

Reliance Departs for New Homeport



The Reliance patrols the western Caribbean in 2014. U.S. Coast Guard/Petty Officer 3rd Class Clinton McDonald

KITTERY, MAINE – The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Reliance crew was to depart on patrol from the Naval Shipyard in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, on July 6 and return in August to its new homeport of Naval Air Station Pensacola, Florida, the Coast Guard's 1st District said in a release.

After 32 years homeported in New Hampshire, Reliance will continue service with two other 210-foot medium endurance cutters homeported at Naval Air Station Pensacola, allowing the Coast Guard to better leverage efficiencies gained by clustering vessels of the same class.

The Reliance has shifted homeports several times since its commissioning in 1964. The cutter has been homeported in Corpus Christi, Texas, Yorktown, Virginia, and Port Canaveral, Florida. More recently, Reliance replaced the cutter Vigilant in New Castle, New Hampshire in 1988, and in 1996, shifted berths to the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.

During the time in New Hampshire, Reliance has contributed to the Coast Guard's missions of search and rescue, living marine resource protection, and safeguarding New England port and waterways.

In 1989, Reliance acted as the on-scene commander for the Narragansett Bay oil spill. Reliance crews coordinated multiple assets and directed the cleanup of over 300,000 gallons of crude oil from the tanker ship, World Prodigy, that ran aground off the coast of Rhode Island.

In 1991, a crew of the Reliance assumed tactical command for

the intersection of the fishing vessel, Hunter, which was spotted 100 miles south of Long Island and caught smuggling more than 5 tons of cocaine.

Additionally, a Reliance crew was involved with port security operations during the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, responded to numerous search-and-rescue cases saving hundreds of lives at sea, and regulated New England's fisheries to ensure sustainment of fishery stocks.

The Reliance was originally designed with a stern exhaust system, a 3-inch gun deck capable of manning a 40 mm anti-submarine cannon, a helicopter pad capable of carrying the out of commission HH-52 rotary wing aircraft, and a power plant system that combined diesel and gas combustion.

After undergoing a major maintenance availability in 1987, she was modified to include two pitch controlled main diesel engines capable of reaching a max speed of 18 knots, an exhaust stack that is presented amidships, an armament of one 25 mm. automatic machine gun and two .50-caliber machine guns, and a flight deck capable of carrying and deploying an MH-65 Dolphin helicopter.