

The Virgin Islands Consortium

CBP Seized 72,111 Pounds of Narcotics in Fiscal Year 2020 Worth \$48.8 Million

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U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) today released a summary of fiscal year (FY) 2020 border enforcement efforts in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. According to the summary, CBP has confiscated 72,111 pounds of narcotics with a value of \$48.8 million.

"This Caribbean area effort is possible through collaborative operations and partnerships with other Federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, which have become an integral part of CBP's procedures, in order to manage illicit activity throughout the area," CBP said Wednesday.

Since 2017, CBP components in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands have increases in the narcotics and currency seized.

CBP's Air and Marine Operations (AMO) played a major role in the determent of illegal activity throughout the coasts through the coordinated use of integrated air and marine forces to detect, interdict and prevent the unlawful movement of people, illegal drugs and other contraband in the area, said a the summary. AMO agents seized 39,683 pounds of narcotics and \$12 million in currency.

According to the release, throughout Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, Ramey Border Patrol agents arrested 380 individuals; 356 were illegal immigrants and 24 were U.S. citizens. Out of all the illegal immigrants apprehended, 141 (40 percent) had prior criminal history; 72 were prosecuted. Ramey Border Patrol agents seized 10,490 pounds of narcotics.

Ramey Border Patrol agents, along with AMO and the U.S. Coast Guard, interdicted 1,367 migrants were interdicted and repatriated to the point of embarkation, CBP said.

During this time, Office of Field Operations' CBP Officers seized 21,938 pounds of narcotics and arrested 60 individuals, of which 21 were wanted for crimes, including murder, rape, assault, and robbery. CBP officers also denied entry to more than 5094 people who were inadmissible to the U.S. through air or sea ports of entry in Puerto Rico or the USVI. Furthermore, \$36. 8 million of undeclared currency was seized.