

**MS | RISK**

## Global Piracy Report

Detailed Weekly Piracy Report Focusing on the Horn of Africa, Gulf of Guinea, Southeast Asia and South America; and Reporting of On - The - Ground in Somalia and Kenya

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  - Training
  - Special assignments
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  - Crisis management
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References are always available.  
More information is found at [www.msrisk.com](http://www.msrisk.com)

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## Summary (December 15 - 21, 2014 - Week 51; Edition 68)

### List of Incidents at Sea for this Reporting Period

**Gulf of Guinea/West Africa:** No incidents reported during this period

**Somalia-Indian Ocean:** Three incidents reported during this period

**Southeast Asia:** No incidents reported during this period

**South America:** No incidents reported during this period

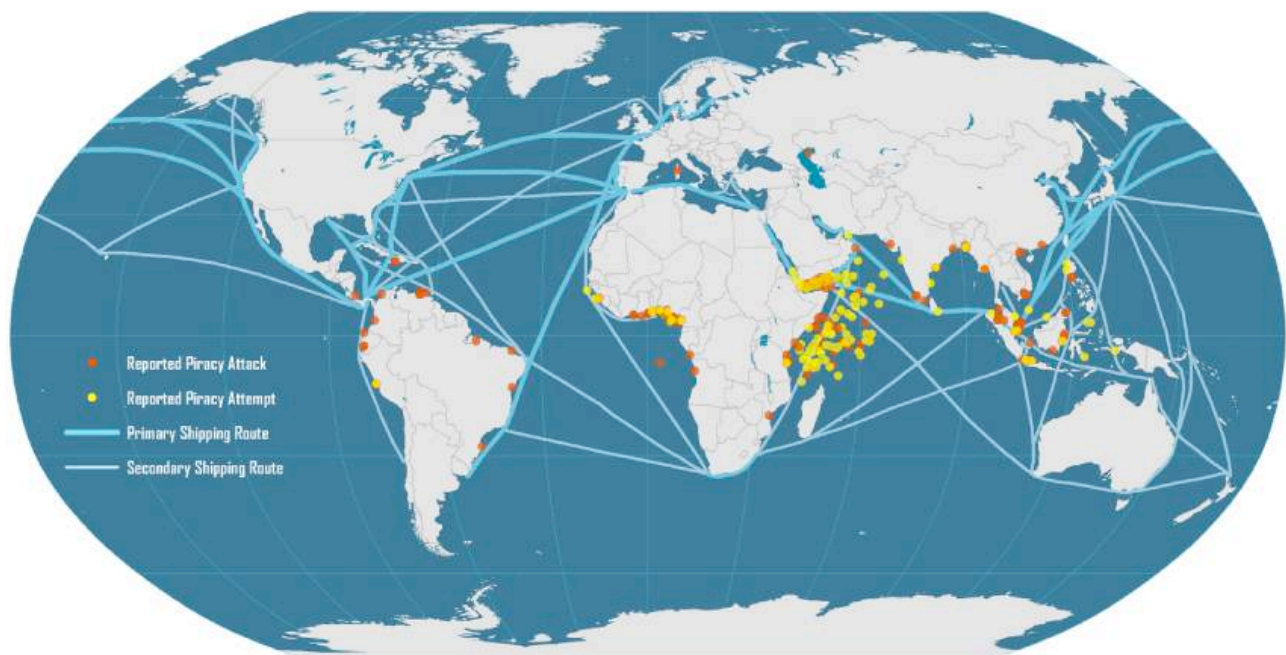
**North America:** No current incidents to report

**Central America-Caribbean:** No current incidents to report

**Atlantic Ocean Area:** No current incidents to report

**Northern Europe-Baltic:** No current incidents to report

**Mediterranean-Black Sea:** No current incidents to report



# SOMALIA

## Executive Summary

While there has been no successful hijacking of a vessel transiting the region in over two years, the threat of piracy remains high as Pirate Attack Groups (PAG's) continue to approach vessels in a bid to attack and hijack them. The Southwest Monsoon season is now in a transition period. Waves off the eastern coast of Somalia are up to 1.5 meters with winds up to 20 knots – conditions that are becoming increasingly favorable for single skiffs and whalers to operate in. Vessels transiting the Gulf of Aden and waters off the coast of Somalia are reminded that skiffs and whalers will increasingly move their operations out of the Gulf of Aden and further out to sea in an attempt to hijack a vessel.

