutch Harbor mountains.

The primary mission of the patrol was protecting the U.S. commercial fishing fleet, securing, controlling, and defending U.S. borders and maritime approaches. Waesche's crew conducted 15 boardings, discovering 11 violations.

The deployment also highlighted the Coast Guard's commitment to joint operations and technological advancements in the Arctic. The crew conducted deck landing qualifications for more than 64 flight hours with pilots from Air Station Kodiak and the Alaska Air National Guard's 210th Rescue Squadron. This patrol also saw the initial integration of the V-BAT unmanned aircraft system (UAS), a remote surveillance drone capable of vertical takeoff and landing, which provides persistent airborne surveillance to support a wide range of Coast Guard missions from a smaller footprint.

In a demonstration of the service's capability to sustain forces in the high north, Waesche conducted the first-ever fueling at sea exercise with the Coast Guard Cutter Storis (WAGB 21) in Dutch Harbor, Alaska. The exercise proved Storis's unique ability to extend asset time on station and deliver fuel direct to another cutter, maximizing the nation's operational footprint. The two cutters also engaged in a passing exercise, maneuvering in close formation to hone visual communication and ship handling skills.

"The Bering Sea is one of the most challenging areas that the Coast Guard operates in, especially during the winter," says Capt. Tyson Scofield, commanding officer of Waesche. "I am extremely proud of the grit and devotion to duty that the crew displayed by rising to the challenges of sub-freezing temperatures, equipment casualties and a government shutdown to successfully execute a myriad of missions and provide sovereign presence in this challenging environment."

Waesche is a 418-foot National Security Cutter with a top speed of 28 knots, a range of 12,000 nautical miles, and a permanent crew of 120. She is equipped with a 4,000 square-foot flight deck and hangars capable of housing two multi-mission helicopters.

U.S. Coast Guard Commissions 62nd Fast Response Cutter Honoring 9/11 Hero



Two U.S. Coast Guard MH-65 Dolphin helicopters fly over the Coast Guard Cutter Vincent Danz (WPC 1162) following the cutter's commissioning ceremony in New York City, May 22, 2026. The Vincent Danz is the 62nd Fast Response Cutter and honors Petty Officer 2nd Class Vincent Danz, a New York City police officer and Coast Guard reservist who died responding to the September 11, 2001, attacks. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Marco A. Gutierrez Rosales)

From U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia, May 22, 2026

NEW YORK – The U.S. Coast Guard commissioned its newest Fast Response Cutter, USCGC Vincent Danz (WPC 1162), for official entry into its service fleet during a ceremony held in New York City on Friday.

The Vice Commandant of the Coast Guard, Vice Adm. Thomas Allan, presided over the ceremony. Members of the Danz family were also in attendance, including the cutter's sponsor, Ms. Angela Donohue, widow of the late Vincent Danz.

“Vincent Danz’s legacy will live on not only through his

family and his brothers and sisters in the NYPD, but through the Coast Guard crew who will breathe life into this cutter today,” said Adm. Tom Allan. “The Coast Guard Cutter Vincent Danz will perform the Coast Guard’s vital work across Oceania—projecting U.S. presence, countering illicit maritime activity, and strengthening our international partnerships.”

The Vincent Danz is the 62nd Sentinel-class Fast Response Cutter in the service and the fourth of five FRCs to be homeported in Guam with U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam. The crew of the Vincent Danz will primarily serve U.S. and mutual interests in Oceania with an emphasis on the Micronesia and Melanesian sub-regions, conducting maritime security operations, combating illegal activity, supporting search and rescue missions, and strengthening partnerships with Pacific Island nations and Allies. The cutter is a multi-mission platform.

The cutter’s namesake, Vincent Danz, was serving in the New York City Police Department, Emergency Services Unit, ESU Truck 3, when he responded to the World Trade Center as part of a massive emergency response and was killed when the World Trade Center collapsed. He was posthumously awarded the New York City Police Department’s Medal of Honor for his heroic deeds. He was a veteran of the United States Marine Corps and joined the New York City Police Department in 1987, while continuing to serve in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve as a Port Security Specialist 2nd Class.

