

Coast Guard Interdicts 10 Cuban Migrants and 2 Suspected Smugglers off Villa Clara Province



A Coast Guard Cutter Raymond Evans small-boat crew approaches a 30-foot go-fast vessel about 12 miles off Villa Clara Province, Cuba, on May 20. U.S. Coast Guard

KEY WEST,

Fla.— The Coast Guard interdicted 10 Cuban migrants and two suspected smugglers

on May 21 about 12 miles off Villa Clara Province, Cuba, the Coast Guard 7th

District said in a release.

Coast Guard

7th District watchstanders received notification of an illegal departure of a

30-foot go-fast vessel with 12 people aboard in the vicinity of Villa Clara

Province.

A Coast Guard

Air Station Miami HC-144 Ocean Sentry aircraft crew located the vessel and

vectored the Coast Guard Cutter Raymond Evans (WPC-1110) crew to the location,

where the crew embarked 10 males and two females. The Evans crew repatriated

the 10 Cuban migrants back to their home. The two suspected smugglers were

transferred into Homeland Security Investigations custody.

“The

Coast Guard maintains a focused and coordinated effort with multiple agency assets to interdict any attempt to unlawfully immigrate by sea to the United States,” said Rear Adm. Peter J. Brown, commander of Coast Guard 7th District.

The 7th District, based in Miami, Florida, oversees all Coast Guard operations in South Carolina, Georgia and Florida as well as Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Brown is also the director of Homeland Security Task Force Southeast, a standing multiagency team that unifies the whole of government effort to monitor, identify, mitigate and respond to large-scale migration events.

About 290 Cuban migrants have tried to illegally enter the U.S. by sea in fiscal year 2019 compared to 384 in fiscal 2018. These numbers represent the total number of at-sea interdictions, landings and disruptions in the Florida Straits, the Caribbean and Atlantic.

Once aboard a Coast Guard cutter, all migrants receive food, water, shelter and basic medical attention.