

**Coast Guard Cutter Spencer
returns home after Operation
Vigilant Sentry patrol,
service life extension
upgrades**



Coast Guard Cutter Spencer (WMEC 905) crew member conduct small boat operations while patrolling the Florida Straits, March 21, 2025. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Haylee Casey)

From U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area, April 14, 2025

PORTSMOUTH, Va. – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Spencer (WMEC 905) returned to their home port in Portsmouth, Friday, following a 92-day deployment in support of alien interdiction operations in the Florida Straits.

Deployed in support of Homeland Security Task Force – Southeast (HSTF-SE) and Operation Vigilant Sentry (OVS) in the Seventh Coast Guard District’s area of responsibility, Spencer’s crew conducted search and rescue, and maritime border security operations to support the ongoing U.S. mission to protect the maritime borders of America.

On April 6, Spencer’s crew rescued a mariner from a capsized vessel approximately 35 miles northeast of Boynton Beach, Florida. Coast Guard Cutter Margaret Norvell’s crew embarked the survivor who was transferred to the Royal Bahamas Defense Force in good condition.

Prior to the patrol, Spencer was part of the service life extension program (SLEP) for two years getting upgrades at the Coast Guard Yard in Baltimore.

“Although our time in Baltimore was challenging, the officers and crew of Spencer were motivated to get the ship ready for operations and embark on our inaugural post-SLEP patrol,” said Cmdr. Justin Strock, commanding officer of Spencer. “In support Homeland Security Task Force – Southeast, we provided a clear visible deterrent to anyone considering illegal entry into the country.”

Established in 2003, HSTF-SE is the DHS-led interagency task force charged with directing operational and tactical planning, command and control, and functions as a standing organization to deter, mitigate and respond to maritime mass migration in the Caribbean Sea and Florida Straits.

OVS is the 2004 DHS plan that provides the structure for deploying joint air and surface assets and personnel to respond to irregular maritime migration in the Caribbean corridor of the United States. Its primary objectives are to prevent the unnecessary loss of life at sea while deterring and dissuading maritime mass migration alongside our federal, state and local partners.

Spencer 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.

For information on how to join the U.S. Coast Guard, visit [Go Coast Guard.com](https://www.go.uscg.mil) to learn about active duty and reserve, officer and enlisted opportunities. Information on how to apply to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy can be found [here](#).