

Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk Returns from Counter-Drug Patrol

KEY WEST, Fla. – The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk crew has returned to their homeport in Key West following a 65-day counter-drug patrol throughout the eastern Pacific Ocean and Caribbean, the Coast Guard said in a release.

The Mohawk crew, with a deployed Coast Guard Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron crew, interdicted four suspected drug vessels, apprehended more than 25 suspected drug smugglers and seized more than 4,500 pounds of cocaine and 1,500 gallons of liquefied cocaine.

The crew worked with multiple interagency and partner-nation maritime patrol aircraft and surface assets to counter transnational criminal organizations and hinder the illicit flow of drugs, people and other dangerous cargo into the U.S.

Two of these interdictions were coordinated directly with Central and South American law-enforcement agencies from Costa Rica to strengthen partnerships, promote stability and rule of law in the region and ease pressures on the U.S. southern border and domestic law enforcement.

Between operational tasking, the cutter crew completed aviation, damage control, seamanship and navigation training to maintain operational readiness and prepare for future multimission deployments.

On April 1, U.S. Southern Command began enhanced counter-narcotics operations in the Western Hemisphere to disrupt the flow of drugs in support of Presidential National Security Objectives.

Numerous U.S. agencies from the Departments of Defense, Justice and Homeland Security cooperated in the effort to combat transnational organized crime. The Coast Guard, U.S. Navy, Customs and Border Protection, FBI, Drug Enforcement Administration, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, along with allied and international partner agencies, play a role in counter-drug operations.

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 in districts across the nation.

The law-enforcement phase of counter-smuggling operations in the eastern Pacific is conducted under the authority of the 11th Coast Guard District, headquartered in Alameda. The interdictions, including the actual boardings, are led and conducted by members of the Coast Guard.