

Coast Guard Repatriates 91 Migrants to the Dominican Republic



A makeshift boat, one of three illegal migrant voyages, interdicted by the Coast Guard and Caribbean Border Interagency Group partner agencies Sept. 2, 2021 in the Mona Passage just off Puerto Rico. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The Coast Guard Cutter Reliance crew repatriated 91 migrants to the Dominican Republic Sept. 3 from three at-sea interdictions in the Mona Passage off the west coast of Puerto Rico, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a release.

These interdictions are the result of ongoing Coast Guard and Caribbean Border Interagency group partner efforts to deter and stop illegal voyages in the Mona Passage.

In the first interdiction, the Coast Guard Richard Etheridge located and interdicted an illegal voyage at 3:26 a.m. Sept. 2, comprised of a 17-foot makeshift vessel with 32 migrants onboard, 30 men and two women, in waters just off Rincon, Puerto Rico.

In the second interdiction, a Puerto Rico Police Joint Forces of Rapid Action marine unit interdicted a 30-foot makeshift boat at 7 a.m. Sept. 2 just off Aguadilla, Puerto Rico that was carrying 50 migrants onboard; 47 men and three women.

In the third interdiction, a Puerto Rico Police Joint Forces of Rapid Action marine unit interdicted a 15-foot makeshift boat at 9:20 a.m. Sept. 2 just off Rincon, Puerto Rico that was carrying 12 migrants onboard, 11 men and a woman.

“These interdictions highlight the professionalism, commitment

and unwavering resolve of the Coast Guard and our Caribbean Border Interagency Group partners in safeguarding the maritime border of Puerto Rico,” said Cmdr. Beau Powers, Sector San Juan chief of response. “We continue to implore anyone thinking about taking part in an illegal voyage that they not take to the sea. It is just not worth it, not only would you be putting your life at risk, but the life of everyone else if the voyage. You are also risking federal prosecution for attempting to enter illegally into the United States.”

In the last eight days, Coast Guard and Caribbean Border Interagency Group partner agencies have interdicted 10 illegal voyages with 211 migrants, who were traveling illegally to Puerto Rico aboard grossly overloaded makeshift boats. Since Oct. 1, 2021, the Coast Guard and CBIG federal and state partner agencies have interdicted and or apprehended over 2,100 migrants who were traveling illegally to Puerto Rico.

Once aboard a Coast Guard cutter, all migrants receive food, water, shelter and basic medical attention. Throughout the interdictions, Coast Guard crewmembers were equipped with personal protective equipment to minimize potential exposure to any possible case of COVID-19. There were no migrants in these cases reported to have any COVID-19 related symptoms.

The Coast Guard Cutter Richard Etheridge is a 154-foot fast response cutter homeported in Puerto Rico, while the Coast Guard Cutter Reliance is a medium-endurance cutter homeported in Pensacola, Florida.