

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Air & Marine Operations, Coast Guard Stop Vessel With 1084 Pounds Of Cocaine And 19 Pounds Of Heroin In Route To Southern Puerto Rico

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U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) [Air and Marine Operations \(AMO\)](#) and the U.S. Coast Guard collaborated to intercept on Saturday a go-fast vessel seizing 1,084 pounds (491.5kilos) of cocaine and 19 pounds (9 kilos) of heroin. The estimated value of the seized cocaine is \$ 12.8 million and \$540,000 for the heroin.

“AMO crews spend many hours patrolling the Caribbean region to discover smuggling ventures into US territory,” said Johnny Morales, director of Air Operations. “We remain committed to work with other law enforcement partners to detect and deter these

intrusions.”

On Apr. 14, AMO [DHC- 8 Marine Patrol Aircraft](#) crew observed a suspect vessel described as 25 feet in length, center console, twin engines with two occupants about 110 nautical miles south of Puerto Rico. The crew observed the suspect vessel receive fuel from another vessel in the vicinity.

Near 9:00 a.m., the vessel made contact with a different vessel and transferred several packages that appeared to be contraband. The AMO crew started tracking the vessel that received the packages as it continued to make a course towards the south part of Puerto Rico, contacting the USCG and the Puerto Rico Police Joint Forces of Rapid Action (FURA) for interception.

The AMO aircraft maintained contact with the 30-foot suspect vessel coordinating with USCG cutter Richard Dixon that intercepted the vessel approximately 80 nautical miles south of Puerto Rico.

USCG recovered 22 bales of contraband and took custody of 2 men, a U.S. Citizen from Puerto Rico and a Dominican Republic national, who are now in the custody of federal law enforcement authorities in Puerto Rico, where they are facing potential prosecution.

The crew of the Richard Dixon later rendezvoused with and transferred the contraband and detainees to the Coast Guard Cutter Heriberto Hernandez for transport to Coast Guard Sector San Juan where Drug Enforcement Administration Financial Investigative Team Special Agents in charge of the investigation took custody of the case.