

Coast Guard Increases Presence Near Southwest Border Between U.S., Mexico



Maritime enforcement specialists from Tactical Law Enforcement Team South and U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Kimball (WMSL 756) crewmembers interdict a suspected drug smuggling vessel while patrolling the Eastern Pacific Ocean, March 4, 2025. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Max Hanfland)

U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Southwest, March 28, 2025

ALAMEDA, Calif. – The Coast Guard has increased its operational presence near the southwest border between U.S. and Mexico to enhance border security, immigration enforcement and to protect the territorial integrity of the United States.

Coast Guard District Eleven (D11) has expanded its posture from previous steady state counter-illicit-maritime-activities to gain full operational control of the Southwest Maritime Border.

Since Jan. 21, D11 has tripled its forces operating on the southern border and coordinated Coast Guard surface and air presence with partners to detect, deter, and interdict alien and drug smuggling ventures. D11 diverted aircraft, cutters, small boats and crews under its operational control to the southern border, increasing the illegal alien apprehension rates by 75% with multiple smuggling attempts continuing to occur each night. The Coast Guard remains committed to a persistent operational presence to ensure border security and territorial integrity of the United States.

Irregular maritime migration aboard unseaworthy or overloaded vessels is always dangerous, and often deadly. D11 remains steadfast in its commitment to saving lives and discouraging anyone from taking to the sea in ways that are unsafe and illegal.

D11 has taken immediate actions to increase operational presence and focus to combat illegal fentanyl threatening the United States. In recent years, smuggling ventures across the southern border have been found to include bulk cocaine, methamphetamines, and fentanyl. This trafficking of illegal drugs poses an urgent threat to the American people, and the members of the Coast Guard do everything in their power to interdict drugs before they reach our shores and citizens. Accordingly, the Coast Guard has increased operations to interdict, seize, and disrupt the transshipment of cocaine and other bulk illicit drugs by sea. This includes operations in the Eastern Pacific and the Western Hemisphere Transit Zone, a major highway for illegal smuggling activity. Through sustained counter-narcotics operations, the Coast Guard has imposed billions of dollars of costs on the criminal networks, continuing the fight against corruption and violence fueled by narco-trafficking. Coast Guard law enforcement action and presence is critical to countering the destabilizing impacts of transnational organized crime. Since January 21, the Coast Guard has interdicted more than 68,800 lbs of cocaine and

4,200 lbs of marijuana totaling nearly \$785 million in wholesale value.

These trends may change due to an influx of Coast Guard assets coupled with Department of Defense (DoD) resources and U.S. Border Patrol in a coordinated effort to protect our southern borders and maritime approaches. U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM) recently deployed two U.S. Navy warships to the southern border to protect the territorial integrity of the United States and support Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Coast Guard operations.

These U.S. Navy warships will operate in direct support of the Coast Guard and carry Coast Guard law enforcement teams that will enable them to conduct border security operations under Coast Guard authorities. As the Coast Guard hardens and sustains its operational posture, including the arrival of these U.S. Navy warships, it is fully integrated with DHS and DoD through NORTHCOM and U.S. Southern Command.

Additionally, D11 is assisting with the national transport of illegal aliens to designated locations in Texas and California, where DoD then transports the aliens internationally for repatriation. The Coast Guard continues to devote its forces from across the nation to support these flights. These combined surface and air operations demonstrate the Coast Guard's continued dedication to control, defend, and secure U.S. borders, territorial integrity, and ensure sovereignty.

D11 plays a crucial role in homeland security and economic prosperity by conducting border security and counter-drug operations to safeguard the integrity of the Southwest Border and its maritime approaches, effectively interdicting, seizing and disrupting drug and alien smuggling at sea.