



Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Paul Zukunft speaks during a press conference before the Coast Guard Cutter Stratton crew offloads more than 66,100 pounds of cocaine in San Diego Aug. 10, 2015. The drugs were seized in 37 separate interdictions by Coast Guard cutters and Coast Guard law enforcement teams operating in known drug transit zones, resulting in one of the largest cocaine offloads in U.S. history. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Joel Guzman.

Acquisition Update: National Security Cutter Offloads \$1 Billion In Seized Narcotics

Aug. 13, 2015

Coast Guard Cutter Stratton, one of the Coast Guard's new national security cutters, offloaded more than 66,100 pounds of cocaine with a street value of more than \$1.01 billion – one of the largest cocaine offloads in U.S. history – at Naval Base San Diego Aug. 10.

The haul unloaded by Stratton's crewmembers comprised drugs seized during 37 interdictions in the Eastern Pacific Ocean by Coast Guard cutters and Coast Guard law enforcement personnel temporarily stationed on board U.S. Navy vessels.

Of the total amount interdicted, Stratton's crewmembers seized or disrupted more than 33,000 pounds of the cocaine, worth more than \$540 million wholesale, since May 2015. The number includes 12,000 pounds of cocaine valued at \$181 million that the cutter's crewmembers seized from a semi-submersible vessel July 18 – the largest recorded semi-submersible interdiction in Coast Guard history. Stratton interdicted another semi-submersible carrying 5,460 pounds of cocaine June 16.

The June 16 and July 18 interdictions also mark the first two semi-submersible interdictions by an NSC.

“Last week, the U.S. Coast Guard celebrated its 225th anniversary. I said then that the U.S. Coast Guard can look forward to a future 225 years even brighter than the last 225,” Department of Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson said in a statement Aug. 10. “The Stratton is one of the U.S. Coast Guard’s fleet of new national security cutters. ... As such, the Stratton is part of the current recapitalization of the U.S. Coast Guard fleet and reflects that bright future.”

Commissioned in 2012, Stratton was the third NSC to enter service and is stationed in Alameda, California, alongside the first two NSCs, Bertholf and Waesche. The fourth and fifth NSCs – Hamilton and James – are stationed in Charleston, South Carolina. The sixth NSC, Munro, is scheduled for christening in November 2015 and delivery in 2016. In March, the Coast Guard ordered the eighth and final planned NSC, which is scheduled for delivery in 2019.