

Coast Guard Commissions Two Newest National Security Cutters in Honolulu



The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Kimball brings the ship to life during a commissioning ceremony at Base Honolulu on Aug. 24. The dual ceremony was for the Kimball and Cutter Midgett. U.S. Coast Guard/Petty Officer 3rd Class Matthew West

HONOLULU –

The U.S Coast Guard's two newest national security cutters were commissioned

Aug. 24 during a ceremony presided over by Commandant Adm. Karl Schultz, the

Coast Guard Pacific area said in a release.

The Coast

Guard Cutter Kimball (WMSL 756) and the Coast Guard Cutter Midgett (WMSL 757)

were "brought to life" at the rare dual-commissioning ceremony in Honolulu,

where the two cutters homeport. Three fast-response cutters also homeport

there. Kimball and Midgett are the seventh and eighth Legend-class national

security cutters in the fleet.

"These

national security cutters will continue our 150 years of partnership and

commitment to the Pacific region – since September 1849, when Revenue Cutter

Lawrence sailed into Honolulu Harbor escorted by Native Hawaiians in outrigger

canoes," Schultz said. "In today's complex geostrategic

environment with rising great power competition, the importance and demand for a strong Coast Guard presence in the Pacific has never been greater.”

Advanced command-and-control capabilities and a combination of range, speed and ability to operate in extreme weather enable these ships to confront national security threats, strengthen maritime governance, support economic prosperity and promote individual sovereignty.

From the Bering Sea and the Arctic to patrolling known drug trafficking zones off Central and South America to working to strengthen the capabilities of our partners across the Indo-Pacific, national security cutters deploy globally to conduct essential Coast Guard missions.

Known as the Legend-class, national security cutters can execute the most challenging national security missions, including support to U.S. combatant commanders.

They are 418 feet in length, 54 feet in beam and 4,600 long tons in displacement. They have a top speed of more than 28 knots, a range of 12,000 nautical miles, an endurance of up to 90 days and can hold a crew of up to 150.

These new cutters are replacing the high-endurance Hamilton-

class cutters (378 feet) that have been in service since the 1960s.



Commandant Adm. Karl Schultz shakes hands with Capt. Alan McCabe, commanding officer of the Coast Guard Cutter Midgett, during a commissioning ceremony at Base Honolulu on Aug. 24. U.S. Coast Guard/Petty Officer 3rd Class Matthew West

The Midgett's transit to Hawaii was punctuated by two interdictions of suspected low-profile go-fast vessels in the eastern Pacific Ocean, the first July 25 and a second July 31. The boardings resulted in a combined seizure of more than 6,700 pounds of cocaine, estimated to be worth over \$89 million.

National security cutters are responsible for 40% of the 460,000 pounds of cocaine interdicted by the Coast Guard in the fiscal year 2018. NSC crews have interdicted more than 92,000 pounds of cocaine to date in the fiscal year 2019.

Midgett is named to honor all members of the Midgett family who served in the Coast Guard and its predecessor services. At least 10 members of the family earned high honors for their heroic lifesaving efforts. Among them, the Coast Guard awarded various family members seven gold lifesaving medals, the service's highest award for saving a life, and three silver lifesaving medals.



The crew of the Midgett stand along the rails during a commissioning ceremony Aug. 24. U.S. Coast Guard/Petty Officer

3rd Class Matthew West

The Kimball is the third ship to bear that name, in honor of Sumner Kimball, who served as superintendent of the Revenue Marine and as general superintendent of the Life-Saving Service from 1878 until the two organizations merged in 1915 to become the modern-day U.S. Coast Guard.

“As you take to the seas, you will write the next chapters of the Kimball and Midgett legacies,” Schultz said, addressing the commands and crews of the two cutters on Aug. 24. “I charge you with carrying out the operations of these ships in such a manner as to be worthy of the traditions of self-sacrifice, inspirational leadership and unwavering dedication to duty – traits exemplified by these cutters’ distinguished and storied namesakes.”