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Vessel Returning to Puerto Rico From St. Thomas With 475 Pounds of Cocaine Intercepted by Federal Agents, CBP Says

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AMO found Sunday 475 pounds of cocaine concealed inside a vessel being removed from the water in Las Croabas. By. U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Air and Marine Operations (AMO) found Sunday 475 pounds (215.5 kilos) of cocaine concealed inside a vessel being removed from the water in Las Croabas, Customs and Border Protection announced Tuesday. The estimated value is \$4.3 million.

On May 8, Marine Interdiction agents conducted a land patrol at the Las Croabas Public Boat Ramp in Fajardo, Puerto Rico. According to the release, agents inspected the occupants of a vessel

being removed from the water using a truck and trailer. During the inspection, one of the occupants admitted to entering the United States illegally from the Dominican Republic and the vessel operator admitted to returning from St. Thomas, USVI, and not reporting entry to CBP.

AMO agents requested assistance from a Puerto Rico Police Department K-9 who alerted to the presence of a smell it is trained to detect.

Agents inspected the vessel finding a hidden compartment containing 202 bricks of a white powdery substance which tested positive for the properties of cocaine.

Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Special Agents took custody of three men and the contraband for prosecution and investigation.

“Our agents continue to interdict unlawful people and cargo approaching U.S. borders, investigates criminal networks and provides domain awareness in the air and maritime environments,” Augusto Reyes, Director of the Caribbean Air and Marine Branch. “

AMO safeguards the U.S. by anticipating and confronting security threats through aviation and maritime law enforcement expertise, innovative capabilities, and partnerships at the border and beyond, according to the release. With approximately 1,800 federal agents and mission support personnel, 240 aircraft, and 300 marine vessels operating throughout the United States, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Virgin Islands, AMO says it conducts its mission in the air and maritime environments at and beyond the border, and within the nation's interior.