As a U.S. Coast Guard reservist, Danz understood the meaning of service to country and community. His courage in the face of unimaginable danger and his dedication to saving others made him a hero not only to New York City but to the nation. This cutter honors his memory and the legacy of all first responders who gave their lives on Sept. 11, 2001.

The Vincent Danz will join the Myrtle Hazard (WPC 1139),

Oliver Henry (WPC 1140), and Frederick Hatch (WPC 1143), all of which were commissioned in Guam. Since their 2021 commissioning, Guam's FRC crews have distinguished themselves across the region, most recently responding to the impacts of Super Typhoon Sinlaku on communities in the Marianas. USCGC Myrtle Hazard's crew became the first to operationalize the bilateral maritime law enforcement agreement with Papua New Guinea, conducting joint patrols and boardings in 2023. USCGC Oliver Henry's crew saved around a dozen mariners in the Federated States of Micronesia, delivered humanitarian assistance during the Yap drought, and towed the 500-ton yacht Black Pearl to the Republic of Palau, rescuing 11 people in 2024. USCGC Frederick Hatch became the first FRC to visit several Pacific ports, including Tacloban, Philippines, for the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Leyte Gulf, and the crew operationalized the enhanced bilateral agreement with Palau in 2024.

The U.S. Coast Guard ordered a series of new FRCs to replace the 1980s-era Island-class 110-foot patrol boats. Using the \$25 billion provided by the historic Fiscal Year 2025 budget reconciliation, which includes \$1 billion for additional FRCs, the Coast Guard has already ordered over \$13 billion in new fleet assets and capabilities. This rapid investment demonstrates the Coast Guard's commitment to modernizing acquisition, delivering next-generation technology, and revitalizing American shipbuilding.

The FRCs feature advanced command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance equipment, as well as over-the-horizon cutter boat deployment capability, enhancing the Service's ability to control, secure, and defend U.S. borders and maritime approaches. These new assets and capabilities continue the U.S. Coast Guard's modernization, through which the Service is transforming into a more agile, capable, and responsive fighting force.

The commissioning ceremony is a traditional milestone in a cutter's life, marking its entry into active service and signifying its readiness to conduct operations.

Coast Guard Awards Contract for Advanced Training Facilities in Yorktown, Virginia



Then-Vice Adm. Charles W. Ray, Vice Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard, and then-Master Chief Petty Officer Charles R. Bushey, Command Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard, visit Coast Guard Training Center Yorktown, Va. March 15,

2021. *Photo credit: U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Edward Wargo*

From U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, May 21, 2026

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Coast Guard has awarded a \$17.8 million contract to Ocean Construction Services Inc. for the construction of new engineering and weapons training facilities at Training Center (TRACEN) Yorktown, Virginia.

The project is a critical step in preparing Coast Guard personnel to operate the service's next generation of Offshore Patrol Cutters (OPCs) and Waterways Commerce Cutters (WCCs).

"This state-of-the-art training facility is a cornerstone of our modernization effort, ensuring our investment in a 21st-century fleet is supported by the men and women who carry out our critical maritime missions," said Jennifer Sinclair, director of Force Readiness Command. "We shape the future of maritime security through advanced training, equipping our personnel with the skills and confidence to meet tomorrow's challenges."

The project will add 18,700 square feet of building space to Samuel Travis Hall, the training center's Cutter and Weapons Training Building. This expansion will ensure tailored ship-specific engineering and weapons training facilities for the modern fleet. This building is named in honor of Captain Samuel Travis, Captain of the Revenue Cutter Surveyor, which achieved legendary fame in the War of 1812 during battle on the York River, near TRACEN Yorktown.

The expansion includes mock-up engine rooms, training labs, classrooms, a mock-up training space and other administrative needs to support comprehensive "C-School" training for future cutter crews. This project furthers the Service's historic transformation made possible by Fiscal Year 2025 Reconciliation by enabling world-class training for two of the Coast Guard's newest fleets: 25 OPCs and 30 WCCs.

