

Maritime Security Review



Issue No. 39

2 October 2017

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PLEASE NOTE:

The information contained in this report is as accurate as possible at the time of publishing. In some cases, however, incidents are updated at a later date as more information comes becomes available.

We encourage our readers to confidentially report any incidents or suspicious activity to info@msrisk.com.

INCIDENTS AT SEA

Reporting Period: 25 September – 1 October 2017

Region	Current Incidents Reported	Late Reported incidents	Threat level
MAIN REGIONS			
Gulf of Aden/Arabian Sea	2	2	Medium
Gulf of Guinea	1	3	Medium
Southeast Asia	0	0	Low
WORLDWIDE			
North America	0	0	Low
Central America/Caribbean/South America	0	2	Medium
Atlantic Ocean Area	0	3	Medium
Northern Europe/English Channel/Baltic	0	1	Low
Mediterranean/ Black Sea	0	2	Medium
Arabian Gulf	0	0	Low
East Asia/Indian Subcontinent	1	0	Low
Southern Africa	0	0	Low
Northeast Asia	0	0	Low
Pacific Ocean/Southern Ocean	0	0	Low

Piracy Levels are determined on a weekly basis as follows:

HIGH	5 or more incidents in the current reporting period
MEDIUM	2 – 4 piracy incidents in the current reporting period
LOW	0 – 1 piracy incidents in the current reporting period

GULF OF ADEN/ARABIAN SEA/BAB EL-MANDAB/RED SEA



WARNING FOR RED SEA, BAB EL-MANDAB STRAIT AND GULF OF ADEN: HIGH THREAT OF VESSEL HIJACKING

Activity in the Gulf of Aden appears to have re-emerged again, with several incidents being reported of skiff sightings in this area. Vessels transiting this region are advised to remain alert at all times, as skiffs may attempt to approach vessels in a bid to hijack them.

While international naval patrols and anti-piracy measures on board commercial vessels have practically eradicated Somali piracy since its peak in early 2011, poverty coupled with other factors that motivate pirates remain and some vessels

transiting this region may have increasingly become complacent in the belief that the piracy threat had diminished. While the international community has over the past several years taken significant steps in order to improve security in the region, including boosting naval forces in the area and requiring ships to take protection measures, including reporting in and out of high risk areas, sailing at top speed as far away as possible from the Somali coast and travelling with armed escorts on board, the threat of an attack and hijacking remained as the real root of the cause on the ground in Somalia has never been properly addressed. After five years without a successful attack, analysts say that complacency may have set in and this year's successful hijacking is likely to result in potential copycat attacks, as pirate action groups head out in a bid to successfully hijack a commercial vessel.

Masters are advised to remain vigilant at all times inside the HRA and are advised to adhere to strict guidance and protective measures as set down in BMP4. Sailing yachts should avoid transiting the HRA. Past activity has demonstrated that pirates will attack both large and small yachts transiting this region. While successful attacks and hijackings of merchant vessels have significantly decreased over the past two years, the possibility of attacks and the successful hijacking of sailing vessels continue to remain high. This is due to the reduction of revenue sources from pirated merchant vessels and the fact that sailing yachts are vulnerable and easier targets. PAG's continue to conduct "soft approaches" on merchant ships transiting the area. Skiffs have approached vessels in order to probe the reaction of the crewmembers and any possible Privately Contracted Armed Security Personnel (PCASP) onboard. If the pirate approach does not elicit a response, the pirates will likely proceed with an attack, in which additional skiffs may participate.

Vessels transiting the greater Gulf of Aden region should operate under a heightened state of alert. This is due to increasing tensions in the region, which in turn can escalate the potential for direct or collateral damage to vessels transiting the region. These threats may come from a number of different sources such as missiles, projectiles, or waterborne improvised explosive devices. Houthi rebels have claimed responsibility for the 1 October 2016 attack on a UAE vessel. MS Risk advises all vessels transiting this region to report any hostile activities immediately.

HIJACKS

- No current incidents to report

UNSUCCESSFUL ATTACKS/ROBBERIES

- No current incidents to report

VESSELS FIRED UPON/ATTEMPTED BOARDINGS

- No current incidents to report

VESSELS BOARDED

- No current incidents to report

KIDNAPPING

- No current incidents to report

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

- No current incidents to report

OTHER ACTIVITY

1. **26 September (Gulf of Aden)** – A merchant tanker was attacked near position 15:53 N – 052:20 E, 20 nautical miles south of al Gaydah, Yemen. Six persons were reportedly in the boat and they fired on the tanker. The vessel and crewmembers have been reported safe.

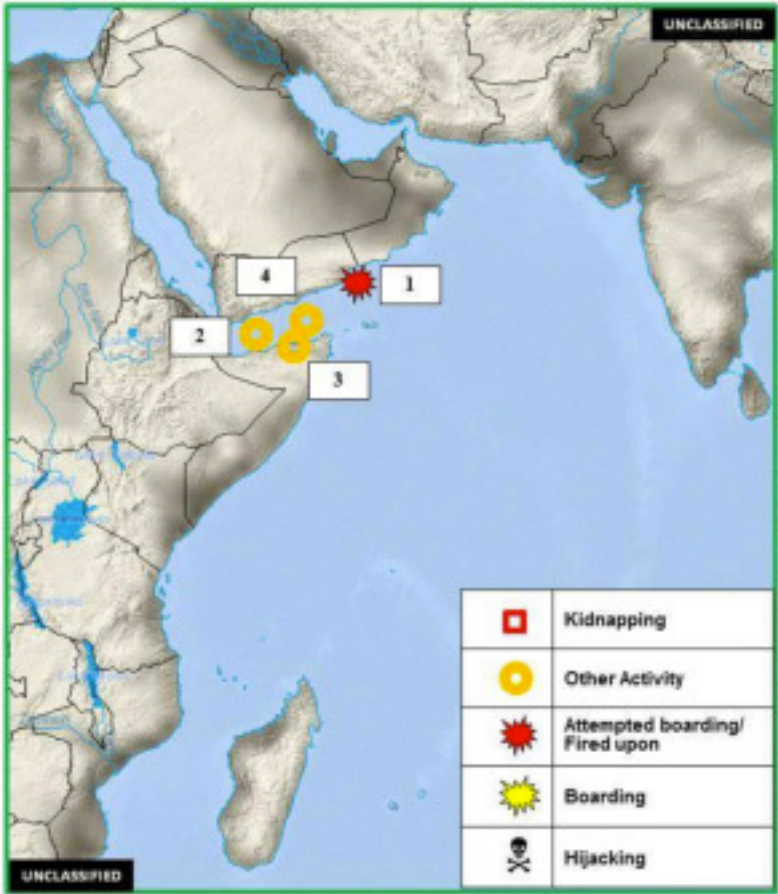
2. **26 September (Gulf of Aden)** – A merchant vessel reported sighting five skiffs with four persons in each skiff. One skiff closed to within one cable. The sighting occurred near position 12:08 N – 044:15 E, approximately 46 nautical miles southwest of Aden, Yemen. Armed guards showed weapons and the skiff changed direction.
3. **22 September (Gulf of Aden - Late Report)** – Puntland authorities have disclosed that they have seized a boat carrying illegal weapons and other materials off the coastal town of Bossaso. An unnamed Puntland official who took part in the operation to seize the arms load disclosed that they had partly unloaded the weapons consignment off the boat, which he said was from Yemen.
4. **22 September (Gulf of Aden - Late Report)** – A merchant vessel reported sighting one skiff with three persons onboard carrying weapons. The sighting occurred near position 12:37 N – 047:28 E, approximately 151 nautical miles southwest of Mukalla, Yemen.

