

# Coast Guard, Port Partners Increase Joint Inspection Operations During Busy Shipping Season



A member of Coast Guard Maritime Safety and Security Team New York and K9 Ruthie inspect goods in the Port of Philadelphia for contraband, Nov. 13. Interagency teams brought an increased presence to the ports during November to inspect goods brought in for the holiday seasons. U.S. Coast Guard Sector Delaware Bay/Petty Officer 1st Class Seth Johnson

PHILADELPHIA – Members of Coast Guard Sector Delaware Bay, Coast Guard Maritime Safety and Security Team New York, Customs and Border Protection, and multiple state and local police agencies increased maritime operations to deter illegal activity within the ports of Philadelphia and Wilmington, Delaware, over the past three weeks, the Coast Guard 5<sup>th</sup> District said in a Dec. 3 release.

These combined joint agency efforts were focused on a period of heavy import and export before the holidays, accounting for more than \$1.2 billion of commerce throughout the Delaware Bay watershed.

During this time period, the Coast Guard and partner agencies conducted more than 470 hours of extensive joint operations that included the inspection of 235 vehicles before export, screening 150 ferry passengers and the pier side examination of 62 shipping containers.

“The Delaware River contributes more than \$77 billion dollars in economic value each year,” said Capt. Scott Anderson, Coast Guard Sector Delaware Bay Commander and Captain of the Port. “These types of joint operations help unify law enforcement

efforts in the port to disrupt, detect and deter illegal activities by sharing unique capabilities and resources between agencies.”

In March 2019, an interagency task force seized 537 kilograms of contraband from a commercial vessel at the port of Philadelphia and in June 2019, nearly 20 tons of cocaine was seized, with an estimated street value of \$1.3 billion.

The Delaware River port facilities can receive more than 3,000 deep draft vessels each year. There are more than 70 private and public facilities capable of servicing bulk, break bulk and containerized cargos.

Philadelphia is the largest North American port for the importing of paper, meat, cocoa beans and fruit. The Delaware River is also the largest energy port on the East Coast.