

Coast Guard Repatriates 18 Migrants to the Dominican Republic



The Coast Guard Cutter Winslow Griesser rendezvous with a D.R. Navy patrol boat June 10, just off Samaná, Dominican Republic. The cutter Griesser repatriated 18 Dominican migrants, from a group of 24, who were interdicted June 10 offshore Aguadilla, Puerto Rico. U.S. COAST GUARD.

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The Coast Guard Cutter Winslow Griesser (WPC-1116) repatriated 18 Dominican migrants to a Dominican Navy patrol vessel June 11 near Samana, Dominican Republic, following the interdiction of an illegal migrant voyage Monday just off the coast of Aguadilla, Puerto Rico, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a June 12 release.

Six other Dominican migrants traveling in the group remain in federal custody facing possible prosecution by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Puerto Rico on potential charges of attempted illegal reentry into a U.S. territory.

The interdictions are the result of ongoing efforts in support of Operation Unified Resolve, Operation Caribbean Guard and the Caribbean Border Interagency Group (CBIG).

"I'm glad that our crew was able to safely recover all the migrants and provide them with the humanitarian assistance they required," said Lt. Luke A. Walsh, USCGC Winslow Griesser commanding

officer. "This group is very fortunate. The dangers in the Mona Passage are quite real, as migrants risk losing their lives at the hands of ruthless smugglers whose vessels are ill equipped with little or no emergency and lifesaving equipment onboard."

A team of Ramey Sector Border Patrol agents detected the 20-foot migrant vessel, transiting without navigational lights, approximately a mile and a half off the coast of Aguadilla.

Coast Guard watchstanders in Sector San Juan diverted cutter Winslow Griesser to interdict the suspect vessel. As the Winslow Griesser arrived on scene, a responding Puerto Rico Police Joint Forces of Rapid Action marine unit stopped the migrant vessel. The Winslow Griesser crew embarked from the makeshift vessel all 24 migrants, 23 men and a woman, who claimed Dominican nationality.

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

The cutter Winslow Griesser transferred custody of the six migrants facing federal prosecution to Ramey Sector Border Patrol agents in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico.

The Caribbean Border Interagency Group unifies efforts between U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Puerto Rico, and Puerto Rico Police Joint

Forces of Rapid

Action. These agencies share a common goal of securing the maritime border of

Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands against illegal migrant and drug smuggling threats.

The Winslow Griesser is a 154-foot fast-response cutter homeported in San Juan, Puerto Rico.