

Coast Guard, CBP Stop Suspected Human Smuggling Venture Off West Palm Beach



A Coast Guard Station Lake Worth Inlet law enforcement team and Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations law enforcement team interdict a 29-foot vessel with two Bahamians, seven Jamaicans, two Haitians and four Dominican Republicans aboard March 17, 2021 approximately 5 miles off West Palm Beach, Florida. Some passengers were brought ashore for further investigation of potential criminal charges by Homeland Security Investigations while the remaining passengers were repatriated to the Bahamas. U.S. COAST GUARD

MIAMI – A Coast Guard Station Lake Worth Inlet law enforcement team and Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations (CBP AMO) law enforcement teams interdicted a 29-foot vessel with 16 people aboard Wednesday approximately 5 miles off West Palm Beach, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a March 19 release.

Coast Guard Robert Yered arrived on scene and a crew brought all the vessel occupants: two Bahamians, seven Jamaicans, two Haitians and four Dominican Republicans, aboard the ship. Some passengers were brought ashore for further investigation of potential criminal charges by Homeland Security Investigations. The remaining passengers were repatriated to the Bahamas Friday.

A CBP AMO aircraft notified Coast Guard Station Miami watchstanders of the suspected smuggling vessel at approximately 12:20 a.m.

“Wednesday’s case spotlights the great work done every day by Air and Marine and our DHS partners,” stated John Priddy, executive director of the AMO Southeast Region. “With our

integrated operations, we get the job done and protect our homeland.”

Since Oct. 1, 2020, Coast Guard crews have interdicted 78 Bahamians, eight Jamaicans, 182 Haitians, 194 Dominican Republicans compared to fiscal year 2020, where crews interdicted 194 Bahamians, four Jamaicans, 418 Haitians and 1,117 Dominican Republicans.

Once aboard a Coast Guard cutter, all migrants receive food, water, shelter and basic medical attention. Throughout the interdiction, Coast Guard crew members were equipped with personal protective equipment to minimize potential exposure to any possible case of COVID-19. There were no migrants in these cases reported to have any COVID-19 related symptoms.