

Coast Guard Cutter Venturous Returns Home After 62-Day Patrol



The Coast Guard Cutter Venturous, shown here returning from its November 2018 patrol. U.S. COAST GUARD / Michael De Nyse ST.

PETERSBURG, Fla. – The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Venturous (WMEC-625) returned home to St. Petersburg June 27 following a 62-day patrol in the Caribbean Sea, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a release of the same date.

Venturous' crew spent the first three weeks of the patrol at Naval Station Mayport for their biennial Tailored Ship's Training Availability, which is designed to test the crew's ability to respond to various operations and shipboard emergencies.

After departing Mayport, the Venturous crew transited over 7,000 miles while operating in the Caribbean Sea enforcing international laws and treaties in support of the Coast Guard's Western Hemisphere Strategy by countering transnational organized criminal networks and deterring human smuggling while safeguarding life at sea.

On June 12th, the crew of the Venturous partnered with rotary and fixed wing

aircraft from
Coast Guard Air Stations Clearwater and Miami and Royal
Bahamian Defense Forces
interceptor and rescued 177 Haitian migrants from an
overloaded 40-foot vessel
approximately 20 nautical miles southwest of Providenciales,
Turks and Caicos.

“From responding to Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017, to completing four consecutive deployments through the Panama Canal to the Eastern Pacific Ocean, to preventing over nine tons of illicit narcotics, valued at over a quarter billion dollars, from reaching our shores, and rescuing 189 migrants and 10 fishermen from the perils of the sea, the crew of Venturous truly upheld her motto, Nemo Supra, None Better.”

Cmdr. Matthew Chong, commanding officer of the Venturous

The Venturous
crew utilized both of the over the horizon cutter boats to
safely offload all
177 migrants from the vessel, which was slowly flooding due to
its severely
overloaded state and choppy seas. The Royal Bahamian Defense
Forces interceptor
provided security on the vessel and the Air Station Clearwater
MH-60 Jayhawk
helicopter provided overflight coverage as Venturous embarked
the migrants.
Once aboard Venturous, crewmembers provided the migrants with
food, water,
shelter and basic medical care.

On two other
occasions, Venturous intercepted overloaded vessels closer to
shore and
directed them to return back to port rather than face the

dangerous journey in
open waters.

Six cadets
from the Coast Guard Academy also joined Venturous during the
deployment and
worked alongside the crew while earning various shipboard
qualifications and
gaining valuable operational experience that will aid in their
development as
future Coast Guard officers.

Additionally,
Venturous hosted two ship riders from the Cayman Islands.
While on board, the
ship riders attended operations briefings and engaged with
crewmembers to
exchange best practices to fight human and narcotics
trafficking networks while
strengthening the strategic partnership with an important
regional ally.

“As I
complete my final patrol on Venturous, I can’t help but look
back on the past
two years with immense pride and awe in all that our crew
accomplished.” said
Cmdr. Matthew Chong, commanding officer of the Venturous.
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Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017, to completing four
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The Venturous
is a 210-foot Reliance-class cutter, homeported in St.
Petersburg and has a
crew of 76. Medium endurance cutters, like the Venturous, are
slated for
replacement by a new class of cutter – the Offshore Patrol
Cutter (OPC). With
the ability to operate more than 50 miles from land, the OPC
will be a
multi-mission asset, providing surface and air pursuit
capabilities and
interoperability with other military and federal partners.