



Lt. Drew P. Cavanagh, commanding officer of Coast Guard Cutter Raymond Evans, thanks guests for being present for the commissioning ceremony at Coast Guard Sector Key West, Florida, Sept. 6, 2014. Coast Guard Cutter Raymond Evans joins three Fast Response Cutters already performing operations out of Sector Key West. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Mark Barney.

Acquisition Update: Coast Guard Commissions 10th Fast Response Cutter Into Service

Sept. 8, 2014

The Coast Guard commissioned the newly built cutter Raymond Evans, the 10th Sentinel-class Fast Response Cutter and the fourth of six FRCs to be homeported in Key West, Florida, in a ceremony Sept. 6, 2014. The ceremony was presided over by Adm. Paul Zukunft, the 25th Commandant of the Coast Guard, and attended by Gen. John F. Kelly, Commander of U.S. Southern Command, and active duty and retired members of the U.S. Marine Corps.

Zukunft emphasized the increasingly complicated nature of the missions facing the Coast Guard, and he outlined the Coast Guard's focus on disrupting criminal networks, securing U.S. borders and safeguarding commerce throughout the western hemisphere.

"These new challenges driven by complex and uncertain times require new ways of thinking, new strategies and the right platforms for 21st century mission execution," Zukunft said. "The cutter Raymond Evans sitting behind me – the newest member of our Fast Response Cutter fleet – is a key component to this vital effort.

"At this very moment, our existing FRC fleet is underway meeting the tough demands I've just described – and they're already making a difference," Zukunft added.

Before the ceremony, Cmdr. John Reed, the deputy commander of Sector Key West, underscored the FRCs' value and illustrated the ways in which they are already proving their worth.

“The Fast Response Cutters have had an incredible impact in terms of both the success of our day-to-day operations as well as the efficiency with which we conduct those operations,” Reed said. “Since July, the FRCs have been involved in 42 of our 50 migrant interdiction cases. Whether detecting and interdicting migrant vessels attempting illegal entry into the United States, processing and caring for the migrants once aboard, or conducting repatriations, the FRCs have enhanced our ability to secure the maritime environment in the Florida Straits.”

Reed also noted the improved seakeeping qualities of the FRC. Better seakeeping “contributes to safety of the crew and passengers as well as the ability to more rapidly respond in weather conditions that would have previously rendered our cutters and crews less capable,” he said.

The 10th FRC is named after Cmdr. Raymond Evans, who was awarded the Navy Cross for his bravery during World War II. Evans, then a signalman 1st class, participated in the Guadalcanal campaign. On Sept. 27, 1942, during the Second Battle of the Matanikau, he and Signalman 1st Class Douglas Munro volunteered to evacuate U.S. Marines from the shore and braved enemy fire themselves to ensure the Marines' safety. Munro died from wounds suffered during the attack and was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor. Evans retired in 1962 after 23 years of Coast Guard service. He passed away May 30, 2013.

Sgt. Roy Pugh, a World War II Marine Corps veteran who survived the attack due in part to selfless efforts by Munro and Evans, was also on hand to participate in the ceremony and presented a long glass to the crew prior to the setting of the cutter's first watch.

The Coast Guard plans to acquire 58 FRCs to replace its 1980s-era 110-foot Island-class patrol boat fleet. The service has ordered 30 FRCs so far. Apart from the 10 cutters that have already been commissioned, 11 are currently under production.