Masters are advised to remain vigilant at all times inside the High Risk Area (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.

## At Sea

### Hijacks:

- None reported during this period.

### Unsuccessful Attacks/Robberies:

- None reported during this period.

### Suspicious Activity:

- **18 December 2014** – At 0730 UTC in position 12:22.5N – 043:58.0E, Master reported being approached by one skiff with six pirates on board, which closed to 0.5 nautical miles off the vessel's port bow. On board armed security team displayed their weapons, resulting in the skiff moving away. MV alerted other vessels in the vicinity.
- **16 December 2014** – At 1232 UTC in position 12:31N – 043:35E, a vessel was approached at speed by seven skiffs. A group of four yellow and blue-hulled skiffs approached to five cables. A second group of

three white and grey-hulled skiffs approached to within 8 cables. The skiffs carried 6 – 8 pirates on board. One skiff was reported carrying a ladder however no weapons were sighted. Embarked armed security team displayed their weapons, resulting in the skiffs turning away. Vessel and crewmembers on board have been reported safe.

- **15 December 2015** – At 0655 UTC in position 12:23N – 043:54E, master reported being approached by one blue skiff to within 0.6 nautical miles on starboard quarter at high speeds. Armed security team on board the vessel displayed their weapons, resulting in the skiff stopping dead in the water and then moving astern of the vessel and stopping its engine. Armed security team again showed their weapons, resulting in the skiff making full speed ahead northbound of the vessel. The skiff had a yellow tarpaulin and had three pirates on board. Weapons were sighted on board the skiff.

## Piracy Related News

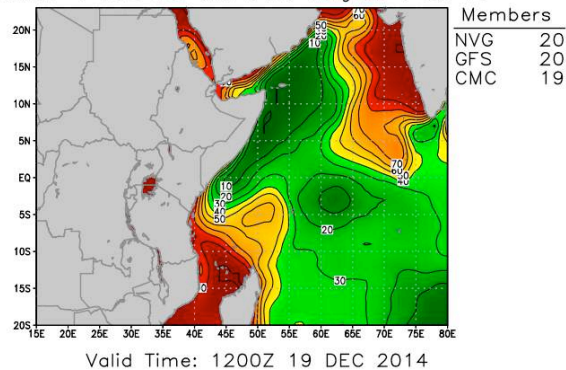
- **17 December 2014** – According to an official, Somaliland has seized more than 51 Yemeni boats and an Egyptian ship for fishing illegally in its waters. Admiral Ahmed Osman reported that coastguards also arrested more than 250 fishermen who were on board. This is the largest arrest to be carried out by Somaliland's coastguards, who have been trained by Western states to curb piracy and illegal fishing off the coast of East Africa.
- **16 December 2014** – The Seychelles Court of Appeal has acquitted and ordered the repatriation of three Somali pirates. The country's highest court overturned a previous ruling that was delivered by the island nation's supreme court, citing "insufficient evidence that proves that they were indeed pirates." Two of the three men had appealed against their 21-year sentence while the third, a juvenile aged 16, appealed against his 14-year sentence. In its ruling, judges at the Court of Appeal "severely warned" the prosecution when delivering their ruling "to make sure they have concrete evidence before prosecuting suspects." The three men were part of a group of twenty-five pirates that were arrested by a Danish Naval vessel of the Horn of Africa in January 2012. At the time, reports disclosed that the Danish Navy had freed fourteen Iranian and Pakistani hostages who were being held captive on the ship, which had been captured by the twenty-five pirates. Four of the pirates were later brought to the Seychelles; another four were brought to Kenya to be prosecuted while the remaining seventeen were released. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), which is responsible for financing the trials and prosecution of Somali pirates in the Seychelles, is expected to arrange the repatriation of the three men back to Somalia. The fourth suspected Somali pirate, who was brought to the Seychelles together with the other three, has abandoned his appeal and has already been repatriated to Puntland, where he is currently serving the 21-year sentence that was imposed on him.