MARITIME REPORTING

- Nothing to report

INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



WEATHER FORECAST: GULF OF ADEN/ARABIAN SEA

WEATHER FORECAST VALID FROM 28 SEPTEMBER – 4 OCTOBER 2017

NORTHERN ARABIAN SEA: Southwest winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.

- **Extended Forecast:** Southwest winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.

GULF OF OMAN: Variable winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 1 - 2 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with variable winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 1 - 3 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.

- **Extended Forecast:** Variable winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 2 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with southwest winds of 10 – 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.

GULF OF ADEN: Variable winds of 5 – 10 knots, and seas of 1 – 2 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with variable winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.

- **Extended Forecast:** Variable winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 2 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with southwest winds of 10 – 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.

SOMALI COAST: Southwest winds of 10 – 15 knots, gusting to 20 knots, and seas of 5 – 7 feet in the northern section of the coastline; with southwest winds of 10 – 15 knots, gusting to 20 knots, and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the southern section of the coastline.

- **Extended Forecast:** Southwest winds of 10 – 15 knots, gusting to 20 knots, and seas of 5 – 7 feet in the northern section of the coastline; with southwest winds of 15 – 20 knots, and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the southern section of the coastline.

CENTRAL AFRICAN COAST/INDIAN OCEAN: Southeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 5 – 7 feet.

- **Extended Forecast:** South-southeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 5 – 7 feet.

MOZAMBIQUE CHANNEL: Southeast winds of 10 – 15 knots, and seas of 4 – 6 feet in the northern Channel; with southwest winds of 10 – 15 knots, with seas of 10 – 12 feet in the southern Channel.

- **Extended Forecast:** Southeast winds of 10 – 15 knots, and seas of 3 – 5 feet in the northern Channel; with southeast winds of 15 – 20 knots, and seas of 12 – 15 feet in the southern Channel.

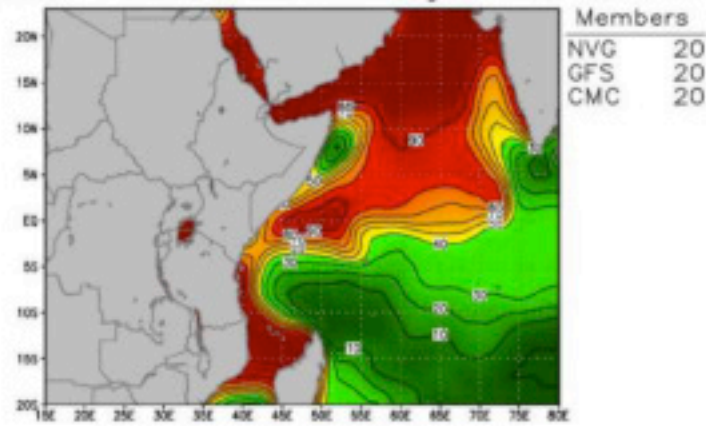
SURFACE CURRENTS: The northern Arabian Sea and Gulf of Aden currents are variable with most areas having an average speed of 1 knot. The Mozambique Channel currents are variable having an average speed of 2 knots. Current's speeds along the Somali Basin are northeasterly averaging between 2- 3 knots.

SYNOPTIC DISCUSSION: High pressure will dominate the weather pattern over much of the AOR producing mostly clear skies. Isolated rain showers and thunderstorms can be expected during the forecast as an area of low pressure moves through the region. Expect increased localized wind flow through the Strait of Hormuz due to funneling effects and occasional shamal winds across the Arabian Gulf.

