

U.S. Coast Guard Commissions 3 Fast Response Cutters in Guam



Adm. Karl Schultz, the commandant of the Coast Guard, speaks during a rare triple-commissioning ceremony at Coast Guard Sector Guam July 29, 2021. During the ceremony, Coast Guard Cutters Myrtle Hazard, Oliver Henry and Fredrick Hatch were commissioned. *U.S. COAST GUARD / Petty Officer 1st Class Travis Magee*

SANTA RITA, Guam – The Coast Guard’s three newest Fast Response Cutters were commissioned July 29 during a ceremony presided over by Adm. Karl Schultz, the Coast Guard’s commandant, the Coast Guard 14th District said in a release.

The Coast Guard Cutters Myrtle Hazard (WPC 1139), Oliver Henry (WPC 1140) and Frederick Hatch (WPC 1143) were commissioned during a rare triple-commissioning ceremony at their new homeport at Coast Guard Forces Micronesia Sector Guam.

“The triple commissioning of Coast Guard Cutters Myrtle Hazard, Oliver Henry, and Frederick Hatch signals our dedication to regional partners and the growing maritime demand in the region,” said Capt. Nick Simmons, commander, Coast Guard Forces Micronesia Sector Guam. “It was an honor to celebrate this historic event with the crews, families and sponsors for each cutters’ namesake.”

Like the 30-year-old Island-class patrol boats before them, they will support the people of Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and our international partners throughout Oceania. The FRCs represent the Coast Guard’s commitment to modernizing service assets to address the increasingly complex global Maritime Transportation System.

The Coast Guard already has a well-established presence within the region due to its bilateral shiprider agreements with Pacific Island Forum countries. These shiprider agreements allow partnering nations' defense and law enforcement officers to go aboard Coast Guard vessels to observe, board and search vessels suspected of violating laws or regulations within their exclusive economic zones.

By embarking shipriders, Coast Guard crews are able to support allies in the region and work towards expanding security by addressing regional challenges to peace, prosperity, and social inclusion. The retention of crewmembers from these invaluable missions means the lessons learned from joint operations will carry over to the new FRCs, ensuring goodwill developed by past Coast Guard assets will remain applicable.

"These initiatives cultivate relationships and they solve practical problems," said Schultz. "In this way the Coast Guard's distinct contributions to maritime government are built on people-to-people relationships."

Named after Coast Guard enlisted heroes, FRCs are equipped with advanced command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance systems and boast a greater range and endurance. At 154-feet long, they reach speeds of over 28 knots covering a distance of 2,500 nautical miles over a five-day patrol. They are armed with a stabilized 25-mm machine gun mount and four crew-served .50-caliber machine guns.

These advanced capabilities greatly improve the Coast Guard's ability to conduct missions ranging from search and rescue to national defense while also contributing to joint operations between the United States and its regional partners as they work towards common goals such as the prevention of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

"The people of Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana

Islands and Micronesia can rest assured that these multi-mission platforms stand ready to support our partners throughout the region," said Simmons.

Each FRC has a standard 24-person crew. This brings over 70 new Coast Guard members to Guam, along with their family members. Prior to the FRCs' arrival, the Coast Guard presence on Guam was composed of approximately 250 active-duty personnel and 40 reservists.