## Weather Analysis

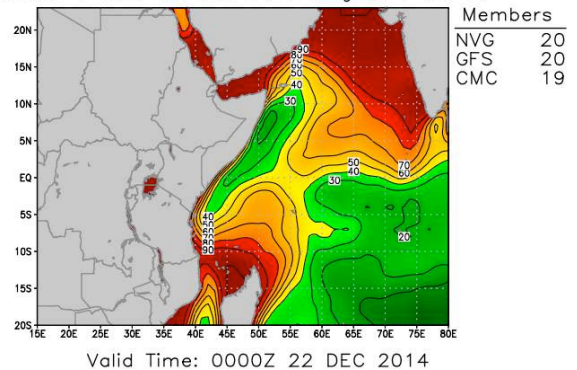
- **North Arabian Sea** – Northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.
  - **Extended Forecast** – Northeast winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.
- **Gulf of Oman** – Westerly winds of 3 – 5 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with westerly winds of 3 – 5 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.
  - **Extended Forecast** – Easterly winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with easterly winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.
- **Gulf of Aden** – Easterly winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with easterly winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.
  - **Extended Forecast** – Easterly winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with easterly winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 4 – 6 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.
- **Somali Coast** – Northeast winds of 15 – 20 knots and seas of 6 – 8 feet.
  - **Extended Forecast** – Northeast winds of 15 – 20 knots and seas of 6 – 8 feet.
- **Central African Coast/Indian Ocean** – North-northeast winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.
  - **Extended Forecast** – North-northeast winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.
- **Mozambique Channel** – Northeast winds of 3 – 5 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the northern channel; with southeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the southern Channel.
  - **Extended Forecast** – Northwest winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 5 – 7 feet in the northern Channel; with southeast winds of 12 – 17 knots and seas of 8 – 10 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. Currents speeds along the Somali basin are northeasterly averaging between 1 – 2 knots.
- **Synoptic Discussion** – As the Northeast Monsoon becomes the dominant feature in the region, expect increased winds and elevated seas in the Arabian Gulf with isolated rain showers and thunderstorms.

## Sea Conditions for the Following Week

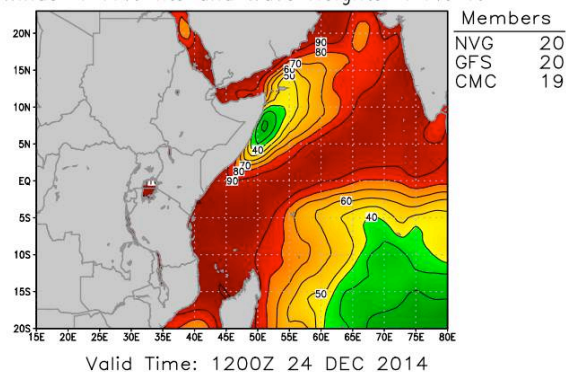
Winds < 15.0 kts and Wave Heights < 5.0 ft



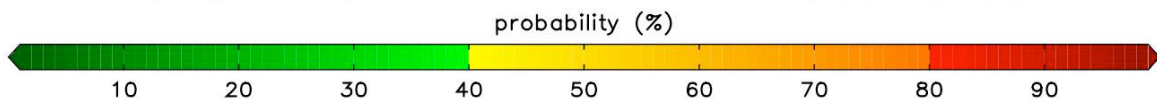
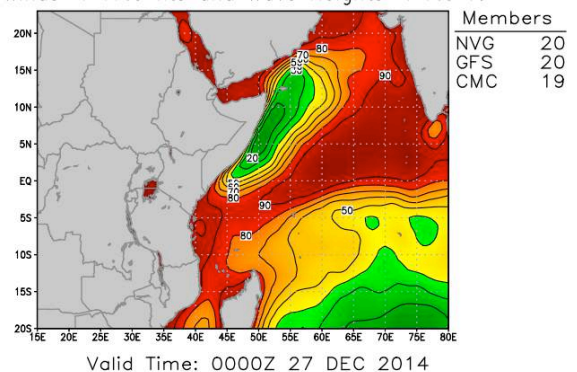
Winds < 15.0 kts and Wave Heights < 5.0 ft