WEATHER MAP

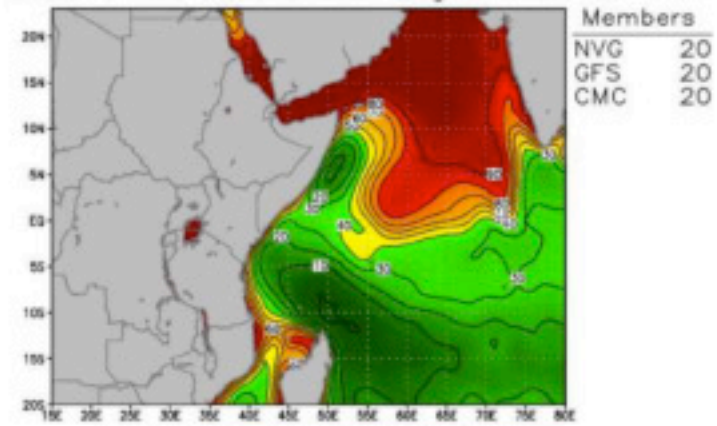
Source: ONI

Winds < 15.0 kts and Wave Heights < 5.0 ft



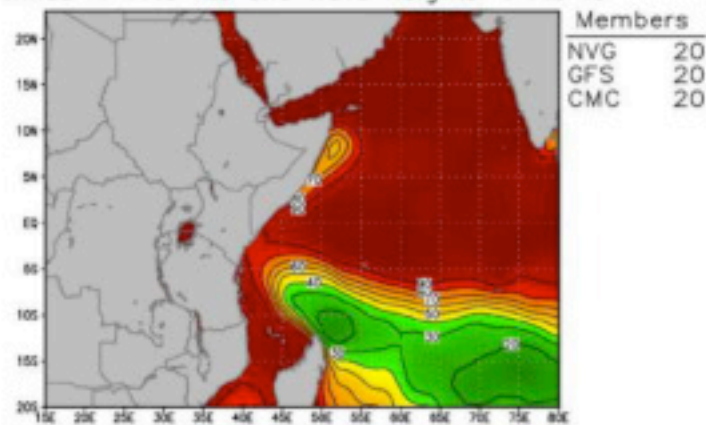
Valid Time: 1200Z 28 SEP 2017

Winds < 15.0 kts and Wave Heights < 5.0 ft



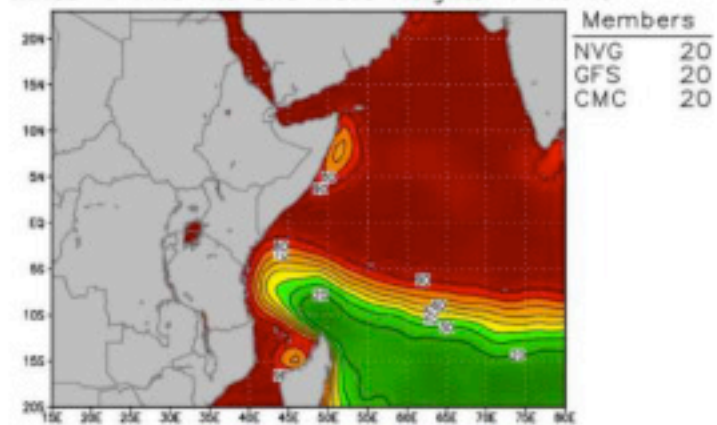
Valid Time: 0000Z 01 OCT 2017

Winds < 17.0 kts and Wave Heights < 7.0 ft



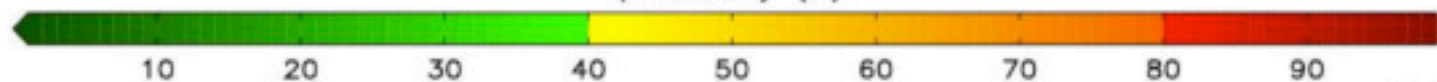
Valid Time: 1200Z 03 OCT 2017

Winds < 17.0 kts and Wave Heights < 7.0 ft



Valid Time: 0000Z 06 OCT 2017

probability (%)



SPOTLIGHT ON YEMEN

PORT STATUS AS OF 1 OCTOBER 2017

Port Name	Port Status	Risk Level	Notes
Aden Port	Open	High	Curfew: 2000-0600
Ash Shihr Oil Terminal	Open	High	
Balhaf LNG Terminal	Closed	Closed	
Hodeidah Port	Open WARNING*	High	The Saudi Royal Navy is using a holding area 60 NM west of Hodeidah port for vessels attempting entry into Salif or Hodeidah. Inbound vessels should plan on holding here prior to receiving clearance.
Mokha Port	Closed	High	Considered unsafe; no activity reported since August 2015
Mukalla Port	Open	High	Capacity: 2 berths
Ras Isa Marine Terminal	Closed	Closed	
Saleef Port	Open	High	Capacity: 2 berths

Shipmasters and crew are urged to remain abreast of current conditions surrounding all Yemeni ports of call, and to ensure that security measured aboard vessels are in place.

NEW GUIDANCE FROM COMBINED MARITIME FORCES

On 6 September, Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) issued guidance relating to transit through the Gulf of Aden, Bab Al Mandeb, Southern Red Sea, and associated waters. The new recommendations do not replace or supersede any previous guidance. Summary here:

To address the multiple types of risks and the broad expanse of ocean, Naval Forces must be used in the most efficient manner possible. To assist in this, CMF is establishing a Maritime Security Transit Corridor (MSTC), which consists of:

- The Internationally Recommended Transit Corridor (IRTC)
- The BAM TSS and the TSS West of the Hanish Islands
- A two-way route directly connecting the IRTC and the BAM TSS

The MSTC provides a recommended merchant traffic route around which Naval Forces can focus their presence and surveillance efforts. It is recommended that all vessels use the MSTC to benefit from military presence and surveillance.

The maritime threat environment is dynamic; the risks will not remain constant for subsequent visits. It is essential therefore, that Masters, Ship Security Officers and Company Security Officers carry out detailed Risk Assessments for each voyage to the region and for each activity within the region.

All vessels transiting the Gulf of Aden and Bab Al Mandeb should follow the guidance of BMP4 to the maximum extent possible and consider the use of embarked armed security. Recent piracy attacks in 2017 serve to emphasise the importance of robustly following this guidance.

This guidance is in no way directive. The use of the IRTC, MSTC, BMP4, armed security, shifting transit times, or any other defensive measures remain the sole decision of the vessel operator based on its own dedicated risk assessment and the requirements of the flag state.

