

U.S., Philippine Coast Guards Conduct Joint Search-and-Rescue Exercise



The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Bertholf (left) moves in formation with Philippine coast guard vessels Batangas (center) and Kalanggaman during an exercise on May 14. U.S. Coast Guard/Chief Petty Officer John Masson

MANILA,

Philippines – The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Bertholf (WMSL 750) and vessels from

the Philippine coast guard conducted joint search-and-rescue exercises May 14 in

the South China Sea west of Manila, the Coast Guard Pacific Area said in a

release.

The Bertholf,

a 418-foot national security cutter based in Alameda, California, worked

together with the Philippine coast guard vessels Batangas and Kalanggaman on

small-boat search-and-rescue tactics to conduct the mock rescue of a person in

the water. The Bertholf is in the midst of a Western Pacific deployment under

the tactical control of the U.S. Navy's 7th Fleet.

In training

with and learning alongside partners in the Philippines on search and rescue,

maritime law enforcement and small-boat tactics, Bertholf's crew enjoys the

benefits of the strong, often personal ties between the

countries, the release
said.



Capt. John J. Driscoll (left), Bertholf's commanding officer, enjoys breakfast aboard the Philippine coast guard vessel Batangas along with Batangas' commanding officer (right foreground) and other officers prior to the search-and rescue exercise on May 14. U.S. Coast Guard/Chief Petty Officer John Masson

The work also strengthens one of the most enduring partnerships in the Indo-Pacific region, between the United States and the Republic of the Philippines and supports both countries' commitment to a free and open Pacific, governed by international maritime law that promotes peace, security and prosperity of all nations.

"Bertholf completed an at-sea search-and-rescue exercise today with our counterparts from the Philippine coast guard. This engagement proved an excellent opportunity to compare techniques, maintain proficiency and build a friendly relationship amongst professional mariners and coast guards," said Capt. John J. Driscoll, Bertholf's commanding officer.

"This engagement proved an excellent opportunity to compare techniques, maintain proficiency and build a friendly relationship amongst professional mariners and coast guards."

Capt. John J. Driscoll, Bertholf's commanding officer

The crew of

Bertholf also will participate in other joint events with members of the Philippine coast guard during the ship's Manila port call. The events include a series of engagements on operational subjects such as damage control and search and rescue as well as sporting and social events. The activities are designed to improve interoperability and strengthen the ties between the two countries.

"The U.S.

Coast Guard is proud to operate with our Pacific counterparts, and together we

are dedicated to enhancing our capabilities and strengthening maritime

governance and security while promoting individual sovereignty," said Vice Adm.

Linda Fagan, commander of the U.S. Coast Guard's Pacific Area.

"Today's exercise

is a great opportunity to share our experiences and learn from our partners in

the Philippine coast guard."