



## **2023 Year in Review**

*Prepared By: LCDR Jed Raskie  
Response and Enforcement Branch  
Coast Guard District 17  
P.O. Box 25517  
Juneau, AK 99802-5517*

<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
I. IUU & High Seas Drift Net Enforcement .....	2
II. US/Russian Maritime Boundary Line (MBL) Enforcement .....	2
III. US/Canadian EEZ Boundary (Dixon Entrance) Enforcement .....	3
IV. Marine Protected Species and Critical Habitat Enforcement .....	3
V. Commercial Fishing Vessel Boarding Statistics .....	3
VI. Charter, Recreational, and Subsistence Vessel Boarding Statistics .....	4
VII. Halibut and Sablefish Enforcement.....	4
VIII. Forward Operating Location Summary.....	4
IX. Crab Fisheries .....	5
X. Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety/Search and Rescue Cases.....	5
XI. Coast Guard Resource Summary .....	6

## Figures

1. Fisheries Boardings by Year .....	4
2. Fisheries Violations by Year .....	4
3. Historical Overview of CFVS Statistics.....	5
4. Annual HC-130 Flight Hours .....	6
5. Annual Major Cutter Days .....	6
6. Annual H60/H65 Hours.....	6
7. Annual Patrol Boat Hours .....	6

## List of Abbreviations

AVDET – Aviation Detachment	MBL – US/Russian Maritime Boundary
CFVS – Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety	MEDEVAC – Medical Evacuation
CGC – Coast Guard Cutter	MEDICO – Passing medical advice at sea
DIW – Dead in the Water	NOV – Notice of Violation
EPIRB – Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon	NPSC – North Pacific SAR Coordinator
FBS – Russian Federal Border Service	NVG – Night Vision Goggles
FCH – Charter Fishing Vessel	PCC – Cabin Cruiser
FLL – Long Line Vessel	PD – Police Department
FF/V – Foreign Fishing Vessel	POB – Persons on board
FOL – Forward Operating Location	PRA – Pleasure craft, runabout
FPB – Pot Fishing Vessel	PRC – People’s Republic of China
FTS – Stern Trawl Vessel	RFMO – Regional Fisheries Management Org.
GOA – Gulf of Alaska	SAR – Search and Rescue
HC-130 – USCG Fixed-Wing Aircraft	SARSAT – Search and Rescue Satellite Aided Tracking
HEC/MEC – High/Medium Endurance Cutters	SEZ - Seizure
HFP – Health Force Partners	SMC – SAR Mission Coordinator
HH65/60 – CG helicopter	TERM - Termination
HSDN – High Seas Drift Net	UMIB – Urgent Marine Info Broadcast
IFQ – Individual Fishing Quota	WHEC – 378ft High Endurance Cutter
IUU – Illegal, Unregulated, and Unreported Fishing	WLB – 225ft Buoy Tender
IVO – In the vicinity of	WMSL – 418ft National Security Cutter
MARB – Marine Assistance Request Broadcast	WPB – 110ft Patrol Boat

## **I. IUU Fishing & High Seas Drift Net (HSDN) Enforcement**

Operation North Pacific Guard (NPG) is an annual high seas U.S. fisheries law enforcement operation designed to detect and deter illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing activity in accordance with multilateral and bilateral international agreements to which the United States is party. This includes large-scale high seas pelagic drift-net (HSDN) fishing. Operation NPG advances U.S. goals for the conservation and management of high seas fisheries resources and is our at-sea enforcement contribution to a multilateral effort by North Pacific rim nations to eliminate IUU fishing activity from the North Pacific. This is in support of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC), and North Pacific Anadromous Fisheries Commission (NPAFC) regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs).

Canada's Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) leased M/V ATLANTIC CONDOR for Operation North Pacific Guard (NPG) in 2023 to conduct 19 FF/V boardings on the High Seas under NPFC and WCPFC authorities, finding 20 potential RFMO violations. There were six instances of illegal shark finning on foreign flagged fishing vessels as well as instances of improperly logged transshipment events and pollution violations. A Coast Guard law enforcement team, including an interpreter, deployed onboard M/V ATLANTIC CONDOR as well. There were no detected HSDN fishing activities during this period. A total of three U.S. Coast Guard C-130 deployments to Yokota, Japan yielded ten potential violations, including an additional instance of shark finning aboard a Taiwanese vessel.