The 25 OPCs are set to replace the aging fleet of medium-endurance cutters, some of which have been in service for over 50 years. These new cutters will form the core of the Coast Guard's offshore presence, bridging the capabilities between the service's National Security Cutters and Fast Response Cutters to save lives, control, secure, and defend U.S. borders and maritime approaches, and respond to contingencies.

The 30 WCCs in the new "Chief Petty Officer class" will replace the legacy inland tender fleet and strengthen Coast Guard operations to facilitate maritime commerce vital to economic prosperity and strategic mobility. WCCs' specialized capabilities are essential for maintaining the United States' 12,000-mile Marine Transportation System, a critical waterway network supporting over \$5.4 trillion in annual economic activity and millions of American jobs.

Using the \$25 billion provided by the historic Fiscal Year 2025 Reconciliation, the Coast Guard has already ordered over \$13 billion in new fleet assets and capabilities. This rapid investment demonstrates the Coast Guard's commitment to modernizing acquisitions, delivering next-generation technology, and revitalizing American shipbuilding.

U.S. Coast Guard's Newest Polar Icebreaker Returns to Seattle Following 36-Day

Deployment



USCGC Storis (WAGB 21) sits hove to in the ice while conducting ice liberty for the crew in the Bering Sea, April 17, 2026. The patrol focused on advancing operational readiness, strengthening interoperability with other military assets, and testing new concepts to support prolonged operations in one of the world's most demanding and austere maritime environments. (U.S. Coast Guard courtesy photo.)

From U.S. Coast Guard Northwest District, May 15, 2026

SEATTLE – The crew of the U.S. Coast Guard's newest polar icebreaker, the USCGC Storis (WAGB 21), returned to their temporary Seattle home port Monday after a 36-day deployment to the Bering Sea.

The patrol focused on advancing operational readiness, strengthening interoperability with other military assets and testing new concepts to support prolonged operations in one of

the world's most demanding and austere maritime environments.

Amid increased global focus on the Arctic, Storis' deployment demonstrates the enhanced capability and commitment to securing maritime borders and protecting U.S. sovereignty and natural resources to safeguard national interests.

Acquired and [commissioned in 2025](#), Storis is the first polar icebreaker commissioned by the Coast Guard in more than two decades. A primary mission for the cutter and its crew during this deployment was conducting an ice assessment to establish baseline performance in a range of Arctic conditions. The crew evaluated the cutter's full icebreaking capabilities, with data gathered serving as a benchmark to inform future operations for U.S. and allied vessels navigating high-latitude environments.

The ice assessment and operational exercises are integral to the crew's preparation for their scheduled summer deployment.

"Operating the Storis in the extreme conditions of an Arctic winter is a clear statement of our nation's resolve," said Capt. Corey Kerns, commanding officer of Storis. "Storis represents a critical bridge to our future icebreaker fleet. This mission is about preparation, rigorous training and asserting the continued importance of the Arctic to our nation."

To demonstrate U.S. operational capability in the high latitudes, Storis conducted a joint passing exercise with the Legend-class national security cutter USCGC Waesche (WMSL 751). The exercise took place in challenging winter conditions less than a mile from the ice edge, with visibility limited to 150 yards.

Storis and Waesche also executed a proof-of-concept fueling evolution in Dutch Harbor, Alaska. This logistical demonstration expanded Storis' operational flexibility for future deployments. By establishing cutter-to-cutter refueling

capability, *Storis* can extend an asset's time on station, maximizing operational reach while reducing the need for long transits back to port for logistics.

The crew conducted advanced ice rescue training during the deployment, practicing complex life-saving maneuvers in unforgiving Arctic conditions to prepare for high-risk search and rescue missions in ice-covered waters. This hands-on training ensures the Coast Guard can effectively respond to emergencies and protect mariners operating in harsh environments.

To ensure maximum readiness in a rapidly evolving geostrategic environment, the crew also conducted a gunnery exercise. Operating in the Arctic presents unique defense challenges, and the live-fire exercise provided essential hands-on training for the ship's weapons teams. By honing marksmanship and weapons system proficiency, the crew reinforced the Coast Guard's role as an armed service capable of defending national security interests and responding to emerging maritime threats.

