

Commander Justin M. Matejka
Commanding Officer, USCGC *Harriet Lane* (WMEC 903) United
States Coast Guard



Commander Matejka assumed command of USCGC *Harriet Lane* (WMEC 903) in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on July 24th, 2025 after serving as a National Security Affairs Fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University. *Harriet Lane* conducts operations across Oceania in support of partner nation capacity building and promoting the sovereignty and maritime governance of Pacific Island partners.

As a career Cutterman, Commander Matejka's last operational assignment was serving as Executive Officer of USCGC *Mohawk* (Key West) from 2020 to 2022. Previous cutter assignments include serving as an Engineer Officer in Training on board USCGC *Thetis* (Key West), Executive Officer of USCGC *Tempest* (Mississippi), Executive Officer of USCGC *Zephyr* (Mississippi), Commanding Officer of USCGC *Baranof* (Bahrain) in support of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command and Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, and as Commanding Officer of USCGC *Bernard C. Webber* (Miami). During his time afloat, he has executed missions including counter-drug operations, migrant interdiction operations, ports, waterways, and coastal security, defense operations, theater security cooperation, fisheries enforcement, and search and rescue.

Prior to his fellowship, Commander Matejka served as Chief of the Coast Guard's Senate Liaison Office from June 2022 to June 2024. In this role, he led and coordinated Coast Guard engagements with Members of Congress and congressional staff for Coast Guard appropriations, authorizations, and maritime related interests on Capitol Hill.

In previous staff assignments, he served as a Command Duty Officer in the Seventh District Command Center (Miami) where he oversaw the prosecution of Search and Rescue and Law Enforcement operations throughout the southeast United States and Caribbean. Following graduate school, he served as the Maritime Domain Officer at Joint Force Headquarters-National Capital Region where he was responsible for coordinating and planning maritime security support for the Nation's Capital. He also served as the Coast Guard's Liaison Officer and Department of Homeland Security Attaché to the Bahamas & Turks and Caicos Islands, coordinating Coast Guard and interagency support including humanitarian efforts, training, law enforcement, search and rescue and maritime safety.

Commander Matejka is a 2005 graduate of the US Coast Guard Academy where he earned a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering. In 2016, he completed a Master of Arts in Defense and Strategic Studies in resident from the Naval War College.

Commander Matejka is a native of Florida and is married to Dr. Ashley Matejka. They have one child, Callen.

Here are the significant achievements and events of USCGC *Harriet Lane* (WMEC 903), kept in chronological order:

August 2023 - June 2025:

- USCGC *Harriet Lane* performed with great distinction, completing a comprehensive Service Life Extension Program (SLEP), conducting a homeport shift, and executing four deployments in support of District 14's Operation BLUE PACIFIC. The cutter also achieved Aviation Certification, an Aviation Standardization Visit, and various FORCECOM compliance inspections.
- Cutter Reconstitution Period (July – October 2023):
- **August 2, 2023:** Sailed from Baltimore following a 16-month, \$20M prototype SLEP, with only seven crew members who had previously sailed the cutter.
- Successfully completed Sea Trials and a Ready for Sea assessment.
- Completed a structural test fire with the Mk38 MOD 3 weapons system, marking the initial test and proof of concept of the new weapons system on a WMEC platform and formalizing the process for future post-SLEP WMEC 270s.
- Conducted a three-week patrol for crew training and proficiency.
- Late 2023: Diverted in support of a Search-and-Rescue (SAR) case for F/V *Gaston*, assuming On-Scene Commander role.
- Executed a \$2.2M dockside package to finalize preparations for employment as the Oceania Support Cutter.

Homeport Shift (November – December 2023):

- **Late 2023:** Made a historical nearly 9,000 nautical mile homeport shift from Portsmouth, VA to Pearl Harbor, HI, to assume responsibility as the Coast Guard's Oceania Support Cutter.
- **December 13, 2023:** Arrived in Pearl Harbor, HI.
- **January 16, 2024:** The Vice Commandant of the Coast Guard (VCG) presided over the Homeport Shift Ceremony, formally marking *Harriet Lane*'s arrival to the region in support of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy.

