

Vice President Participates in \$569 Million Drug Offload in San Diego



Vice President Mike Pence speaks to reporters from aboard the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Munro in San Diego on July 11 during Munro's bulk offload of more than 39,000 pounds of cocaine and 933 pounds of marijuana. U.S. Coast Guard/Petty Officer 1st Class Matthew S. Masaschi

SAN DIEGO

– Vice President Mike Pence attended a U.S. Coast Guard drug offload July 11 in

San Diego, the Coast Guard Pacific Area said in a release.

The crew of

the Coast Guard Cutter Munro offloaded more than 39,000 pounds of cocaine and

933 pounds of marijuana worth a combined \$569 million, which was seized in

international waters in the eastern Pacific Ocean.

The drugs

represent 14 separate suspected drug smuggling vessel interdictions and

disruptions off the coasts of Mexico and Central and South America by three

Coast Guard cutters between May and July. This was the Munro's first deployment

to the region.

Pence,

James W. Carroll, director of the Office of National Drug

Control Policy, DEA
acting administrator Uttam Dhillon, and Vice Adm. Linda Fagan,
commander of
Coast Guard Pacific Area, spent time aboard Munro and talked
to the crew and
media.

“Let me
commend you especially for your new deployment to the Eastern
Pacific
corridor,” Pence said. “Even though this is a new area of
deployment for this
cutter, you’ve already proven yourselves more than up to the
task ... 14
operations went into this offload, and one of them was of a
self-propelled,
semi-submersible vessel (SPPS), which resulted in the largest
Coast Guard
removal in four years. The Coast Guard is seizing illegal
drugs at a faster
rate than ever before. And you all have been at the tip of the
spear, making
that happen.”



Vice President Mike Pence speaks to Cutter Munro crew members,
flanked by the cache of cocaine and marijuana seized by the
cutter’s crew between May and July. U.S. Coast Guard/Petty
Officer 1st Class Matthew S. Masaschi
Munro
interdicted the SPPS on June 18, in international waters west
of South America.
It was carrying more than 17,000 pounds of cocaine. In fiscal
year 2019 to date,
the U.S. Coast Guard has interdicted more than 143 metric tons
of cocaine,
worth more than \$4.2 billion.

These drugs are smuggled by international cartels, said Fagan, whose actions “which left unchecked, fuels violence and instability that corrodes our hemisphere’s social and economic fabric, and directly contributes to historically high drug-related deaths in neighborhoods across North America.”

While the Munro, a national security cutter, was commissioned in 2017, 70% of the Coast Guard’s offshore presence is the service’s aging fleet of medium-endurance cutters, many of which are more than 50 years old.

“Our Coast Guard deserves better,” Pence said. “And that’s why we are committed to fully funding our Coast Guard, including replacing old ships with new ones, just like the Cutter Munro.”