Storis is a 360-foot medium icebreaker with a displacement of nearly 15,000 tons. Powered by four diesel engines generating 22,500 horsepower, the cutter can navigate through three feet of ice at five knots, adding crucial capability to the Coast Guard's Arctic operations.

Storis joins the cutters *Healy* (WAGB 20) and *Polar Star* (WAGB 10), augmenting the Coast Guard's presence in the high latitudes and underscoring the United States' commitment to Arctic security and stewardship. *Storis* is a multi-mission capable asset equipped to support logistics, search and rescue, ship escort, environmental protection, and enforcement of laws and treaties in the region.

Coast Guard Cutter Tahoma Busts Cocaine 'Triple Threat'



U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Tahoma crew members conduct interdiction operations in the Gulf of America, May 8, 2026. Tahoma's crew, alongside a deployed Coast Guard Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron aircrew, stopped three suspected smuggling vessels carrying narcotics during a maritime patrol approximately 90 miles off Cartagena, Colombia. (U.S. Coast Guard photo)

From U.S. Coast Guard Southeast District, May 14, 2026

MIAMI – Coast Guard Cutter Tahoma's crew simultaneously interdicted three suspected smuggling vessels carrying approximately 6,085 pounds of cocaine worth nearly \$45.8

million, May 8, approximately 90 miles off Cartagena, Colombia. This seizure represents 2.3 million potentially lethal doses of cocaine that will not reach American streets.

Tahoma's crew launched their two small boats and their deployed Coast Guard Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron aircrew stopping all three vessels.

One vessel was non-compliant and required aerial use of force tactics, including precision sniper fire directed at the engines, to compel the vessel to stop resulting in the suspected smugglers on the vessel jumping overboard. The aircrew released multiple personal flotation devices, and the people were rescued with no reported injuries. The other two vessels stopped when directed by Coast Guard crews.

"Interdicting three vessels simultaneously is a testament to the unwavering professionalism, precision, and dedication of our crews," said Cmdr. Nolan Cuevas, Tahoma's commanding officer. "This interdiction prevented a significant number of illegal narcotics from reaching America's shores, and their teamwork underscores the Coast Guard's mission to protect our nation and saving lives."

Tahoma's crew will offload approximately 8,185 pounds of narcotics, worth nearly \$61.6 million Thursday at Port Everglades.

"Executing such a complex mission demands the highest proficiency from our crew," Cuevas said. "Our success required the integration of thoughtful training, carefully planned logistics, and joint coordination. We are very proud of our efforts to prevent illicit networks from threatening our security."

The following assets and crews were involved in the interdiction operations:

- Coast Guard Cutter Tahoma

- Coast Guard Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron

- [Joint Interagency Task Force South](#)

- [Coast Guard Southeast District watchstanders](#)

Coast Guard Cutter Tahoma's offload continues record-setting Coast Guard operations to interdict, seize, and disrupt transshipment of cocaine and other bulk illicit drugs by sea. This includes the Coast Guard's seizure of over 511,000 pounds of cocaine in 2025 – over three times the Service's annual average – as well as accelerated counter-narcotics operations in the Eastern Pacific through Operation Pacific Viper. The Coast Guard's persistent operations and rapid response have denied criminal organizations billions in illicit revenue and prevented the flow of dangerous drugs into American communities.

Eighty percent of interdictions of U.S.-bound drugs occur at sea. This underscores the importance of maritime interdiction in combatting the flow of illegal narcotics and protecting American communities from this deadly threat. Detecting and interdicting illicit drug traffickers on the high seas involves significant interagency and international coordination. Joint Interagency Task Force South, in Key West, conducts the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs. Once an interdiction becomes imminent, the law enforcement phase of the operation begins, and control of the operation shifts to the U.S. Coast Guard for the interdiction and apprehension phases. Interdictions in the Caribbean Sea are performed by members of the U.S. Coast Guard under the authority and control of the Coast Guard

Southeast District, headquartered in Miami.