Winds < 17.0 kts and Wave Heights < 7.0 ft



Winds < 17.0 kts and Wave Heights < 7.0 ft



\*\*\* In this graphic, the green shading represents a reduced likelihood of small boats and skiffs operation in the area due to harsh sea conditions, while the red indicates a higher likelihood of favorable sea conditions for skiffs and smaller boats \*\*\*

## On the Ground Reporting

- **15 December 2014** – A joint security operation carried out by Somali security forces and African Union (AU) peacekeepers in the capital Mogadishu has led to the arrest of 228 people. According to sources, security officers conducted house-to-house searches in the Hamarweyen district, where armed men recently killed and wounded several members from Somalia's parliament. Somali police spokesman Col. Kassim Ahmed Roble confirmed the security operations, adding that out of 228 that have been arrested in the operations, 30 are suspected of being al-Shabaab members. Col. Kassim further indicated that the security sweep was aimed at improving the overall security in the capital in the wake of a number of attacks that have been carried out by al-Shabaab fighters.
  - Sources reported Monday that a military base of the African Union mission in Somalia (AMISOM) was attacked during the early morning hours on Monday by al-Shabaab militants. Col. Mohamed Maalin, a Somali Police Force member confirmed the attack, which occurred around 3:00 AM, disclosing that the base "...was attacked by several mortar shells tonight...some of the shells hit the AMISOM compound, while others landed in the ocean." Al-Shabaab fighters targeted the fortified Halane base, which is located in the Somalia capital. The base is AMISOM's largest military base in the East African country, with Col Maalin reporting that the shelling had come from the direction of Wajid district, which is located in the southwestern region of the country. Ten soldiers were killed in the attack, with the militants also burning two military vehicles equipped with anti-aircraft guns. Sheikh Abdiasis Abu Musab, al-Shabaab's military spokesman, later confirmed that the group was behind the attack, indicating that fourteen soldiers had been killed however al-Shabaab often cites a higher death toll than the number that is given by officials.

## Domestic News

- **15 December 2014** – On Wednesday, Somali's president appointed a new prime minister, eleven days after the previous premier was ousted amidst bitter infighting. President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud confirmed that he has appointed political heavyweight Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmakre, 54, who becomes the first person to hold the position twice. The country's parliament must now vote on whether to accept Sharmakre, who is currently Somalia's ambassador to the United States. It remains unclear when the vote will take place. If accepted by Parliament, Sharmakre, a dual Canadian and Somali national, will replace former prime minister Abdiweli Sheikh Ahmed who was ousted by parliament after just over a year in the post. Speaking to reporters, the newly appointed prime minister indicated that he would "continue working on the efforts to bring about stability" and that he will take "...the country the way forward to free elections." The economist held the post of prime minister during the transitional government from 2009 – 2010, when he resigned after falling out with the then president. Most recently, he became in July the first Somali ambassador to the United States in over two decades. He has previously worked for the United Nations as a political advisor. Sharmakre's father was also a former prime minister and was president between 1968 and 1969. He was assassinated by his own bodyguard, effectively paving the way for the takeover by Siad Barre. Barre ruled Somalia until he was toppled in 1991 as the country descended into the civil war. The new prime minister faces the task of reigning in corruption, fighting al-Shabaab, and rebuilding the troubled Horn of Africa nation. Western donors, who have committed billions of dollars to help rebuild Somalia after

two decades of conflict, worry that the political turmoil could threaten Somalia's fragile gains and weaken its fight against al-Shabaab.