ACTIVITY REPORTING

- **27 September** – The Saudi-led coalition’s restrictions on imports to Yemen have worsened the dire humanitarian situation of Yemeni civilians, Human Rights Watch has said. The restrictions, in violation of international humanitarian law, have delayed and diverted fuel tankers, closed a critical port, and stopped life-saving goods for the population from entering seaports controlled by opposing Houthi-Saleh forces. Houthi-Saleh forces have also violated international legal obligations to facilitate humanitarian aid to civilians. They have blocked and confiscated aid, denied access to populations in need, and restricted the movement of ill civilians and aid workers. Yemen is enduring the world’s largest humanitarian crisis, however HRW documented seven cases since May in which the coalition arbitrarily diverted or delayed fuel tankers headed for ports under Houthi-Saleh control. In one case, the coalition held a ship carrying fuel in a Saudi port for more than five months and had not responded to the shipping company’s requests for an explanation. The oil cargo had to be unloaded in a Saudi port without compensation and crew members needing medical treatment could not leave the ship. Under international humanitarian law, parties to an armed conflict may impose naval blockades to prevent arms and materiel from reaching enemy forces. Goods such as food, fuel, and medicines destined for civilians can be inspected but not excessively delayed. The blockading force must publish a list of contraband items, but the coalition has not done so.
- **26 September** – Saudi Arabia has threatened other countries over a proposed resolution at the U.N.’s main human rights body, saying if they send international, independent investigators to war-torn Yemen that could “negatively affect” trade and diplomatic ties with the wealthy kingdom. Two competing resolutions — one by Saudi Arabia and other Arab states and another by Canada and the Netherlands — have been proposed on how to best document the human rights violations in Yemen. The resolutions are shaping up as the main diplomatic showdown at the Human Rights Council session that ends Friday. Saudi Arabia has sent a letter to at least two foreign countries warning that the Arab states “will not accept” the Dutch-Canadian resolution, which seeks an “international, independent investigation.” Saudi Arabia favours an existing domestic investigation that critics say has failed to hold rights violators to account. While both sides say they are working to reach a single, compromise text at the 47-member rights council in Geneva, the letter suggests that Saudi Arabia is exerting diplomatic and economic pressure to thwart the rival plan.
- **25 September** – An American oil worker was abducted from his car by unidentified gunmen on a busy street in the Yemeni capital, his wife and colleagues said on Monday. The American, Danny Lavone Burch, 63, had spent years in Yemen working as an engineer at a Yemeni oil company when he was abducted on Saturday morning. “They did it in broad daylight in front of everyone,” Nadia Forsa, Mr. Burch’s wife, said by phone from Sana, the capital. Armed groups, including a powerful affiliate of Al Qaeda and the Houthi rebels who control Sana, have abducted foreigners to extract ransoms from their governments or because they accuse them of being spies. No group immediately claimed responsibility for Mr. Burch’s abduction, and it remained unclear why he was taken.
- **25 September** – The manipulation of liquefied natural gas prices by Houthi rebels has led to a drastic rise in the prices of gas canisters, 60 percent of which are sent to areas under insurgent control. This has led the prices to rise more than 400 percent. Undersecretary of Oil and Minerals Ministry Eng. Shawqi al-Mekhlafi said that the Yemen Gas Company (YGC) provided the entire country with domestic gas, but the Houthi militias have systematically destroyed the institutions and practiced illegal bill collection and competition in the black market, leading to unreasonable prices. The official prices are still the same and have not been modified by the Ministry of Oil, which is currently producing about 75 gas tank trucks, each loaded with 25 tons of gas. In the worst-case scenario, the price of each gas canister in the liberated areas amounts to 1,500 riyals (\$6), Mekhlafi explained, noting that in areas under the control of the militias the prices have amounted to 5,000 Yemeni riyals (\$20) in recent weeks. Undersecretary of Oil and Minerals Ministry Eng. Shawqi al-Mekhlafi stressed that the legitimate government, in cooperation with the Saudi-led Arab coalition and the United Nations, allows vessels carrying petroleum products to dock at the port of Hodeidah, but the Houthi militias sell the shipments double the price.
- **24 September** – An Al Qaeda explosives expert was captured in Yemen’s southern province of Abyan during a raid on his house on Wednesday, local media and residents said. Media reports said that security forces stormed the house of Al Khedher Ahmad Hussain on Wednesday in Al Ain town and arrested him. The man was identified as an experienced bomb maker who produced Al

Qaeda explosive devices used in attacks on government and military targets in the province. A current string of raids on Al Qaeda hideouts in the province of Abyan is part of an offensive in the province that started earlier this month.

- **23 September** – Houthi rebel officials say a prominent journalist who was sentenced to death over accusations of collaborating with a Saudi-led coalition battling the group has been pardoned. The pardon of journalist Yehia al-Gebeihy, jailed since September 2016, was ordered on Friday and his release will be finalized within days pending legal procedures. Meanwhile, two journalists, Abed al-Mahziri and Kamel al-Khozani, were also released after their arrest last week for criticizing the rebels' rule.
- **23 September** – Somalia's semi-autonomous region of Puntland seized a boat loaded with weapons from Yemen in Saturday's early hours, the regional maritime police chief said. Puntland authorities displayed dozens of anti-aircraft guns, machine guns, AK-47 rifles and dozens of boxes of ammunition seized from the boat after it was stopped in coastal waters off the Horn of Africa region. The journey of the small vessel, known as Al Faruq, was tracked from Yemen by European maritime forces patrolling sea lanes off Somalia, Abdirahman Mohamud Hassan, the director general of Puntland maritime police force, said. He said they had seized other boatloads of arms destined for Islamic State and al Shabaab militants active in Somalia though on this occasion the cargo was believed to be owned by arms smugglers who would have sold them at local retail outlets.
- **22 September** – Saudi Arabia has proposed that food and medicine relief for Yemen be shipped through the country's Jizan port to avoid Yemen's rebel-controlled Hodeidah port. Dr. Abdullah al-Rabeeah, head of the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center, said Houthi rebel militia are holding up relief materials in Hodeidah, preventing them from getting to suffering Yemenis. They are mainly letting through building materials and vehicles. When a cargo of food or medical supplies is allowed through, the militia controlling the port are charging relief agencies as much as \$100,000 to offload a vessel. Jizan, located about 260 kilometres north of Hodeidah, "is far closer to Saada and the north (of Yemen) than Hodeidah." Rabeeah said. "Although we would like to see Hodeidah to full capacity, until that happens we should use the maximum available ports, whether they are from Yemen, from Saudi Arabia, or land ports." On Tuesday, 15 cargo ships carrying food and fuel and authorized by the coalition to enter the port were still waiting to dock due to stalling by the rebels.

YEMEN: PROCEDURE

MS RISK CONTINUES TO ADVISE EXTREME CAUTION FOR VESSELS TRAVELING THROUGH BAB AL MANDAB, THE GULF OF ADEN, AND THE INDIAN OCEAN.

