



SEMAPHORE

Newsletter of the Maritime Law

Association of Australia and New Zealand



US and Seychelles Coast Guards Perform Maiden Exercise

A combined “maritime law enforcement subject matter expert exchange” was recently undertaken between the United States Coast Guard and the Seychelles Coast Guard for the first time in the West Indian Ocean.

The exercise was conducted as part of Operation Junction Rain (OJR), which this year was held over September 9-27. OJR is understood to be part of the Africa Maritime Law Enforcement Partnership (AMLEP) – a United States Naval Forces Europe-Africa/United States 6th Fleet-facilitated initiative that aims to enhance the maritime law enforcement capabilities of African partners in order to improve the security of the maritime domain.



United States Naval Forces Europe-Africa Commander, Admiral James G Foggo III, described the expansion of OJR and AMLEP to the east coast of Africa as an important step for the country’s African partners in establishing a secure maritime environment necessary for local economies to flourish. He added that it was also essential to the overall quality of life for a country’s citizens.

“United States Naval Forces Africa aspires to work with our African partners like the Seychellois to achieve shared objectives centred on the belief that a secure and prosperous African continent will benefit all,” he says.

“Conducting operations, exercises and subject matter exchanges with our partners improves maritime security along their coastlines, territorial seas and exclusive economic zones.

“Maritime security is critical for coastal nations as seaborne trade is the lifeblood of global trade. When maritime trade freely sails across the seas, economic development and opportunities for prosperity are possible.”

It is understood that members of United States Coast Guard Tactical Law Enforcement Team (TACLET) South partnered with their Seychellois counterparts for the third and final operational phase of AMLEP. Those teams also then joined other agencies to discuss best practices and procedures for boarding vessels suspected of engaging in illicit activity and enforcing Seychellois laws and regulations.

During the first two operational phases, TACLET South members teamed up with the Nigerian Navy, Cabo Verdean Coast Guard, Togolese Navy and Ghanaian Navy to execute boardings of vessels in the respective nations’ waters. A P-8A assigned to Patrol Squadron 9 joined in for the second phase to conduct maritime air patrols with the Ghanaian Air Force.

“The integration of the Coast Guard Tactical Law Enforcement Team and Navy P-8A with our partner nations’ navies, coast guards and air forces strengthens our capabilities as a joint force and bolsters the security and stability in the region,” continues Admiral Foggo.

According to the United States Navy, a strong maritime presence is critical to ensuring local fisheries are protected and commercial shipping lanes stay open to sustain global commerce. The operational phases of the AMLEP programme were said to have reinforced the skill sets developed as part of the annual Africa Partnership Station exercises in a real-world operation and improve the detection, boarding and law enforcement activities necessary for maritime security.

“This type of capacity building remains paramount as we help our African partners counter illicit trafficking of drugs, arms and persons in the region. These efforts help nations protect their own resources and use these resources for their prosperity and their people.”

The stated AMLEP end goal is for an African partner nation to be able to conduct law enforcement operations independently of United States efforts and effectively address ever-changing maritime threats including illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing, illicit trafficking and piracy.

December 2019