U.S. Coast Guard District 17 is currently working with DFO to plan NPG 2024 which will include foreign F/V boardings on the High Seas under NPFC and WCPFC authorities.

## **II. U.S./Russian Maritime Boundary Line (MBL) Enforcement**

Foreign fishing vessel activity along the U.S.-Russian EEZ boundary in the Bering Sea and Chukchi Sea increased from 2022 to 2023, with high activity occurring from May to September. There were no detected incursions of U.S. fishing vessels operating on the Russian side of the MBL.

There were six detections of Russian fishing vessels briefly crossing into the U.S. EEZ, but no clear evidence that they were fishing in U.S. waters. As a result, the U.S. Coast Guard increased surface and air presence along the MBL to deter future incursions, including several C-130 flights and National Security Cutter patrols along the MBL and issuing the vessel warnings over VHF radio. The Russian Border Guard was responsive to our incursion reports and concurred that there was no clear evidence of fishing.

### **III. U.S./Canadian EEZ Boundary (Dixon Entrance) Enforcement**

Canadian fishing activity along the U.S.-Canadian EEZ boundary in the vicinity of Dixon Entrance was low throughout 2023. There were no detected incursions by Canadian fishing vessels into the U.S. EEZ in 2023.

### **IV. Marine Protected Resources and Critical Habitat Enforcement**

The Coast Guard monitors 151 critical habitat areas around Alaska each month as part of routine cutter and aircraft patrol activity. In May, FOL Cordova conducted two marine mammal carcass survey flights, one with NOAA personnel onboard, and Air Station Kodiak conducted one marine mammal carcass survey flight. In June, FOL Cordova conducted two marine mammal carcass survey flights, one with NOAA personnel onboard, and Air Station Kodiak conducted one marine mammal carcass survey flight. Air Station Kodiak also provided flight support to NOAA OLE investigating two potential Stellar Sea Lion no-entry zone violations.

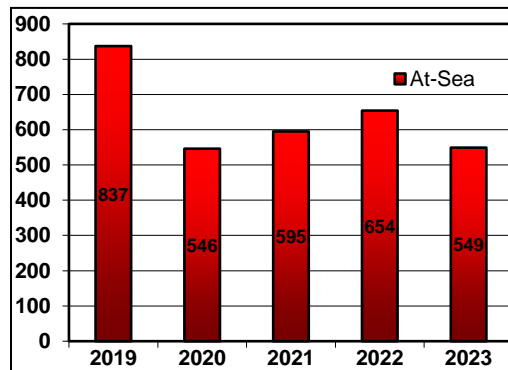
### **V. Commercial Fishing Vessel Boarding Statistics**

District 17 conducted 266 federal fisheries boardings on commercial vessels during 2023, detecting 22 federal fisheries violations on 17 vessels. Additionally, in conjunction with NOAA OLE, Coast Guard Boarding Officers seized some or all the catch on two commercial vessels. Figures 1 and 2 show the historic trends for boardings and violations. The top five fisheries violations were: logbook discrepancies, no IFQ permit or FFP onboard, improper bycatch retention, retention of sport-caught halibut on commercial vessels, and biodegradable panel thread opening on pots being undersized.

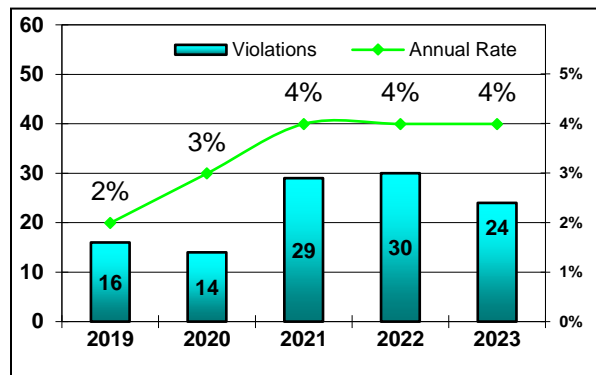
## VI. Charter, Recreational, and Subsistence Vessel Boarding Statistics

District 17 conducted 54 federal fisheries boardings on charter vessels during 2023, detecting two fisheries violations on one charter halibut vessel resulting in seizing the catch. D17 conducted 229 federal fisheries boardings on recreational/subsistence vessels, detecting no federal fisheries violations.