MS Risk has previously assessed that the waters around Yemen may become the next affected area in a battle for regional influence. As Operation Golden Spear ensues along the western coast of Yemen, the potential for retaliatory measures is heightened. On the water, the battle has taken a turn as the US navy has discovered that the recent attack on the Saudi frigate, *RSN Al Madina*, was conducted via an unmanned, remotely controlled vessel. It is unknown how many similar vessels are currently in the hands of Houthi rebels. Attacks from ship-to-shore or vice versa could cause accidental damage to vessels or disruption to shipping routes.

The risk of passage through the region has increased and is likely to rise. There remains a high level of violence and criminal activity ashore. Shipping vessels should remain constantly aware of the situation, including changes to protocol when entering Yemeni maritime waters.

UNITED NATIONS INSPECTIONS

The UN Verification and Inspection Mechanism (UNVIM) is operational for commercial imports to Yemen.

Shipping companies or owners delivering to ports not under the control of the Government of Yemen must apply for permits upon departing from the port of origin of their cargo. Yemen-based importers/traders are required to submit this notification form. More information about the UNVIM program is available here: <https://www.vimye.org/home>.

- *Vessels applying to go to ports under the control of the Government of Yemen* need obtain permission for entry from the Yemeni Ministry of Transport. This should be done through the ship's agent and/or receivers prior to the vessel's arrival. The form should be completed by the ship's master and sent directly to the Ministry of Transport.

SAUDI COALITION INSPECTIONS

All vessels calling at Yemeni ports will only be allowed to enter Yemeni territorial waters following an inspection by the Saudi Arabian coalition forces. Upon arrival outside Bab Al-Mandab, the shipmaster should call the naval forces of the Saudi Arabian coalition by VHF on channel 16 for the arrival registration, and indicate his location (ideally three miles from Bab Al Mandab). Coalition authorities will advise on the anchor position until they provide final approval to enter the port. This procedure will not take more than 48 hours.

Coalition inspectors do not conduct investigation with the crew; contact will be with the ship's master or Chief Officer about the cargo and documents. Once the vessel is permitted into Yemeni ports, the Master will be required to call port control by VHF on channel 14 or 16 for the arrival registration. The shipmaster will be advised the anchor position until the Harbour master confirms berthing prospects.

Coalition forces require AIS to be kept on at all times. The situation is subject to change and vessels should check frequently with local sources for any changes.

WEST AFRICA/GULF OF GUINEA



WARNING: The entire Gulf of Guinea region remains at a high risk to piracy; MS Risk advises all vessels transiting within 100 nautical miles of Tema, Ghana; Lome, Togo and Cotonou, Benin to remain particularly vigilant.

HIJACKS

- No current incidents to report

UNSUCCESSFUL ATTACKS/ROBBERIES

- No current incidents to report

VESSELS FIRED UPON/ATTEMPTED BOARDINGS/ATTACK

- **28 September (Nigeria)** – Suspected pirates attacked a passenger boat along the Nembe-Brass waterway in Bayelsa state on Thursday, in what is the third such piracy incident to occur on the waterway in the past week. According to witnesses, gunmen trailing a passenger boat began firing their weapons sporadically before hijacking the boat. The driver of the boat and his crewmen were later dropped off at the creeks as the pirates took the boat to an unknown destination.
- **22 September (Nigeria - Late Report)** – According to a senior police official, a tugboat towing a barge with a combined team of policemen from the Nigerian Inland Waterways, Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Coprs, and civilians on board were attacked by gunmen in the Ekebiri waterway. He further disclosed that a policeman, one NSCDC person and a civilian were killed and that one policeman is missing.
- **22 September (Nigeria - Late Report)** – Pirates killed two persons in Bayelsa, in the Brass-Nembe area of the state. Their ferry was travelling from Yenagoa to Okpoama in Brass Local Council of the State when the pirates struck and also stole personal effects and valuables.

VESSELS BOARDED

- **20 September (Nigeria - Late Report)** – A robber boarded an anchored tanker near position 06:19 N – 003:22 E, Lagos Anchorage. Duty crew noticed the robber and raised the alarm, resulting in the robber escaping empty-handed. The incident was reported to the local authorities.

KIDNAPPING

- No current incidents to report

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

- No current incidents to report

OTHER ACTIVITY

- No current incidents to report

MARITIME REPORTING

- **25 September (Nigeria)** – On Monday, two persons were shot dead by gunmen suspected to be sea pirates in an attack on a passenger ship along the Brass waterways in Bayelsa State. Community sources have disclosed that the gunmen, numbering about four, opened fire on the boat at Okoroma axis and killed two of the passengers, a young man and a middle-age woman, and injured other passengers. The passengers' boat was moving from Yenagoa to Okpoama in Brass Local Government area when the pirates attacked. They also collected all the passenger's valuables. The Chairman of the Bayelsa State chapter of Nigeria Maritime Workers Union, Lloyd Sese, confirmed the latest incident, adding that five persons were injured in the attack. The latest attack is the third such incident to take place in three weeks. Three weeks ago, Nigerian media reported an ambush on a military houseboat that killed two in Southern Ijaw creeks in Bayelsa state. Last Friday, suspected militants attacked a tugboat in the same area, killing three crewmembers including a police officer.

