

Coast Guard Offloads \$176,000 in Seized Cocaine



The Coast Guard Cutter Winslow Griesser is on scene with a drug smuggling go-fast interdicted moments earlier in the Mona Passage near Puerto Rico Sept. 12, 2020. U.S. Coast Guard SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The crew of the Coast Guard cutter Joseph Napier (WPC-1115) offloaded approximately eight kilograms of seized cocaine and transferred custody of two suspected smugglers to federal law enforcement authorities Sept. 16 in San Juan, Puerto Rico, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a Sept. 17 release.

The seized drug shipment has an estimated value of more than \$176,000 dollars. The two men apprehended who claimed to be Dominican Republic nationals remain in U.S. custody facing criminal charges for drug smuggling.

The interdiction was the result of ongoing efforts in support of Operation Unified Resolve, the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) program and the Caribbean Corridor Strike Force (CCSF). Prosecution is being led by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Puerto Rico.

“Throughout the pursuit and interdiction of this drug smuggling go-fast the crew of the Winslow Griesser demonstrated another outstanding performance all around,” said Lt. Joel Wyman, commanding officer of the cutter Winslow Griesser. “We appreciate the great collaboration and professionalism of our Coast Guard aviators, Command Center, Enforcement and Intel personnel, who greatly contributed to achieving a successful outcome, which kept these drugs from reaching the streets and will bring these smugglers before justice.”

During a routine patrol of the Mona Passage on Sept. 12, the

crew of a Coast Guard HC-144 Ocean Sentry aircraft from Air Station Miami detected a suspect 25-foot go-fast vessel with two people aboard, approximately 25 nautical miles northwest of Aguadilla, Puerto Rico. Coast Guard watchstanders at Sector San Juan diverted the cutter Winslow Griesser to interdict the suspect vessel.

Once the cutter Winslow Griesser closed in on the suspect vessel, the occupants of the go-fast were observed jettisoning objects overboard. Shortly thereafter, the crew of Winslow Griesser's over-the-horizon cutter boat stopped the go-fast, and located eight packages of suspected contraband nearby. The recovered packages tested positive for cocaine.

The detainees and contraband were transferred to the cutter Joseph Napier for transport to Sector San Juan. The Napier's crew offloaded the contraband and disembarked the suspected smugglers in coordination with CBP officers, DEA and CCSF special agents in San Juan.

Cutters Winslow Griesser and Joseph Napier are 154-foot fast response cutters homeported in San Juan, Puerto Rico.