

# U.S. Coast Guard, Russian Border Guard Patrolled Maritime Boundary Line



Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star crew and a Russian aircraft crew patrolled the Bering Sea maritime boundary line between Russia and the United States in mid-January. The 45-year-old heavy icebreaker is underway for a months-long patrol to support national security objectives throughout Alaskan waters and into the Arctic, including along the Maritime Boundary Line between the United States and Russia. U.S. Coast Guard / Petty Officer 1st Class Cynthia Oldham

JUNEAU, Alaska – The Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star crew and a Russian aircraft crew patrolled the Bering Sea maritime boundary line between Russia and the United States in mid-January, the Coast Guard 17th District said in a Jan. 27 release.

Following routine coordinated communications between the Russian Border Guard Directorate for the Eastern Arctic District and the Coast Guard Seventeenth District in Juneau, Alaska, the cutter Polar Star crew and a Russian Border Guard AN-26 aircraft crew patrolled a portion of the 1,700-mile maritime boundary line to support mutual agreements. The agreements consist of combined operations including search and rescue missions, contingency operations, routine communications exercises, and operations to counter illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing.

The purpose of combined operations and communications exercises are to enforce rules and regulations and protect the sovereign rights and economies of both countries. The routine coordination maintains a strong working relationship and improves joint response capabilities for pollution, law enforcement, and search and rescue cases along our shared

maritime border.

A working relationship at the operational level between the Coast Guard and Russian Border Guard remains critical to ensuring stability in the region. The partnership protects shared interests in fish stocks, safety of life at sea, coordinates environmental responses, and counters illicit activity on the high seas.

In July 2020, Coast Guard Cutter Munro conducted a similar communications exercise with the Russian Border Guard Vessel Kamchatka in the Bering Strait.

The Russian Border Guard's effective enforcement of the maritime boundary line, and direct communication with their fishing industry, significantly reduces foreign fishing vessel incursions of the U.S. exclusive economic zone.

Since 2018, the Coast Guard has detected only one Russian fishing vessel incursion along the maritime boundary line. The Russian Border Guard immediately conducted an investigation of the incident and issued fines for that incursion.

"The United States Coast Guard works diligently to maintain a unique cooperative relationship with the Russian Border Guard in an effort to enhance the protection of shared interests in and around the Arctic region. The coordinated communications exercises on the high seas these past weeks with Polar Star demonstrate a recognition of the importance of that relationship," said Capt. Jason Brennell, chief of enforcement for the Coast Guard's 17th District.