WEATHER FORECAST: GULF OF GUINEA

WEATHER FORECAST VALID FROM 28 SEPTEMBER – 4 OCTOBER 2017

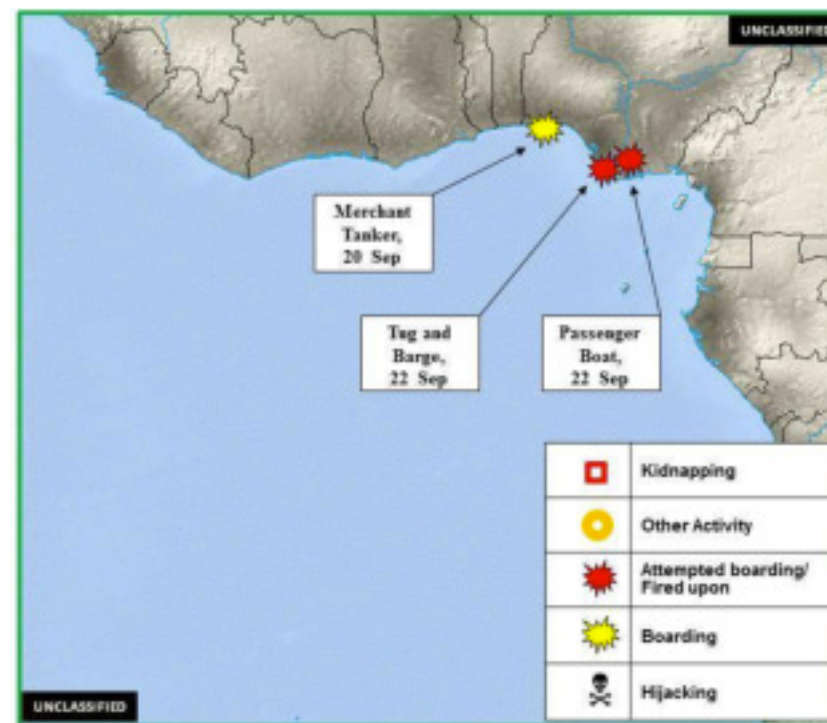
GULF OF GUINEA: Southwest winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 3 – 5 feet.

- **Extended Forecast:** Southwest winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 3 – 5 feet.

SYNOPTIC DISCUSSION: High pressure continues to dominate the region producing relatively light winds across the Somali Basin. Isolated thunderstorms and rain showers can be routinely expected along the Somali and West African coasts with increased southerly wind flow through the Bab el Mandeb Strait due to funnelling effects.

INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



SOUTHEAST ASIA

WARNING: There are continuing concerns in regards to the situation of kidnapping of crewmembers from vessels while underway in the Sulu-Celebs Sea region. MS Risk advises all vessels, particularly slow moving vessels, to re-route where possible. If unable to re-route, we strongly advise vessel Masters and crewmembers to adopt the following measures:

- Maintain a heightened level of vigilance and increase security watch rotations
- Sound the alarm when unknown people are sighted on board the vessel or when suspicious boats are in the vicinity
- Report all incidents and suspicious activity
- Maintain continuous communication with shipping company and with local enforcement agencies
- Avoid confrontation with the perpetrators

Pirate Action Groups (PAG's) operating in this region are likely to target vessels to siphon fuel or oil onto another ship. Masters are therefore reminded to remain vigilant at all times in all regions, including at ports and anchorages. Attacks and robberies can occur at any time. Incidents involving the siphoning of oil/fuel have been on the rise in recent months. Masters are reminded to remain vigilant at all times and to report any incidents, suspicious activity, attacks or hijackings to the local authorities.



HIJACKS

- No current incidents to report

KIDNAPPING

- No current incidents to report

UNSUCCESSFUL ATTACKS/ROBBERIES

- No current incidents to report

VESSELS FIRED UPON/ATTEMPTED BOARDINGS/ATTACK

- No current incidents to report

VESSELS BOARDED

- No current incidents to report

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

- No current incidents to report

OTHER ACTIVITY REPORT

- **21 September (Malaysia – Incident Update)** – The mastermind behind the hijacking of tanker *MGT 1* was given sixteen years in prison for conspiracy to hijack while the ten other Indonesians that were actually caught onboard in the hijack attempt were also jailed for sixteen years each after they admitted to their crimes. Six of the pirates were also sentenced to five strokes of the cane. Three others are still at large. The coastal products tanker was hijacked off the coast of Terengganu on 6 September however the hijacking was foiled after a fisherman alerted the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency when he saw several people boarding the vessel. Reportedly armed with knives, swords and machetes, the attackers also robbed the fourteen crewmembers aboard the tanker that belonged to the Marine Global Transport. One crewman was injured in the incident.

MARITIME REPORTING

- Nothing to report

INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



WEATHER FORECAST VALID FROM 28 SEPTEMBER – 4 OCTOBER 2017

SOUTHERN SOUTH CHINA SEA: Southwest winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 2 feet.

- **Extended Forecast:** Southwest winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet.

MALACCA STRAIT: Variable winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 2 feet in the northern Strait; with variable winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 2 feet in the southern Strait.

- **Extended Forecast:** Variable winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the northern Strait; with variable winds of 10 – 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 2 feet in the southern Strait.

ANDAMAN SEA: West-southwest winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 3 – 5 feet in the northern section; with southwest winds of 10 – 15 knots, and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the southern section.

- **Extended Forecast:** Southwest winds of 20 – 25 knots, and seas of 10 – 12 feet in the northern section; with southwest winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the southern section.

SOUTHERN SULU SEA – NORTHERN CELEBES SEA: Variable winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 2 feet.

- **Extended Forecast:** Variable winds of 5 – 10 knots, and seas of 1 – 2 feet.

SURFACE CURRENTS: Currents in the southern South China Sea, Malacca Strait, and Andaman Sea are generally less than 1 knot, with a few areas in the southern South China Sea averaging 1 knot.

SYNOPTIC DISCUSSION: An area of low pressure moving off of China will produce slightly increased wind flow in the South China Sea. Expect strong gusts in and around scattered thunderstorms, throughout the Malacca Strait and the Andaman Sea due to funneling effects and daytime heating.

WORLDWIDE

NORTH AMERICA

- No current incidents to report

CENTRAL AMERICA/CARIBBEAN/SOUTH AMERICA

1. **23 September (Guatemala)** – According to a judicial source, authorities dealt a blow to drug cartels operating in the Pacific by seizing 33 boats that were used to transport cocaine. The Public Prosecutor's Office (MP) has disclosed that the confiscation was made in twenty piers during two raids in the port of Iztapa, in the southern department of Escuintla and in the channel of Chiquimulila, in Santa Rose. According to the MP, the vessels seized were carrying packages with cocaine and did not have all the requirements established by the Ministry of Defense to be able to navigate in a legal way. The vessels had altered registration numbers, their names erased and overwritten, serial numbers erased and they also altered the engines.
2. **22 September (Venezuela – Late Report)** – The duty officer onboard a bulk carrier anchored near position 10:09 N – 064:47 W, Puerto La Cruz Anchorage, raised the alarm when the duty crewman did not respond to a call on the radio. Crew was mustered and they carried out a search of the vessel, finding the duty crewman tied up on the forecastle. Upon hearing the alarm and seeing the alerted crew, the robbers were seen escaping. Upon inspecting the vessel, it was found that a large quantity of the ship's stores were stolen.

INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



ATLANTIC OCEAN AREA

1. **24 September (United Kingdom – Late Report)** – Two stowaways had to be airlifted from a passenger ferry 20 miles off the Devon coast after falling ill when they hid in a fridge for 13 hours. Falmouth Coastguard was alerted to the medical emergency. The ship's crewmembers reported that one of the men had fallen unconscious as a result of being in the fridge for so long. A rescue helicopter scrambled and two Afghan men were airlifted to a hospital in Devon. Falmouth Coastguard confirmed that the ship was the passenger and car ferry *EPSILON*.
2. **20 September (United Kingdom – Late Report)** – Authorities in the port of Gloucestershire were alerted to the presence of four Albanian stowaways on

board the Ireland-flagged general cargo ship *ARKLOW RAVEN*. The vessel had arrived from Spain.

3. **20 September (Spain – Late Report)** – Several persons utilizing two Netherlands-flagged tugboats attempted to steal a partially constructed cable laying ship *LIVING STONE* from a shipyard in Bilbao currently in court for a bankruptcy case. Two persons were arrested.

INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



NORTHERN EUROPE/ENGLISH CHANNEL/BALTIC

1. **18 September (Netherlands – Late Report)** – Two suspects were arrested after the authorities intercepted 3,800 kilograms of cocaine in the port of Antwerp. The cocaine was found in a shipping container during a routine customs check. The drugs were hidden amongst a load of bananas from Columbia.

INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



MEDITERRANEAN/BLACK SEA

1. **24 September (Libya – Late Report)** – A bulk carrier reported being attacked near position 32:55 N – 023:27 E, 42 nautical miles east-northeast of Derna. One speed boat with persons onboard fired guns and rockets at the vessel.
2. **6 September (Malta – Late Report)** – During a joint operation by police and the Armed Forces of Malta, 70 kilograms of cannabis resin were found in a boat entering Ghadira Bay. Three persons were arrested.

INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



ARABIAN GULF

- No current incidents to report

EAST ASIA/INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

1. **27 September (Myanmar)** – A large mob forced an aid ship to unload 50 tonnes of aid packages in the port of Sittwe. According to a spokesman, police officers arrived as the crowd grew near the jetty, while Buddhist monks also tried to calm the mob, however people began to throw stones and Molotov cocktails at the riot police. Eight people were detained and several police were injured before order was restored.

INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

- No current incidents to report

NORTHEAST ASIA

- No current incidents to report

PACIFIC OCEAN/SOUTHERN OCEAN

- No current incidents to report

MIGRATION



Migrant crossings in the Mediterranean are likely to continue into the Autumn period. As more rescue operations are being suspended, because of tensions with Libyan authorities, migrants may seek the less dangerous crossing towards Spain, which in recent weeks has seen a significant rise in the number of migrants arriving on its shores.

- **29 September** – According to official data, the Tunisian navy has arrested more than 550 Tunisian and African migrants trying to sail to Europe in September – nearly three times more than last month. Human traffickers are increasingly using Tunisia as a launch pad for migrants heading for Europe as Libya's coast guard, aided by armed groups, has tightened controls. The latest data shows that Tunisia's Navy stopped boats with migrants departing from beaches in the south and north of the country, arresting 555 people in September. In August, only 170 people had been caught trying to depart from Tunisia by boat. According to Colonel Major Khelifa Chibani, of Tunisia's national guard, "we succeeded in foiling many attempts, which have increased significantly as the

weather improves and smugglers are promoting that journeys coming out of Tunisia are more safe than other destinations."

- **28 September** – Greek authorities have reported that more than twenty migrants or refugees were rescued and one child died on Thursday on a Greek Island after the boat they set sail in overnight from the nearby Turkish coast either capsized or sank. The Greek coastguard has disclosed that a vessel from the European border agency Frontex patrolling the area initially picked up six people – one man, two women and three children – it spotted in the sea off the small southeastern island of Kastellorizo in the early hours of Thursday. The coastguard further disclosed that the six were transported to land immediately because one of the children, a 9-year-old girl, needed medical attention, but she later died. Another four of the survivors were hospitalized. Greek authorities then launched a search operation with patrol boats and a helicopter and crewmembers later found and rescued another twenty people – five children, two women and thirteen men – who had managed to swim to a rocky coast on the island. One person from that group was also hospitalized. It was unclear what type of vessel the migrants had used and whether it sank or capsized. The coastguard disclosed that all on board had been accounted for and there were no missing people reported.
- **25 September** – Spain's maritime rescue service has reported that it has saved 64 migrants from two small boats trying to make a perilous sea crossing from Africa to Europe. According to the rescue service, one of its boats intercepted 28 migrants on Friday near Alboran Island, which lies in the western Mediterranean Sea east of the Strait of Gibraltar. The service has an outpost on the small island. The rescue ship docked at the Spanish coastal town of Motril on Saturday morning. A second rescue boat pulled another 31 men and five boys from another small craft. The service identified the passengers as Moroccans, stating that several of them were suffering from hypothermia.

SPOTLIGHT ON LIBYA

PORT STATUS AS OF 1 OCTOBER 2017

Port Name	Port Status	Risk Level
Port of Abu Kammash	Open	Low
Port of al-Khums (Homs)	Open	Low
Port of As-Sidra (Sirte, Es Sider)	Open	Moderate - High
Port of Benghazi	Closed	High
Port of Bouri (offshore port)	Open	Low
Port of Derna	Closed	High
Port of El Brega (Marsa El Brega)	Open	Moderate
Port of Hariga	Open	Moderate
Port of Mellitah	Open	Low
Port of Misrata (Qasr Ahmed)	Open	High
Port of Ras Lanuf	Open	Moderate - High
Port of Tobruk	Open	Moderate
Port of Tripoli	Open	Moderate
Port of Zawiya (Zawia)	Open	Moderate
Port of Zueitina	Open	Low



ACTIVITY REPORTING

- 28 September** – The US military carried out more air strikes against the Islamic State (IS) group in Libya, killing several militants, the US Africa Command said on Thursday. The strikes hit about 160km southeast of the Mediterranean city of Sirte on Tuesday, AFRICOM said in a statement. IS has grown bolder in recent weeks, setting up temporary checkpoints, attacking local forces and taking over village mosques, Libyan officials say. Forces loyal to east Libya-based commander Khalifa Haftar said in early September that they had carried out air strikes against the militants in the area of Ain Tarqft, between Sirte and the town of Waddan, 230km to the south. Both Haftar's Libyan National Army (LNA) and forces from the port city of Misrata, which led the campaign in Sirte last year, said they are making frequent patrols to monitor IS movements in the area. On Sunday, the Pentagon announced the first air strikes in Libya since President Donald Trump took power in January.

