

Puerto Rico DNER Rangers Corp, Enforcement Report

April 1, 2025, to July 31, 2025

Presented by:

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Coordinated by:

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Reported by:

Yamiré Pérez-Román
Ranger Corps, Ranger in charge





Cases described in detail

Law 21 "Law to Punish Anyone Who Throws Waste in Public or Private Places" (10 cases).

- Debris was deposited in the coastal area. All for Tickets of Administrative Offenses.

Law 147 "Law for the Protection, Conservation and Management of Coral Reefs in Puerto Rico" (no cases reported).

- Coral breakage

Law 278 "Puerto Rico Fisheries Law" (2 cases).

- It is prohibited to throw, deposit, cause or order to be thrown or deposited any oils, acids, poisons or any substance that kills or destroys fish, crustaceans or mollusks in any lake, lagoon, spring, river, ravine, channel or any water current in Puerto Rico.

Law 430 "Puerto Rico Water Navigation and Safety Act" (529 cases).

- Carrying out activities in the maritime zone without the proper permits
- Tying a boat to a mangrove.
- Minor without a lifeguard.
- Towing without observing.
- Excessive passengers on a boat.
- Diving with an unidentifiable flag.
- The boat operates without safety equipment.
- Boating without the required license.
- Negligence in navigation.
- Boating without a navigational direction.
- No, renew annual rights.

Investigations were conducted into sightings of injured and entangled sea turtles and manatees at various points on the island due to negligent navigation.

Regulation 4860 "Regulation for the conservation of territorial waters and the maritime-terrestrial zone (MTZ) " (20 cases).

- Activity without MTZ permission.
- New use without MTZ permission.
- Illegal construction in MTZ.
- Illegal sand extraction in MTZ.

Regulation 6979 "Regulations for Registration, Navigation and Aquatic Safety in Puerto Rico" (210 cases).

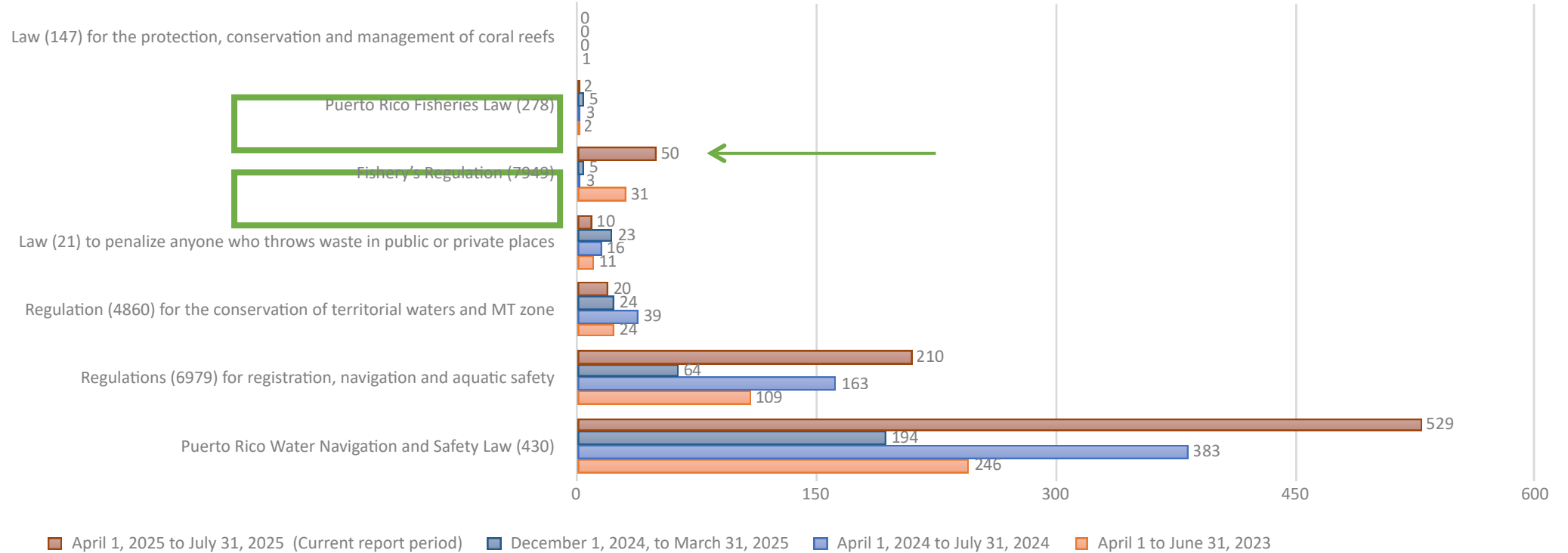
- Operating a watercraft after sunset.
- Sailing without a registration certificate.
- Sailing without a license plate attached to the boat.
- Drinking alcohol while sailing the boat.
- Jet skiing after sunset.
- Anchoring in a natural reserve.