## Regional Reporting

- **20 December 2014** – According to witnesses and officials, militants on Saturday opened fire on a passenger bus along the Kenyan coast however they fled the area without injuring anyone. The latest attack in the region comes nearly a month after al-Shabaab militants executed 28 non-Muslim bus passengers in the country. According to one of the passengers, Abarufa Kokane, after stopping the bus by shooting the tires, three of the attackers climbed on board and identified themselves as “mujahedeen.” They later took off after apparently assuming that all those on board the bus were Muslims. The bus, which was carrying around fifty passengers at the time of the attack, was travelling from the port city of Mombasa to Lamu, some 100 kilometres (60 miles) south of the border with Somalia. The attack occurred near the town of Witu, which is located 50 kilometres from Lamu Island. While there were no immediate claims of responsibility, in July, al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for an assault on a bus near the same town, in which seven people were killed. On 22 November, al-Shabaab fighters seized a bus near the northeastern border with Somalia and killed 28 of its non-Muslim passengers, in what they later indicated was revenge for police raids on mosques in Mombasa. Lamu county deputy commissioner Fredrick Ndambuki confirmed Saturday's incident stating, “our soldiers are on the ground hunting down the attackers.” The resort island of Lamu, a UNESCO World Heritage site, has been hit by a string of attacks, which have left scores dead and frightened off foreign tourists. In a series of raids carried out in the Lamu region in June and July, al-Shabaab rebels massacred some 100 people.
- **17 December 2014** – On Friday, Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta signed into law a controversial anti-terrorism bill, which sparked brawls in parliament and charges that it violated basic freedoms. The Kenyan president however has indicated that he is satisfied that the amendments were passed by the National Assembly on Thursday, adding that it did not breach the bill of rights. Speaking to journalists, President Kenyatta disclosed “all concerns raised by the different stakeholders were addressed by the relevant parliamentary committees,” adding “its intent is one – just one – to protect the lives and property of all the citizens of this republic.” The president has called on all Kenyans to read the new law and to ascertain this for themselves. The new law effectively gives authorities sweeping power to crack down on terror suspects however the new law also curtails press freedoms. The controversial measures extend the time police can hold terror suspects from the current 90-day period to nearly a year. It also increases sentences and gives authorities more power to tap phones. Journalists could face up to three years behind bars if their reports “undermine investigations or security operations relating to terrorism,” or if they publish images of terror victims without permission from the police. While the Kenyan government argues that the measures are necessary in order to confront militants, with Kenya recently suffering a string of attacks carried out by Somalia-based al-Shabaab militants, rights groups and the opposition say that the new measures are an assault on basic freedoms. On Thursday, divisions over the legislation triggered heated exchanges between lawmakers that culminated in a brawl and forced the vote to be repeatedly delayed. The president indicated Friday that the conduct of those MP's opposed to the bill was “deplorable.” He has accused them of “being oblivious to the threat that is upon our country at this point in time.” The opposition, civil society groups and the media have all indicated that they will go to court to challenge the legislation. Since last

month, al-Shabaab has killed at least sixty-four people in two attacks in the northeastern region of Mandera, which borders Somalia. Last year, the militant group was responsible for the Westgate shopping center siege in Nairobi in which 67 people died.

- **15 December 2014** – As part of security operations being carried out in the wake of repeated terrorist attacks, Kenya has closed over 500 non-governmental organizations, including fifteen for allegedly fundraising for terrorism. In a statement released Tuesday, the Kenyan government's non-governmental organization (NGO) coordination board disclosed that it has "de-registered 510 organizations for non-compliance with the law," adding "some NGO's have been and continue to be used for criminal activities, including as conduits of terrorism financing in Kenya and in the Horn of Africa. The board has "...frozen their bank accounts and forwarded information on them to relevant government security agencies for immediate action." The statement did not specify the names of these groups however sources have reported that they appear to be aid agencies and charities, with many closed for failing to provide financial audit returns. Several appear to be Christian organizations, orphanages or organizations working in health and development. Since last year's attack, which saw al-Shabaab militants attack the Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi, in which sixty-seven people were killed, Kenya's government has been under fire over its inability to prevent on-going attacks. Earlier this month, Kenya's interior minister and police chief were removed from their posts after al-Shabaab carried out several massacres in the northeastern region of the country. Kenyan lawmakers are currently deliberating proposals to boost security laws, which have been criticized by many as being too tough and restricting freedoms.