- **27 September** – Libya's navy warned it will seize activists' boats on migrant rescue missions that enter its waters unauthorised, after a run-in on Wednesday with a German vessel during which a warning shot was fired. A Libyan coast guard vessel fired shots and boarded a humanitarian ship in the Mediterranean on Tuesday, demanding that the migrants on board be handed over to them, a spokesman for the Mission Lifeline charity said. "The Libyan man said: 'This is our territory,'" said Axel Steier, a spokesman for the German-based charity that performed its first rescues on Tuesday. "After a while, they fired shots," he said, probably into the air or sea. No one was wounded. Afterward two Libyans boarded the Lifeline ship to try to persuade them to hand over some 70 migrants they had just taken off a wooden boat in international waters. "We told them we don't return migrants to Libya. After a while, they gave up," Steier said. The two men spent about 15 minutes on board, he said. A Libyan coast guard spokesman in Tripoli declined to comment, saying he was seeking information. Navy spokesman General Ayub Kacem said, "This time we avoided an escalation. In future, we will seize the boats of NGOs that do not respect Libya's sovereignty."
- **27 September** – The government based in eastern Libya said on Wednesday it would bar entry to U.S. citizens after President Donald Trump's administration included Libya in a new travel ban. Announcing its ban, the eastern-based government said it was responding to "a dangerous escalation that targets Libyan citizens and puts them in the same basket as the terrorists against whom our... armed forces are fighting". It was not clear when or how the Libyan ban would be enforced.
- **25 September** – Two experts – a former top Pentagon attorney and a former official at the international criminal court – said that newly unearthed video evidence suggests that General Khalifa Haftar has been complicit in calling for extrajudicial killings and the unlawful siege of the eastern port city of Derna. In one case, he is believed to have called for the "choking" of Derna just a day after he met Boris Johnson, the UK foreign secretary, in Benghazi. The new assessment, published on the Just Security blog, follows the recent issuing of an arrest warrant by the ICC for Mahmoud Mustafa Busayf al-Werfalli, a member of Haftar's Libyan National Army. Werfalli stands accused of executing prisoners himself, as well as commanding others to carry out extrajudicial killings. Amnesty

International and Human Rights Watch have also condemned alleged war crimes by the LNA.

- **24 September** – Libya's National Oil Corporation (NOC) has diverted fuel tanker vessels from Al-Zawiya to Tripoli after an armed attack by gunmen on its Al-Zawiya oil storage depot on Monday, September 18. NOC said that due to the attack by an "armed militia", the Line 16 from Al-Zawiya to Tripoli was forced to stop pumping. "The NOC response is designed to ensure that adequate petroleum products are available in Tripoli and that supplies of gasoline to Greater Tripoli and the Western Mountain cities are maintained," the oil company said. NOC added that it would pursue legal measures against "the blockaders", noting that no concessions will be made.
- **24 September** – A spokesman for Benghazi Port, Meftah al-Shuhibi, said that the preparation process of opening the port and resuming work officially is in full swing. Shuheibi added that a new entrance was established for the port beside rebuilding and renewing several damaged structures. The port has been offline since the launch of Dignity Operation in May 2014.
- **24 September** – The United States military said on Sunday that it had conducted drone strikes on an Islamic State training camp in Libya, killing 17 militants in the first American airstrikes in the strife-torn North African nation since January. A half-dozen "precision strikes" on Friday hit a training camp about 150 miles southeast of Surt, from which militants were moving fighters in and out of the country, stockpiling weapons and equipment, and plotting and conducting attacks, the Pentagon's Africa Command said in a statement. Three vehicles were also destroyed.

LIBYA: PROCEDURE

Although conditions are improving in Benghazi, the security situation throughout Libya remains fluid. In the absence of a diplomatic solution, MS Risk continues to advise extreme caution to all vessels entering Libyan waters. The ports are an extremely valuable target, and control of these key facilities in Libya have, and could

again, change hands with little or no notice. As a result, ports, infrastructure, and other valuable assets remain at a high risk for violent attack by various armed militia groups.

While all working ports are believed to be currently safe for ships and crew, the security situation remains volatile and subject to rapid change. Shipmasters and crews are urged to exercise extreme caution when entering Libyan ports and waters. Vessels are urged to:

- Observe international laws of trading
- Follow official sea navigation routes to any of the working Libyan ports and avoid navigating in the coastal waters of the closed ports. **Vessels should avoid navigating in the coastal waters of Benghazi, Derna and Sirte.**
- In advance of arrival, declare the intended voyage and type of cargo to be discharged/loaded to the local agent, to allow sufficient time to notify the appropriate authorities.
- Stay in contact with local port authorities to receive the most up to date information.
- Vessels should report their schedules to local port agents prior to arrival at any Libyan port, including:
 - A declaration of the vessel's sailing route
 - Whether they are loading or discharging cargo
 - The type of cargo on board

Vessels are cautioned to avoid navigating in the coastal waters of Benghazi, Derna and Sirte. MS Risk advises that shipmasters and owners stay up-to-date on the volatile situation in this region.

ABOUT MS RISK

MS Risk is a privately-owned company domiciled in the Isle of Man. It is underwritten by a syndicate of Lloyd's of London for special risks case management in all jurisdictions. It also acts as retained advisors to syndicates in the Lloyd's of London specialty risk insurance markets: kidnap for ransom, extortion, hijack, illegal detention, illegal war tax, malicious product tamper, terrorism, political and war risk.

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MS Risk has a dedicated team of researchers, a 24/7 hotline service and a pool of trained and experienced consultants to support client needs.

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References are always available.

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