

Coast Guard Cutter Seneca returns home after 54-day maritime border security patrol in the Windward Passage



Coast Guard Cutter Seneca (WMEC 906) patrols off coastal Haiti, March 1, 2025. The crew of Seneca conducted a 54-day maritime border security patrol in the Windward Passage. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Seaman Solana Laughlin)

From U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area, April 22, 2025

PORTSMOUTH, VA – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Seneca (WMEC 906) returned to their home port in Portsmouth, April 11, following a 54-day maritime border security patrol in the Windward Passage.

Seneca deployed in support of Homeland Security Task Force – Southeast (HSTF-SE) and Operation Vigilant Sentry (OVS) while underway in the Seventh Coast Guard District’s area of responsibility. Crew members directly contributed to safeguarding America by patrolling U.S. maritime borders and conducting alien interdiction operations.

While underway in the Windward Passage, Seneca’s crew interdicted an unsafe and illegal voyage with 99 aliens on board. A U.S. Customs and Border Protection – Air and Marine Operations aircrew initially detected the vessel. Seneca crew members launched a small boat, interdicting the voyage and transferring the aliens aboard Seneca before their repatriation to Haiti.

During the deployment, Seneca’s crew worked with many partners to include Coast Guard Cutters James (WMSL 754), Vigilant (WMEC 617), Valiant (WMEC 621), Tampa (WMEC 902), the Coast Guard Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron and the Royal Netherlands Navy. Their joint efforts included counter-drug operations and advanced shipborne helicopter training, increasing joint interoperability between interagency and international partners.

“The integrity of our maritime borders is vital to national security, and I am proud of our crew’s hard work and determination throughout this deployment. Their dedicated commitment to deterrence of alien maritime migration saved lives from dangerous ventures at sea while safeguarding our borders,” said Cmdr. Lee Jones, commanding officer of Seneca. “Together with our partner agencies, we were able to effectively enforce United States customs and immigration laws against illegal entry.”

The Coast Guard, along with its HSTF-SE partners, maintains a continual presence with air, land, and sea assets in the Florida Straits, the Windward Passage, the Mona Passage, and the Caribbean Sea in support of OVS. The HSTF-SE combined,

multi-layered approach is designed to protect the safety of life at sea while preventing unlawful maritime entry to the United States and its territories.

Seneca is a 270-foot, Famous-class medium-endurance cutter. The cutter's primary missions are alien interdiction, counter-drug operations, enforcement of federal fishery laws, and search and rescue in support of U.S. Coast Guard operations throughout the Western Hemisphere.