

## Jury Convicts Two Men in Maritime Drug Case After Coast Guard Seizes Nearly Two Tons of Marijuana

Federal prosecutors said a jury found two Jamaican nationals guilty after a go-fast vessel carrying more than 3,700 pounds of marijuana was intercepted off Haiti, marking a major conviction in a high-seas trafficking case.

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Two Jamaican nationals have been convicted in federal court in the U.S. Virgin Islands on maritime drug trafficking charges following a jury trial that centered on the interdiction of a go-fast vessel carrying thousands of pounds of marijuana on the high seas.

United States Attorney's Office for the District of the Virgin Islands announced that on January 16, a federal jury returned guilty verdicts against Miguel Orr and Romaine Betty after a multi-day

trial involving what prosecutors described as large-scale maritime drug trafficking.

According to the announcement, Orr was found guilty on Counts One and Two of the Indictment, which charged him with conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute a controlled substance while on board a vessel subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, and possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance while on board such a vessel. The jury also found Betty guilty on Count Two of the Indictment, charging him with possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance while on board a vessel subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.

The evidence presented at trial established that on or about April 30, 2024, the defendants were aboard a go-fast vessel intercepted by the United States Coast Guard on the high seas, approximately 14 nautical miles off the coast of Tiburon, Haiti.

During the interdiction, Coast Guard personnel recovered approximately 3,736 pounds of a substance packaged in bales. Laboratory testing of samples taken from the recovered bales returned positive results for marijuana, according to prosecutors.

The case was investigated jointly by the United States Coast Guard, Homeland Security Investigations, and the Drug Enforcement Administration.

The prosecution was handled by Cherrisse R. Amaro and Denise N. George, Assistant United States Attorneys with the District of the Virgin Islands.

Sentencing for both defendants is scheduled for May 22, 2026, before Robert A. Molloy, Chief Judge of the District Court of the Virgin Islands.