

U.S. Coast Guard Cutter James returns from Eastern Pacific patrol after interdicting 12,909 kilograms of cocaine, 7,107 pounds of marijuana



[Release from U.S. Coast Guard 7th District](#)

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Charleston, S.C. – The crew of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter James (WMSL 754) returned home to Charleston, Saturday, following a 113-day patrol in the Eastern Pacific Ocean.

Patrolling in support of Joint Interagency Task Force-South, James worked alongside other Coast Guard cutters, Department of Defense and Department of Homeland Security units, and international partners to conduct counter-drug operations.

During the patrol, James' crew disrupted illegal narcotics smuggling, interdicting 12,909 kilograms of cocaine and 7,107 pounds of marijuana valued at over \$380 million. While in theater, James interdicted eight drug-smuggling vessels and apprehended 23 suspected traffickers, including one low-profile vessel laden with contraband. The efforts by the crew of the James directly contributed to U.S. Coast Guard objectives to combat transnational criminal organizations and enhance regional stability and security.

James' crew conducted multiple joint operations with foreign partner nations such as Ecuador and Mexico. James conducted a passing exercise with the Mexican navy's ARM Chiapas. During

the exercise, James practiced close quarters tactical maneuvering and landed the Chiapas' Panther helicopter on deck. This exercise with the Mexican navy was particularly important to promote interoperability and enhance ongoing and focused partnership efforts.

While in the Eastern Pacific Ocean, James interdicted an Ecuadorian go-fast vessel laden with illicit narcotics. James executed a complex at-sea rendezvous with Isla Darwin (ECU) and transferred three suspected narcotics traffickers and 73 bales (1,742 kilograms) of cocaine. The evolution enhanced cooperation with Ecuadorian partners and supported the home-country prosecution of international crimes.

James is a 418-foot National Security Cutter. The cutter's primary missions are counter-drug operations, and defense readiness in support of U.S. Coast Guard operations. The National Security Cutters fall under the command of the U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area. Based in Portsmouth, Virginia, U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area oversees all Coast Guard operations east of the Rocky Mountains to the Arabian Gulf. In addition to surge operations, Atlantic Area also allocates ships to deploy to the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific to combat transnational organized crime and illicit maritime activity.

For information on how to join the U.S. Coast Guard, visit [GoCoastGuard.com](https://www.goCoastGuard.com) to learn about active duty, reserve, officer, and enlisted opportunities. Information on how to apply to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy can be found [here](#).