

Coast Guard Offloads \$5.6 Million in Seized Cocaine in San Juan, Puerto Rico



USCGC Joseph Napier, shown here in the Port of Bridgetown, Barbados.

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Napier and Caribbean Corridor Strike Force agents offloaded 626 pounds of seized cocaine Monday in San Juan, Puerto Rico, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a May 10 release.

The offload of contraband resulted from a go-fast vessel interdiction April 28, 2022, in Mona Passage waters near the Dominican Republic.

The interdiction is the result of multi-agency efforts involving the Caribbean Border Interagency Group and the Caribbean Corridor Strike Force. The seized cocaine has an estimated wholesale value of approximately \$5.6 million dollars.

During the morning of April 28, the crew of a Coast Guard HC-27J Spartan aircraft detected a suspect vessel north of Mona Island, Puerto Rico. Coast Guard watchstanders in Sector San Juan diverted the cutter Joseph Napier that arrived on scene with the suspect vessel. Upon detecting the presence of the Coast Guard cutter, the occupants of the suspect vessel were observed jettisoning multiple bales of suspected contraband into the water and attempting to flee the area toward Dominican Republic territorial waters. Once in Dominican Republic waters, the crew of a Dominican Republic navy vessel interdicted the suspect vessel and apprehended three Dominican Republic nationals who were aboard. Meanwhile, the crew of the cutter Joseph Napier recovered 11 bales of the

jettisoned suspected contraband, which tested positive for cocaine.

“Safeguarding the nation’s southernmost maritime border is among our top priorities,” said Capt. Gregory H. Magee, Coast Guard Sector San Juan commander. “You can expect to see many more of these interdictions from the Coast Guard, federal and local law enforcement, and from our Dominican Republic Navy partners as we work together to stop drug smuggling go-fast vessels at sea and prevent them from making landfall in Puerto Rico.”

Special Agents supporting the Caribbean Corridor Strike Force are leading the investigation into this case.

Cutter Joseph Napier is a 154-foot fast response cutter that is homeported in San Juan, Puerto Rico.