

Coast Guard Cutter Alex Haley Returns to Homeport following Fisheries Patrol



A crewmember aboard a 26-foot over-the-horizon boat prepares to come alongside Coast Guard Cutter Alex Haley (WMEC 30) while underway in the Bering Sea in this 2019 photo. U.S. Coast Guard / Ensign Richard Zogby

KODIAK, Alaska – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Alex Haley returned to homeport in Kodiak, Alaska, Thursday, following an 85-day deployment throughout the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea, the Coast Guard 17th District said in a Nov. 3 release.

The crew patrolled more than 11,000 miles for approximately three months and safeguarded a \$5.9 billion fishing industry, and enabled search and rescue coverage in an area spanning 890,000 square miles.

During the patrol, the Alex Haley crew conducted 20 boardings in partnership with six different fisheries.

In addition to patrolling the Maritime Boundary Line, the Alex Haley crew joined the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force vessel, Kashima, for a high-latitude exercise in early September. The two vessels completed tactical formation maneuvering and visual communication exercises in a show of international cooperation and goodwill.

On Aug. 26, Russian Naval vessels and aircraft participating in the Russian military exercise Ocean Shield without authority directed U.S. fishing vessels that were legally fishing within the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) to depart the area. Alex Haley was sent to the exercise area within the EEZ to provide U.S. military presence, gather information on the incident, and educate the fishing fleet on

U.S. sovereign rights. Alex Haley boarded four of the five fishing vessels known to have interacted with the Russian Navy. The information Alex Haley collected was critical to developing an appropriate diplomatic response to the Russian military interaction with the fishing fleet.

The Alex Haley is a 282-foot medium-endurance cutter that has been homeported in Kodiak since 1999. The crew of the Alex Haley performs a multitude of the Coast Guards missions.

“Despite the extraordinary challenges imposed by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the crew of the Alex Haley displayed remarkable perseverance throughout the duration of the patrol,” said Capt. Benjamin Golightly, commanding officer of the Coast Guard Cutter Alex Haley. “While nearly three months away from home can be daunting, the enthusiasm, maturity, and dedication from all hands made this patrol a resounding success.”