

Coast Guard, Navy interdict 14 aliens 18 miles southeast of Catalina Island, Calif.



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From U.S. Coast Guard Southwest District, Oct. 8, 2025

PACIFIC OCEAN – A U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) embarked aboard the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Sampson (DDG 102), interdicted 14 aliens aboard a 33-foot sport fishing vessel approximately 18 miles southeast of Catalina Island, California, Sunday morning.

Watchstanders at the Sector San Diego Joint Harbor Operation Center (JHOC) received notification of a vessel crossing north

of the maritime boundary line operating with no navigation lights. Sampson approached the vessel as it loitered in the contiguous zone off San Clemente Island and San Diego and observed two persons aboard the vessel giving the appearance of fishing. When Sampson distanced itself from the vessel, it stopped loitering and continued transiting on a northerly course. Watchstanders at the JHOC then directed Sampson to board the vessel using its attached LEDET.

13 adults aboard the vessel claimed Mexican nationality and one adult claimed Ecuadorian nationality. The 14 aliens and the vessel were brought to Oceanside, CA, and custody of the people was transferred to another Department of Homeland Security (DHS) agency.

Upon mission completion, tactical control of Sampson returned to U.S. 3rd Fleet.

This operation reflects ongoing cooperation between the U.S. Navy, U.S. Coast Guard, and interagency partners to disrupt transnational criminal networks operating in the maritime domain.

Sampson is employed under U.S. Northern Command's maritime homeland defense authorities with a Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment embarked to enable maritime interdiction missions to prevent the flow of illegal drugs and other illegal activity. U.S. Northern Command is working together with the Department of Homeland Security to provide additional military forces and capabilities at the southern border.