Regulation 7949 "Regulation on Fisheries" (50 cases).

- Use harpoon and SCUBA tank without commercial license.
- Illegal possession of species in closure date.
- Lobster does not measure as required by law.
- Possession of Queen Conch not complying with the size limit.
- Fishing in an area not allowed.
- Excess Queen Conch possession on Recreational and Commercial fisher.



Cases submitted by DNER's Ranger Corp (April periods <3 years> and previous period)



The DNER Ranger Corps continues to provide security, protection, and surveillance of the Natural Resources of Puerto Rico in the coastal zone and in the open sea. Maritime and land preventive patrols are carried out in areas of clandestine dumps, sand extraction and damaged coastal mangroves in coastal areas of the Island. We guide the public and inspect recreational and commercial vessels that land on our shores. Recreational fishing tournaments that comply with nautical safety regulations are visited; assistance and cooperation is also provided to other state and federal agencies with the arrest of illegals on the coast.

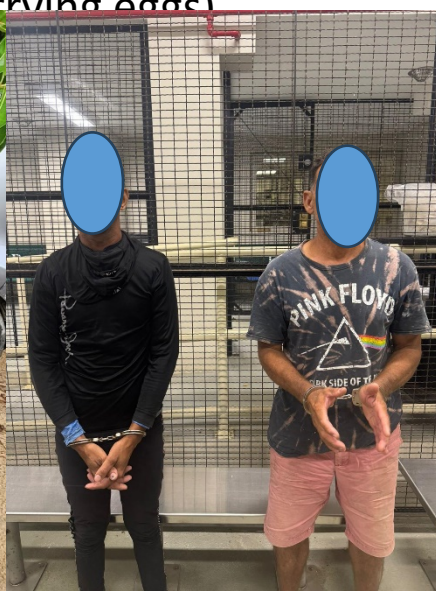
- Each Maritime Unit of the Rangers Corps is now equipped with a vessel.
- Two new academy classes have graduated.
- Eight drones with thermal vision and trained pilots deployed for illegal fishing surveillance (targeting queen snapper, conch, and land crabs).
- Agreements reactivated with U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the U.S. Coast Guard.
- Undercover operations personnel stationed in Arecibo, Humacao, and Mayagüez.
- Joint task force established in Vieques with FURA, municipal police, USFWS, and U.S. Coast Guard; operational base already secured through leased facility.



Exclusive Economic Zone

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Three individuals were intercepted at “Playa Las Picúas” in the municipality of Río Grande. Two of them were actively engaged in spearfishing and initially refused to exit the water, while a third individual, a female, was waiting in the getaway vehicle. The two fishermen were identified as undocumented and were subsequently taken into custody. The Commissioner personally oversaw the case, and with the support of additional DNER rangers, the following items were seized: 83 queen conchs, 10 lobsters (all punctured), several of which were gravid (carrying eggs)



The Commissioner intervened directly with a commercial fisherman found in possession of:

- 47 lobsters, many below the legal-size limit.
- A significant quantity of queen conchs (currently legal, but concerns raised due to the approaching closed season and potential illegal sales).





Illegal commercial fishing activity detected involving 32, undersized snooks, in the Municipality of Loiza.





Sergeant Toro, while off duty, responded to a report of a sea turtle trapped among rocks in a cliff, at the Municipality of Cabo Rojo. He coordinated the rescue with a biologist and several DNER Rangers. The turtle was successfully rescued and relocated safely.





Enhancing Enforcement Capacity Across DNER Rangers

- This Monday, Commissioner Cruz expressed strong interest in improving species identification capacity among DNER Rangers, specially those from non-marine units (e.g., Wildlife).
- Objective: Enable Rangers to identify prohibited species quickly and accurately (by size, stage, etc.).
- Need: A software tool for species ID + standardized measuring equipment (e.g., lobster calipers, finfish boards).
- Progress: Laptops already acquired for Rangers; additional units in process.
- Support from NOAA would be instrumental in scaling these tools and ensuring effective, consistent enforcement across all divisions.



Questions?

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