D14 Operation Blue Pacific Patrol (January 22 – April 9, 2024):

- Deployed for its inaugural Oceania deployment within 45 days of arrival in Pearl Harbor.

- Extended efforts throughout the Indo-Pacific region, including American Samoa, Western Samoa, Fiji, Vanuatu, Australia, Papua New Guinea, Nauru, and the Marshall Islands.
- Conducted IUUF (Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated fishing) operations in concert with the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission and executed bilateral maritime law enforcement agreements.
- Conducted Subject Matter Expert Exchanges on boat operations and damage control.
- Hosted numerous community events, including a Coast Guard Recruiting event in American Samoa, beach cleanups, key leader engagements, and partnership in education efforts, garnering media attention.
- Recognized by Australia's Deputy Prime Minister and Chief of Defense, who conducted a unit visit during a scheduled visit to Pearl Harbor.

D14 Operation Blue Pacific Patrol (June 17 – August 23, 2024):

- Represented the United States as a flagship in the Tongan International Fleet Review, celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Royal Tongan Navy and King Tupou VI's 65th birthday.
- Patrolled the Samoan EEZ with shippers for boardings of foreign-flagged fishing vessels and engaged in community events in Western Samoa.
- Became the first cutter to visit Niue in over 30 years, hosting Niue's Minister of Social Services, Minister of Natural Resources, Director of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, and the Chief of Police, and assisting in restoring dilapidated infrastructure.
- Exercised a bilateral agreement with the Cook Islands, received as the Prime Minister's personal guest at the country's Constitution Day celebration, and conducted joint operations with members of the Guardian Class Patrol Boat crew.
- Diverted to intercept F/V *Autumn* for a critical MEDEVAC of a crew member while en route homeport, coordinating support to ensure quicker medical access and rerouting the F/V out of Hurricane GILMA's path.

Hawaiian Island Patrol (November 1 – December 23, 2024):

- Suffered cascading casualties to both Caterpillar C18 SSDGs (Ship Service Diesel Generators), over 1,000NM from the nearest port.
- Engineers demonstrated resiliency, safely returning the cutter to homeport on the Emergency Diesel Generator (EDG).
- Underwent six weeks of unscheduled maintenance; diagnostic efforts regarding cooling system failures caused by dissimilar metals in the C18s are expected to have far-reaching effects on future 270 WMEC SLEPs.

- Once fully mission capable, deployed for a local patrol to ensure the sovereignty of the Hawaiian Islands, honing seamanship and navigation skills through live-fire gunnery exercises, towing/astern refueling training with CGC *William Hart*, navigation drills, and small boat training.

D14 Operation Blue Pacific Patrol (April 28 – July 09, 2025):

- Departed Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam in April for a 73-day patrol in support of Coast Guard Oceania District's Operation Blue Pacific.
- Patrolled over 15,000 nautical miles around the Hawaiian Islands, French Polynesia, Cook Islands, and American Samoa.
- Conducted joint operations and territorial integrity missions, reinforcing the rules-based international maritime order in the region.
- Exercised partnerships with Cook Islands, French Polynesia, New Zealand, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office of Law Enforcement through bilateral maritime law enforcement agreements, professional exchanges, and domestic federal maritime law enforcement operations.
- In the Cook Islands' Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ):** Conducted six boardings of fishing vessels with two Ministry of Marine Resources officers, resulting in one suspected violation.
- In French Polynesia:** Conducted joint operations and exercises with French Armed Forces in the Asia-Pacific (ALPACI) to enhance collective maritime domain awareness. Coordinated with an ALPACI aviation asset to conduct two Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) high seas boardings and inspections on commercial fishing vessels, resulting in one potential violation.
- Overall:** Conducted 14 additional high seas boardings and inspections on commercial fishing vessels, resulting in two potential violations of conservation and management measures under the WCPFC.
- In American Samoa:** Hosted a reception attended by a U.S. Congresswoman's staff delegation, American Samoa Attorney General, Assistant Director of NOAA's Office of Law Enforcement Pacific Islands Division, and other officials, discussing the deterrence of threats to regional security and illicit maritime activities.