**Figure 1. Fisheries Boardings by Year**



**Figure 2. Fisheries Violations by Year**



## VII. Halibut and Sablefish Enforcement

In 2023, Coast Guard patrols resulted in 388 boardings on commercial, charter, and recreational vessels targeting halibut and/or sablefish. Of these boardings, 97 were IFQ halibut or sablefish vessels, which led to the detection of 12 fisheries violations. The top violations included not having an official logbook onboard or improper logbook recordkeeping, no IFQ permit and/or FFP onboard, illegally retaining and/or mutilating halibut, biodegradable panel thread opening being undersized, and failure to retain and/or log retaining rockfish. District 17 conducted 64 boardings on charter halibut vessels, which led to the detection of three violations. District 17 conducted 227 boardings on recreational vessels targeting halibut and detected no violations. However, one vessel was suspected of being an illegal charter operation and reported to NOAA OLE.

## VIII. Forward Operating Locations (FOL) Summary

In support of Operation Arctic Shield, Air Station Kodiak deployed aircraft to Arctic FOL in Kotzebue from July 1-31. Due to increased recreational boating activity in Prince William Sound, Air Station Kodiak deployed aircraft to FOL Cordova from April 15-October 15. Air Station Kodiak deployed aircraft to Cold Bay for intermittent periods of high Bering Sea fishing vessel activity.

## IX. Crab Fisheries

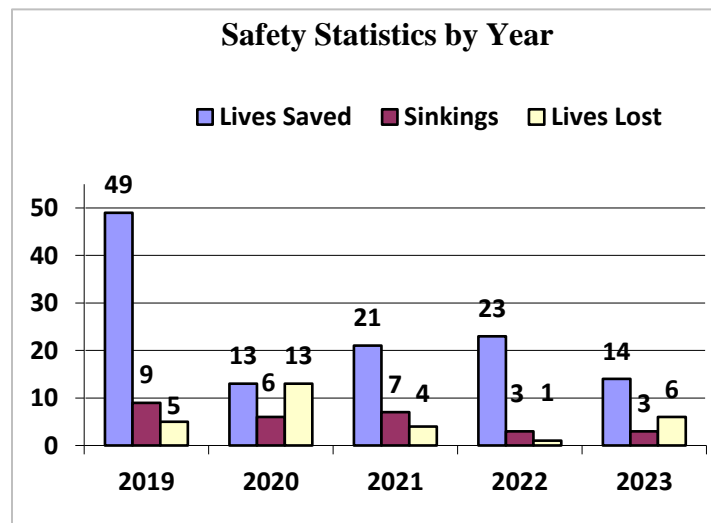
Coast Guard units conducted 11 boardings on fishing vessels targeting crab throughout Alaska including four King Crab vessels in the Bering Sea, four Tanner Crab vessels in Southeast Alaska, two Tanner Crab vessels in the Gulf of Alaska, and one Dungeness Crab vessel in the Gulf of Alaska.

## X. Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety/Search and Rescue Cases

During 2023, District 17 detected 75 safety violations on 47 vessels. District 17 surface assets terminated four commercial fishing voyages for safety. The top five violations were: expired EPIRB hydrostatic release, expired life rafts, inadequate or insufficient immersion suits, expired/insufficient fire extinguishers, and not enough PFDs for all personnel onboard.

District 17 conducted 63 search and rescue (SAR) cases involving commercial and charter fishing vessels in U.S. waters, resulting in 14 lives saved, 136 lives assisted, three vessels lost, and six lives lost during 2023.

