

USCGC VIGILANT

JIATF SOUTH PATROL FALL 2015

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VIGILANT departed Cape Canaveral on August 9th for an exciting Joint Inter Agency Task Force - South (JIATF-S) patrol. VIGILANT conducted drug interdictions, search and rescue and migrant interdiction.

Small boat operations, damage control training and law enforcement compromised much of our daily schedule. In addition, the crew enjoyed port calls in Roatan, Honduras and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

FROM THE CAPTAIN'S CHAIR



Greetings VIGILANT family and friends! It is a pleasure Commanding VIGILANT and her crew. We are glad to return home after a successful patrol in the Western Caribbean.

In the midst of a busy transfer season we had many shipmates step into new leadership roles as we said farewell to many of our senior qualified members. I am proud of the efforts that VIGILANT's crew put forth every day to train and conduct law enforcement operations. Please know the most recent time away from families and friends was extraordinarily well spent. VIGILANT and her crew saved 28 lives during Alien Migration Interdiction Operations (AMIO), seized 5,600 pounds of marijuana and apprehended seven drug smugglers.

MIGRANT INTERDICTION

Within days of getting underway for patrol, VIGILANT received immediate tasking. Alien Migrant Interdiction Operations (AMIO) could wait no longer. Although JIATF-S patrols mainly consist of drug interdiction, encountering migrants in the Northern Caribbean is always a possibility. VIGILANT saved 28 Cuban migrants stranded at sea in vessels that were barely seaworthy.

Spotting 28 migrants from the get go was an exciting way to start our journey. Shortly after, VIGILANT was tasked to receive an additional 58 migrants! Working together with CGC KATHLEEN MOORE and CGC RAYMOND EVANS, VIGILANT ensured AMIO were never compromised. Once again, proving VIGILANT and her crew are always ready.



BUSTED!

Coast Guard missions are never easy nor are they predictable. Taking action following the report of an overturned vessel, VIGILANT commenced a search in hope to find survivors. As we approached the last known position (LKP) of the vessel, everyone on the bridge noticed something odd in the water...a debris field with scattered objects surrounded the area. No vessel was seen upon reaching the LKP. However, VIGILANT quickly commenced a Search and Rescue pattern and was able to find three survivors holding on to the last bit of their overturned vessel. If it wasn't for our top notch crew and vigilance, the lives of three human beings would have quickly been claimed by the sea that very same day. After safely embarking the survivors, we quickly shifted our attention to the debris field surrounding the overturned vessel. As we navigated our way through the center of the debris field, we spotted multiple objects in the water. Ultimately recovering 68 bales of marijuana totaling 3,662 lbs with a street value of \$2 million. Needless to say, the three survivors quickly became detainees.



DRUG INTERDICTION

Drug smugglers make every attempt to avoid getting caught. Despite the dark blue paint jobs, a blue tarps over the boat, or low riding vessels, VIGILANT detected a target on interest. While creative with their evasive techniques that may have fooled many untrained and lazy eyes, VIGILANT's sharp lookout, did not fail to report the suspect vessel. After launching the small boat to track down the vessel, VIGILANT detained four smugglers with 1,970 lbs of Marijuana on-board. Working closely with other Coast Guard Assets, VIGILANT transported nearly 8,000 lbs of Marijuana and 1,700 kgs of Cocaine with a total street value of \$60 million to Southern District of Florida.



TOWING A FELLOW

VIGILANT may very well be the towing champion of the fleet. BMC Wardynski, BM1 Goolsby and the entire deck force make towing evolution go safe, smooth and effective. After six days and over 500 nautical miles, VIGILANT successfully towed a 30 ft sailing vessel from the middle of the Caribbean Sea to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Participating in a joint drug interdiction case with CGC ROBERT YERED (based out of Miami, FL), VIGILANT was tasked to transfer two drugs smugglers, cocaine and a sailing vessel to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba for further Disposition. Once again, VIGILANT stepped up to the challenge.



GUNNEX & PYROTECHNICS TRAINING

One most exciting and fun exercises we conduct onboard are the Gunnery and Pyrotechnics Training. During Gunnery Exercises, everyone involved simulates General Quarters conditions, which trains the crew on how to respond in the event of an imminent attack. Within minutes of announcing the drill, everyone onboard knows exactly where to be, what to do, and the appropriate gear to wear.

Pyrotechnic Training is mandatory for all new personnel and members involved in small boat evolutions. After a quick presentation on the specifications and proper deployment procedures for the pyrotechnics, all members involved get to have a hands on experience with parachute flares, smoke floats and pencil flares.



HELICOPTER OPERATIONS

During our transit to the op area, VIGILANT conducted flight operations with Air Station Miami. This training allowed VIGILANT to qualify three Landing Signals Officers, four tie-down members and flight deck recertification for two pilots. Drills conducted maximized VIGILANT's operational readiness while ensuring the crew remained proficient and effective for flight operations.

Training proved to be effective the morning of August 26th. A member of our crew had to be Medically Evacuated (MEDEVAC). Using acquired knowledge from training evolutions, the flight deck team was able to safely conduct a personnel transfer to a helicopter from the USNS COMFORT.



ROATAN, HONDURAS.

Being the largest of Honduras's Bay Islands, Roatan had much to offer and proved to be a great port call for VIGILANT. Located on the second largest barrier reef in the world, Scuba Diving and Snorkeling were some of the best activities we got to experience. Some members went even further, taking fishing trips with locals and making new friends. Others took water taxi rides for a low fare of \$3.00 to West End Bay beach. On this side of town, the crew enjoyed beach volleyball, refreshing beverages, delicious Honduran Seafood and live reggae music. Most people in Rotan spoke Spanish and English, some even spoke French! Communication was easy making everyone's stay relaxing and fun.



“ You know the diving is good when every other store in town is a Diving Shop” — Mrs. Lara Delgado, Roatan Diver.

QUALIFICATIONS

Underway & Inport OOD

BMC Brown

BMC Wardynski

Helm and Lookout

SN Baptiste

SN Demers

SN Rivera

SN Vega

Deck Seamanship

SN Conway

SN White

SN Midgett

Gangway Petty Officer of the Watch

SN Rivera

Advancements:

Congrats to BM2 Dennee, MK2 Kohn, FS2 Gilkerson, MK2 Hays, EM2 Roux, SN Midgett, and SN Conway on their advancements!

Underway EOW

ENG2 Collins

MK1 Neely

Throttle

ENS Daniels

MK1 Neely

Auxiliary Watch

ENS Daniels

MK1 Neely

MK2 Henderson

EM2 Roux

FN Santana

DC2 Palm

CIC Watch

OS2 Helms

ET2 Floyd

ET3 Harris

ME1 Moss

ME3 Flores

Boarding Officer

ME1 Moss

Boarding Team Member

ME3 Flores

Quarter Master of the Watch

BM2 Kingdon

BM2 Poklemba

ET1 Torgesen

GM1 Delgado

ENS Baca

Davit Operator

SK1 Dombrowski

Lee Helm

SK1 Dombrowski

YN1 Clipse

Bravo Zulu to LT. Hutchinson on receiving her Permanent Cutterman's pin, representing five years of sea time.



UNDERWAY LIFE

