

Coast Guard Repatriates 23 Migrants to the Dominican Republic After Interdiction



The Coast Guard Cutter Donald Horsley and a U.S. Customs and Border Protection maritime patrol aircraft interdicted a migrant vessel near Mona Island, Puerto Rico, with 28 Dominican men on Nov. 14. U.S. Coast Guard SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk repatriated 23 of 28 Dominican migrants to the Dominican Republic navy in Santo Domingo following the interdiction of an illegal migrant voyage in the Mona Passage, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a release.

Five of the interdicted migrants remain in Puerto Rico to face possible federal prosecution on charges of violating U.S. Code for attempting to illegally re-enter the United States, which carries a potential maximum term of imprisonment of 20 years and a fine of up to \$250,000.

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

“We are glad that we were able to arrive in time to safely recover all 28 migrants from this grossly overloaded vessel,” said Lt. Christopher Martin, commanding officer of the Donald Horsley. “This vessel could have easily capsized, and the people onboard would have had a very little chance of survival since they basically possessed no lifesaving equipment onboard. We appreciate the collaboration and coordination of our CBP partners, which allowed for a prompt response and successful outcome in this case.”

The interdiction took place Nov. 14 after a Customs and Border

Protection (CBP) Air and Marine Operations DHC-8 patrol aircraft crew sighted a migrant boat just off Mona Island. The Donald Horsley diverted to the scene and interdicted the 30-foot migrant boat with 28 adult Dominican men aboard.

The crew of the Donald Horsley transferred the migrants to the cutter Mohawk for their repatriation, while the five migrants awaiting prosecution were transferred to the cutter Joseph Napier. Ramey Sector Border Patrol agents in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, received custody of the five migrants awaiting federal prosecution.