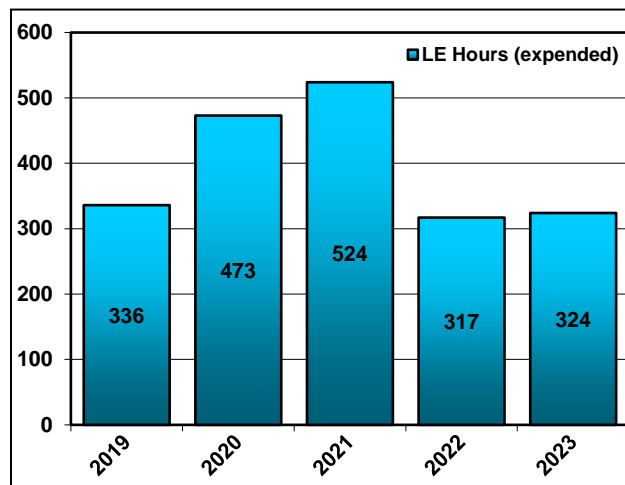
**Figure 3. Historical Overview of CFVS Statistics**



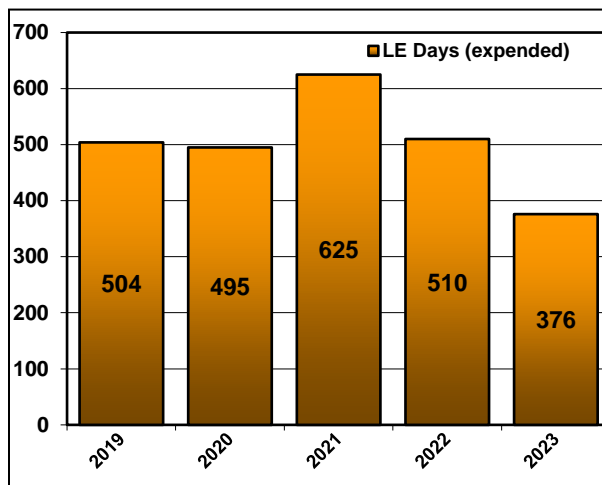
## XI. Coast Guard Resource Summary

Figures 4 - 7 show the annual aircraft law enforcement hours, Major Cutter days, and Patrol Boat hours used in the Seventeenth District.

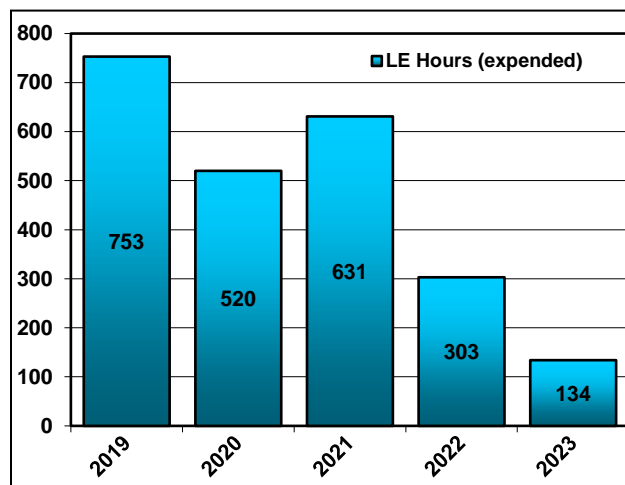
**Figure 4. Annual HC-130 (fixed wing) Hours**



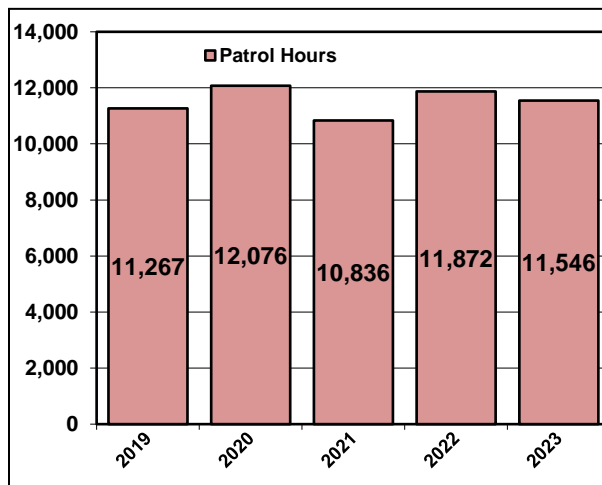
**Figure 5. Annual Major Cutter Days**



**Figure 6. Annual H60/65 (rotary wing) Hours**



**Figure 7. Annual Patrol Boat Hours**



\*Note: As the Coast Guard transitions from ship-based MH-65 to shore-based MH-60 rotary wing support, the number of Law Enforcement hours has decreased.