

Cutter Harriet Lane Interdicts \$16 million Worth of Illicit Drugs



Crewmembers from the Coast Guard Cutter Harriet Lane conduct sunset flight operations with an MH-65 Dolphin aircrew from Coast Guard Air Station Miami in the Caribbean Sea. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

PORTSMOUTH, Va. – The Coast Guard Cutter Harriet Lane returned to its homeport in Portsmouth, Virginia, after a 72-day patrol in the Caribbean Sea, July 25, the Coast Guard 5th District said in a July 27 release.

The Harriet Lane's crew performed counter-drug and migrant interdiction operations in support of the Coast Guard 7th District and Joint Interagency Task Force-South.

Throughout the patrol, the crew of the Harriet Lane worked in conjunction with a diverse array of U.S. and foreign military assets to conduct vital training and perform its assigned law enforcement mission, which included interdicting one go-fast vessel carrying approximately 882 pounds of suspected cocaine with an estimated street value of \$16 million.

The interdiction was conducted jointly with USS Wichita (LCS 13). Harriet Lane's crew assumed tactical control of Wichita's helicopter, which employed airborne use of force executed by a trained Coast Guard crew member. The helicopter disabled the vessel and vectored in Harriet Lane's small boat with embarked boarding team. Harriet Lane crews also conducted multiple at sea transfers of suspected illegal narcotics and drug-smugglers with the Dutch Navy aboard HNLMS Holland and facilitated the at-sea interdiction of a suspected drug smuggling vessel by the French frigate Ventôse.

In addition to operations, the Harriet Lane crew conducted a towing exercise with the USS Wichita, taking the 378-foot littoral combat ship in tow. During the evolution both vessels exchanged crew members of various rates and rank to provide exposure and promote professional development. This exercise provided invaluable training for both crews and strengthened the special relationships amongst the seagoing services. The crew of Harriet Lane hosted Consul General Allen Greenberg, the U.S. Consul General for Curacao and U.S. Chief of Mission for the former Dutch Antilles. Amidst operations, joint military training and acts of diplomacy, the cutter crew also completed aviation, damage control, seamanship and navigation training to maintain operational readiness and prepare for future multi-mission patrols.

“I am tremendously humbled to have completed my first patrol aboard Harriet Lane with this fine crew of maritime professionals,” said Cmdr. Ben Goff, commanding officer of the Harriet Lane “Throughout, we showcased a diversity of talent unique to the world’s best Coast Guard. I am extremely proud of the crew for their unwavering flexibility and selfless service amidst a variety of scheduling changes and mission challenges. Likewise, it was a true privilege to conduct operations and training with our U.S., Dutch and French navy partners.”

Harriet Lane is a 270-foot medium-endurance cutter responsible for a variety of Coast Guard missions, including search and rescue, enforcement of laws and treaties, maritime defense, and protection of the marine environment.