Coast Guard Cutter Tahoma is a 270-foot medium endurance cutter homeported in Naval Station Newport, Rhode Island under U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area Command.

U.S. Coast Guard Announces \$212M in Base Charleston improvements



From U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, May 11, 2026

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Coast Guard today awarded two contracts that will deliver critical new operational and support facilities at Base Charleston in North Charleston, South Carolina. These projects support the Coast Guard's transformation initiatives and will deliver critical new operational and support facilities to the expanding base.

One contract, awarded to The Whiting-Turner Contracting Company of Greenbelt, Maryland and executed by the U.S. Coast Guard Facilities Design and Construction Center in Norfolk, Virginia, is for the full recapitalization of Base Charleston's Pier Mike. This \$116.7 million, fixed-price, design-build project includes demolition of the existing pier and replacing it with a state-of-the-art structure designed to homeport four Offshore Patrol Cutters (OPCs) and one visiting cutter. Each berth will also be capable of mooring National Security Cutters, providing significant strategic flexibility for the fleet. Contract completion is expected in 2030.

The second contract has been awarded to Brasfield & Gorrie, LLC of Birmingham, Alabama for the design and construction of a new 30,000-square-foot combined medical and dental facility, a new entry control point/visitor's center and various supporting utilities at Base Charleston. This \$95.5 million project is a major step forward in increasing personnel readiness through improved access to medical and dental care, ensuring crews receive necessary support to sustain mission readiness. Contract completion is expected by July 2029.

Both contracts were awarded under the Department of Homeland Security's National Multiple Award Construction Contract III and were made possible by the Coast Guard's historic \$25 billion investment included in the Working Families' Tax Cut Act.

"I am excited for the incredible potential these projects have to improve the welfare of our Servicemembers and their families, to homeport our future fleet of Offshore Patrol Cutters and to operationalize the generous investments being made in our Service by the American people," said Vice Admiral Jo-Ann Burdian, commander of Coast Guard Atlantic Area. "Our people are our greatest asset, and everything we do on their behalf, to ensure they are ready, trained and well-supported will enable us to act with clarity, cohesion, and purpose to deliver the outcomes our Nation expects."

The Pier Mike project follows Whiting-Turner's successful demolition and ongoing reconstruction of the nearby Pier November. This adjacent project is progressing on time and on budget.

Coast Guard Creates Special Missions Command to Counter Maritime Threats at Home, Abroad

From U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, May 6, 2026

WASHINGTON – The Coast Guard is standing up the Special Missions Command to oversee its deployable specialized forces. The command will enhance the operational effectiveness of the Coast Guard in responding to a wide range of national emergencies and events as the demand for deployable specialized forces capabilities increase.

The Coast Guard selected the existing Coast Guard C5I Service Center facility in Kearneysville, West Virginia, as the future site of the Coast Guard's Special Missions Command (SMC). The SMC will be commissioned on or around October 1, 2026, fully integrating the Service's Deployable Special Forces under a single operational commander to provide oversight and advocacy, improve readiness, mission effectiveness, and interoperability to meet Service, Department, and joint military requirements.

"The creation of the Special Missions Command is a vital evolution for our service," said Adm. Kevin Lunday, Commandant of the Coast Guard. "We are forging our most elite operators into a single, razor-sharp instrument of national power. The Special Missions Command is not an administrative change; it is an investment ensuring these elite teams are the best trained, equipped, and organized force possible, ready to protect the Homeland and support the Joint Force."

The Special Missions will include the following units:

- Maritime Security Response Teams serve as the Coast Guard's first responders to maritime terrorism and other high-risk threats. They are equipped to conduct the nation's most critical maritime security and defense operations at home or abroad, with both partner law enforcement agencies and joint services.
- Tactical Law Enforcement Teams provide law enforcement expertise across the full spectrum of maritime response situations with specific focus on counter-trafficking and criminal networks attempting to exploit maritime transit zones.
- Maritime Safety and Security Teams are rapidly deployable boat teams that provide port, waterway, and coastal security capability to safeguard the public, protect the marine transportation system, and respond to maritime crime, sabotage, and terrorist activity.
- Port Security Units provide shoreside and waterborne security including point defense of strategic shipping, designated critical infrastructure, and high value assets in joint and combined expeditionary warfare environments.
- Regional Dive Lockers provide dedicated undersea capabilities for a variety of missions. These missions include ensuring the security of ports and waterways, maintaining aids to navigation, and conducting ship maintenance and repair, often in extreme environments like the remote polar regions.

