

Coast Guard Crew Offloads \$335.8M Worth of Cocaine in San Diego



Crewmembers of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Munro (WMSL 755) work on the flight deck of the cutter during the contraband offload in San Diego, Nov. 19, 2024 (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Richard Uranga)

From U.S. Coast Guard District Eleven, Nov. 19, 2024

SAN DIEGO – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Munro (WMSL 755) offloaded more than 29,000 pounds of cocaine, with an estimated value of \$335.8 million, Tuesday in San Diego.

The offload is a result of eleven separate suspected drug smuggling vessel interdictions or events off the coasts of Mexico and Central and South America in September and October.

“I would put this crew on any mission, anywhere, at any time,” said Capt. James O’Mara, commanding officer, Coast Guard Cutter Munro. “They executed everything asked of them with incredible teamwork and persistence, and we are proud of the results. Hats off to all our international and interagency partners – we absolutely cannot do this mission without them. For our families and loved ones back home: your support keeps us going out there. It takes everyone’s head in the game to make these interdictions happen, and we are grateful you have our backs on the home front as we patrol the high seas and do our part to prevent dangerous narcotics from hitting cities around the globe.”

Multiple U.S. agencies, including the Departments of Defense, Justice, and Homeland Security, collaborate in the effort to combat transnational organized crime. The Coast Guard, Navy,

Customs and Border Protection, FBI, Drug Enforcement Administration, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, along with allied and international partner agencies, all play a role in counter-narcotic operations. The fight against drug cartels in the Eastern Pacific Ocean requires unity of effort in all phases, from detection and monitoring to interdictions and criminal prosecutions.

“Our partnerships and our collective abilities are vital to the security and prosperity of the hemisphere,” said Rear Adm. Joseph Buzzella, commander, Coast Guard District Eleven. “The Eastern Pacific is a challenging environment – both operationally and logistically. The transit zone is a vast area of ocean to cover, far from home. Despite the challenges, the success of the Munro’s crew highlights the importance of what we do on the high seas.”

The fight against drug cartels in the Eastern Pacific Ocean requires unity of effort in all phases, from detection, monitoring and interdictions to criminal prosecutions by international partners and U.S. Attorneys’ Offices in districts across the nation. The law enforcement phase of counter-smuggling operations in the Eastern Pacific Ocean is conducted under the authority of Coast Guard District Eleven, headquartered in Alameda, California. The interdictions, including the actual boardings, are led and conducted by members of the U.S. Coast Guard.

These interdictions relate to Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) designated investigations. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level criminal organizations that threaten the United States using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach. Additional information about the OCDETF program can be found at <https://www.justice.gov/OCDETF>.

The Munro is the sixth Legend Class National Security Cutter, and is homeported in Alameda, California. The ship/s crew can

operate in the most demanding open ocean environments, including the hazardous fisheries of the North Pacific Ocean and the vast approaches of the Southern Pacific Ocean, where significant narcotics trafficking occurs.

Crewmembers of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Munro (WMSL 755) work on the flight deck of the cutter during the contraband offload in San Diego, Nov. 19, 2024. The Munro crew members interdicted the narcotics in the Eastern Pacific during counter-narcotic patrols, seizing 29,000 pounds of cocaine worth an estimated wholesale value of \$335.8 million. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Richard Uranga)