

65 Bricks of Cocaine Recovered After Boat Chase Between St. Thomas and Culebra; Two Men Face Federal Charges

Federal agents intercepted a vessel traveling between St. Thomas and Culebra, recovering 65 bricks of cocaine tossed overboard during pursuit; one suspect remains jailed while the other was released to home detention with electronic monitoring.

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Federal law enforcement authorities have charged two men with cocaine trafficking after an at-sea interception of their vessel.

According to court documents, last Monday Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations agents spotted a vessel on radar traveling from St. Thomas and headed towards

Culebra, Puerto Rico. A CBP vessel was launched to investigate further.

Just before 4 a.m., CBP officials made a visual observation of the suspicious vessel, which was speeding towards Culebra with no onboard lighting. As the CBP vessel drew up behind the target boat, agents could reportedly see the two persons aboard tossing duffle bags over the side.

It took the firing of two warning rounds before the suspicious vessel came to a stop. Captain Carlos Cruz Resto and passenger Jean Carlos Torres Cruz were both taken into custody while agents searched for the bags that had been thrown overboard. Two were recovered and were found to contain 65 bricks of a white powder that returned positive results when tested for cocaine.

Resto and Cruz were both charged with possession with intent to distribute 5 kg or more of cocaine. They made their first appearance before U.S. Magistrate Alan Teague on July 22. Resto agreed to be detained in custody pending trial, while Cruz was released to home detention under an unsecured bond of \$50,000. He will be subject to electronic location monitoring.

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