National Strike Force provides highly trained technical

experts and specialized equipment to Coast Guard and other federal agencies to prepare for and respond to the most complex crises and natural disasters, including oil, hazardous substances, and chemical, biological, radiation and nuclear incidents. The force, comprised of three strike teams, an incident management assist team, and the public information assist team supports federal on-scene coordinators and incident commanders, and is poised for immediate response across the nation and globally.

“The geo-political landscape is evolving and the demand for Coast Guard Deployable Specialized Forces is at an all-time high,” said Capt. Robert Berry, Special Missions Command pre-commissioning team lead. “These forces are instrumental to the Coast Guard’s readiness and its role as a global leader in maritime contingency response. The Service has always turned to its specialized forces to respond to national threats and disasters, and establishing this command is the natural next step to enabling our forces to lead the way at the tip of the spear.”

Additional units, capabilities and functions may be incorporated into the Special Missions Command in the future. Currently, the administrative and operational control of specialized forces units is shared between the Coast Guard’s two Area commanders. The Coast Guard is evolving to become a stronger, more capable and responsive fighting force in responding to threats presented by emerging technologies, intensified border security activities, large-scale contingencies and national special security events.

Coast Guard, Navy Interdict Suspected Drug Vessel off Haiti



Haitian National Police members inspect interdicted drugs following a drug interdiction off Haiti, May 3, 2026. At the behest of the Haitian government, a U.S. Coast Guard law enforcement detachment deployed on the USS Billings stopped a suspected drug vessel carrying approximately 3,200 pounds of marijuana. (U.S. Coast Guard photo)

From U.S. Coast Guard Southeast District

MIAMI – A Coast Guard Cutter Venturous law enforcement boarding team and a USS Billings helicopter crew stopped a suspected drug smuggling vessel, Thursday, approximately 8 miles off Mole Saint-Nicolas, Haiti.

With the permission of the Haitian government, the boarding team's investigation resulted in approximately 3,200 pounds of marijuana being found, worth approximately \$3.8 million, and one person was detained. The contraband and suspected smuggler were transferred to Haitian authorities, Sunday.

“In close coordination with the Haitian government, the U.S. Coast Guard remains steadfast in our shared mission to

safeguard the maritime approaches of the Caribbean,” said Lt. Cmdr. Cory Arsenault, the Coast Guard liaison officer for Haiti. “Together, we are strengthening joint operations to disrupt the illegal flow of narcotics, protect vulnerable communities, and uphold the security and stability of the region. Our partnership reflects a continued commitment to collaboration, vigilance, and the rule of law.”

The following assets and crews were involved in the interdiction operations:

- [Coast Guard Cutter Venturous](#)

- [USS Billings](#)

- U.S. Coast Guard Tactical Law Enforcement Team South, LEDET 405

- Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron 48, Detachment 3

- [Joint Interagency Task Force South](#)

- [Coast Guard Southeast District watchstanders](#)

80% of interdictions of U.S.-bound drugs occur at sea. This underscores the importance of maritime interdiction in combatting the flow of illegal narcotics and protecting American communities from this deadly threat. Detecting and interdicting illicit drug traffickers on the high seas involves significant interagency and international coordination. Joint Interagency Task Force South, in Key West, conducts the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs. Once an interdiction becomes

imminent, the law enforcement phase of the operation begins, and control of the operation shifts to the U.S. Coast Guard for the interdiction and apprehension phases. Interdictions in the Caribbean Sea are performed by members of the U.S. Coast Guard under the authority and control of the Coast Guard Southeast District, headquartered in Miami.