

Coast Guard Cutter Diligence Returns to Wilmington After a 60-day Patrol



Diligence performed counter-drug, search-and-rescue and alien migrant interdiction operations in support of Coast Guard District Seven and Joint Interagency Task Force South on its 60-day patrol. U.S. Coast Guard.

WILMINGTON, N.C. – The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Diligence returned to Wilmington, North Carolina, Nov. 28 following a 60-day patrol in the Caribbean, the Coast Guard 5th District said in a release of the same date.

The Diligence performed counter-drug, search-and-rescue and alien migrant interdiction operations in support of Coast Guard District Seven and Joint Interagency Task Force (JIATF) South.

While working with Coast Guard Sector San Juan, Puerto Rico, Diligence seized more than 300 kilograms of cocaine, worth more than \$9 million, and was responsible for the disruption of more than 800 kilograms of cocaine worth more than \$25 million. The operation also led to the apprehension of two drug smugglers, who were turned over to U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration authorities in St. Thomas, United States Virgin Islands for prosecution. Cutter Diligence also helped facilitate the transfer of 5,000 kilograms of cocaine and 11 drug smugglers interdicted by other Coast Guard cutters to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration for prosecution.

Diligence also interdicted three illegal and unsafe migrant smuggling vessels in the Mona Pass between the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, and repatriated 76 of the migrants to the Dominican Republic Navy and turned over four migrants suspected to be in violation of U.S. immigration laws to U.S.

Customs authorities in Puerto Rico.

In early November, Diligence found a Haitian vessel disabled and adrift off the north coast of Haiti. Diligence's Rescue and Assistance team was deployed and determined the vessel to be inoperable. Diligence took the vessel in tow and delivered the vessel and 13 passengers to a safe harbor on the north coast of Haiti.

Later that month, Diligence assisted the Royal Bahamian Police and Defense Forces in rescuing 86 Haitian migrants stranded on a desolate beach on Great Inagua island with no food or water after their vessel had run aground. Diligence brought all 86 persons aboard the cutter, and safely delivered them to Bahamian Customs authorities in Matthew Town, Great Inagua.

"Diligence had a remarkably busy and productive patrol," said Cmdr. Luke M. Slivinski, Diligence's commanding officer. "Our success in carrying out numerous challenging operations in an unforgiving maritime environment across a range of Coast Guard missions was a testament to the professionalism, hard work, and determination of the crew."

During the patrol, Diligence embarked an aviation detachment from Coast Guard Air Station Borinquen, Puerto Rico, which assisted in the detection and deterrence of illegal maritime activity and increasing the visibility of the U.S. Coast Guard in the Caribbean. Diligence constantly trained and worked with the aviation detachment to ensure seamless integration and operational proficiency.

Fifty-four-year-old Coast Guard Cutter Diligence is a 210-foot medium-endurance cutter homeported in Wilmington, with a crew of approximately 80. Diligence's primary missions consist of counter drug, migrant interdiction, enforcing federal fishery laws, and search and rescue in support of Coast Guard operations throughout the Western Hemisphere.