



16214
December 10, 2021

Mr. William Ailā Jr., Chair
Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve
Daniel K. Inouye Pacific Regional Center
1845 Wasp Blvd., Bldg. 176
Honolulu, HI 96818

Dear Mr. Ailā:

I am pleased to report to the Council the following summary of U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) response activities in the Western and Central Pacific region for the period of October through December 2021.

Operation Aiga

USCG Cutter OLIVER BERRY and USCG Cutter JUNIPER completed Operation Aiga 2021 on October 1st, where the crews conducted operations to counter illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing and strengthened relations with foreign allies while promoting resource security of partner nations. Operation "Aiga," the Samoan word for family, is designed to integrate Coast Guard capabilities and operations with Pacific Island Country partners in order to effectively and efficiently protect shared national interests, combat IUU fishing, and strengthen maritime governance on the high seas. During the patrol, the JUNIPER crew serviced vital aids to navigation in Pago Pago Harbor and in neighboring islands. Additionally, the JUNIPER embarked a Mandarin linguist from the U.S. Marine Corps to query 11 foreign fishing vessels and board four fishing vessels, and conducted joint operations with a French Navy Falcon-200 aircraft to identify and intercept vessels on the high seas, generating vital information reports for IUU in the region. The OLIVER BERRY patrolled the exclusive economic zones (EEZs) of American Samoa and Samoa and strengthened maritime domain awareness and resource security on the high seas and within the EEZs of Cook Islands and French Polynesia.



*The crew of
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JUNIPER
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Operation Kurukuru

USCG District Fourteen supported the Pacific Island Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) Operation Kurukuru 2021 with air and surface assets including an Air Station Barbers Point HC-130 Hercules, USCG Cutter WILLIAM HART, and USCG Cutter MYRTLE HAZARD from October 25th to November 5th, by providing surveillance efforts including 13 surface observation reports and 07 air missions resulting in 52 sightings.



Crews aboard an Air Station Barbers Point HC-130 Hercules and USCGC WILLIAM HART participate in the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency's (FFA) Operation Kurukuru in the Pacific, Nov. 3, 2021.

Operation Blue Pacific

The crew of the USCG Cutter WILLIAM HART completed its 39 day patrol over 7,000 nautical miles in Oceania in support of the Operation Blue Pacific. Operation Blue Pacific is an overarching multi-mission Coast Guard endeavor promoting security, safety, sovereignty, and economic prosperity in Oceania while strengthening relationships between our partners in the region. During the patrol, WILLIAM HART worked with our partners including New Zealand's National Maritime Coordination Centre (NMCC), the nation of Samoa, the National Park Service, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) on a number of joint endeavors. Additionally, USCGC WILLIAM HART completed patrols of the EEZs of Samoa, Tonga, Kiribati, and Fiji.



USCGC WILLIAM HART completes Operation Blue Pacific patrol in Oceania.

Upon request from NOAA, the crew visited Fagatele Bay in the National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa, using the cutter's small boat to ensure there was no fishing or activity which would damage the coral within the United States' largest national marine sanctuary. The crew also supported a National Park Service boat during a transit between Tutuila Island and the Manu'a Islands, providing search and rescue coverage.

WILLIAM HART supported New Zealand's NMCC by locating an adrift Deep-ocean Assessment and Reporting of Tsunamis (DART) buoy and reporting the buoy condition to Headquarters Joint Forces New Zealand and other stakeholders. DART buoys are real-time monitoring systems strategically deployed throughout the Pacific to provide important tsunami forecasting data to researchers.



A USCGC WILLIAM HART crew member inspects a Deep-ocean Assessment and Reporting of Tsunamis (DART) buoy in the Pacific, Nov. 16, 2021.

USCG Cutter MYRTLE HAZARD also patrolled the high seas and conducted the two foreign vessel boardings under the WCPFC Conservation and Management Measure (CMM) 2006-08 Boarding and Inspection Procedures.

Marine Protected Resources Response

In October, USCG District Fourteen provided conservation assistance to NOAA by transporting an injured Hawaiian monk seal from Oahu to Kona on an Air Station Barbers Point HC-130 Hercules so the seal could receive rehabilitative care at the Marine Mammal Center. Later in the month, Air Station Barbers Point conducted an overflight of the north shore of Kauai to provide an assessment of the area after humpback whales were sighted in Hanalei Bay.

In December, USCG conducted an overflight of the south shore of Oahu after three Fraser's dolphin carcasses were found.

Other

Additionally, District 14 Enforcement personnel participated in Hawaii Large Whale Entanglement Response preparation efforts including training for USCG Station Maui personnel, the

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Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument Law Enforcement Coordination Team meeting, the Marine Animal Response Network quarterly meeting, the National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa Advisory Council meeting, the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council meeting, the Meeting of the Permanent Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commissioners to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), the 18th Regular Session of the WCPFC, and the 189th Western Pacific Fishery Management Council meeting.

Sincerely,

C. Maile Norman

C.M. Norman
U.S. Coast Guard
Fourteenth Coast Guard District