

Coast Guard Cutter Northland Returns Home from Patrol



The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Northland conducts a live firing of the MK 75 76mm weapons system while underway, September 20, 2020, in the Atlantic Ocean. The cutter returned to its homeport of Portsmouth, Virginia, Wednesday after a 47-day patrol . U.S. Coast Guard / Seaman Vincent Bologno
PORTSMOUTH, Va. – The Coast Guard Cutter Northland (WMEC-904) returned to its homeport in Portsmouth after a 47-day patrol conducting counter-drug and migrant interdiction operations in the Caribbean Sea and Atlantic Ocean, Sept. 30, the Coast Guard 5th District said in an Oct. 1 release.

The Northland deployed in August and offered pre-storm information and assistance to locals off the coast of Haiti.

Prior to the arrival of Tropical Storm Laura off the island of Hispaniola, Northland crewmembers located a disoriented fisherman who had drifted approximately 17 miles offshore. The crew provided him with food and water as the ship escorted him back to land well ahead of the storm's passage.

The Northland also hosted a civilian Haitian-Creole interpreter for the majority of the patrol to assist with translations.

“Before this mission I did not know anything about the Coast Guard,” said Rishi Jolivian, a Haitian-Creole interpreter aboard the Northland. “But, now I have so much gratitude and appreciation for what the Coast Guard does. I have tremendous respect for the Northland and it’s truly an awesome place to be.”

The Northland crewmembers provided Coast Guard presence along the north coast of Haiti by conducting 20 transits through the

Canal de Tortue. The crew also maintained a robust training schedule earning more than 160 qualifications in addition to running over 60 shipboard drills and over 30 hours of small boat training. A highlight for the crew was the live-fire gunnery exercise of the 76mm Mk75 Gun Weapon System.

“I am truly humbled to command a crew that diligently works to get the job done,” stated Cmdr. Patricia Bennett, commanding officer of the Northland. “Their remarkable ability to overcome the inherent challenges of serving aboard an aging 36-year old asset downrange during a global pandemic cannot be overstated. The crew maintained a high level of morale and camaraderie that, in my opinion, is really only encountered by those of us who serve aboard Coast Guard cutters. This crew truly demonstrates the spirit of why I go to sea.”

Upon the Northland’s return to homeport, the crew will conduct critical maintenance and repairs to extend the ship’s service life and will undergo a rigorous training assessment to ensure emergency readiness for future deployments.

The Northland is a 270-foot medium-endurance cutter homeported in Portsmouth, Virginia and routinely deploys in support of counter-drug, migrant interdiction, fisheries, and search and rescue and homeland security missions.