## International Developments

- **20 December 2014** – A Sierra Leonean military official has revealed that the West African country is withdrawing from the African Union peacekeeping mission force in Somalia after it was blocked from rotating its soldiers over concerns about the spread of Ebola. Maj Gen. Samuel Omar Williams, the chief of defense staff, confirmed Saturday that troops currently deployed in Somalia will be sent back to Freetown in January "and will not be replaced." A separate statement released by the African Union mission Saturday disclosed that 850 Sierra Leonean troops deployed for twelve months starting in 2013 however the AU halted their rotation in response to Ebola, which according to the World Health Organization (WHO) has killed more than 2,4000 people in Sierra Leone. The mission has indicated that the soldiers will be replaced by troops from other countries "until the virus has been fully contained.
- **19 December 2014** – A former Somali warlord, who was an ally of al-Shabaab before severing contact this summer, has been removed from a United Nations sanctions list. According to sources, Mohamed Said Atom, a powerful arms dealer, had been targeted with UN travel and financial sanctions for "kidnapping, piracy and terrorism," however in June, he announced that he had laid down arms and would now only work through "peaceful means and understanding." At the time, he accused al-Shabaab of being manipulated by a foreign agenda and of killing Muslims. The United Nations Security Council committee that deals with Somalia announced his removal from the sanctions list on Friday. Mohamed Said Atom however remains on the US Treasury's financial sanctions list.

### Map



# GULF OF GUINEA

## Executive Summary

While over the past week pirate and maritime crime activity in the Gulf of Guinea has remained at a low level, the threat of piracy and maritime crime remains high. Officials have reported two suspect pirate vessels, one operating in waters off Congo and the other operating in Gabonese waters. All vessels transiting this region are reminded to remain vigilant. Masters are reminded to remain vigilant at all times and in all regions of the Gulf of Guinea.

## At Sea

### Hijacks:

- None reported during this period.

### Unsuccessful Attacks/Robberies:

- None reported during this period.

### Suspicious Activity:

- None reported during this period.

## Weather Analysis

- **Gulf of Guinea** – Southwest winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 4 – 6 feet.
  - **Extended Forecast** – Southwest winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.
- **Synoptic Discussion** – Expect partly to mostly cloudy conditions for the Gulf of Guinea with associated rain showers.

## SOUTHEAST ASIA

### Executive Summary

The threat of violent attacks, crime and hijackings remains high in waters off Southeast Asia. Pirate Action Groups (PAG's) 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 anytime. 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.

### At Sea

#### Hijacks:

- None reported during this period.

#### Unsuccessful Attacks/Robberies:

- **7 December 2014 (Late Report)** –

#### Suspicious Activity:

- None reported during this period.

### Weather Analysis

- **South China Sea** – Northerly winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 6 – 8 feet.
  - **Extended Forecast** – Northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 8 – 10 feet.
- **Malacca Strait** – Northeast winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the northern Strait; with northeast winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the southern Strait.
  - **Extended Forecast** – Northeast winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the northern Strait; with east-northeast winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the southern Strait.
- **Andaman Sea** – East-northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.
  - **Extended Forecast** – Easterly winds of 13 – 18 knots and seas of 5 – 7 feet.

- **Surface Currents** – Currents in the South China Sea, Malacca Strait average speeds of 1 knots, while currents in the Andaman Sea average between 1 – 2 knots.
- **Synoptic Discussion** – The fall transition continues to influence the region. Expect mostly cloudy conditions with rain showers and thunderstorms.

## SOUTH AMERICA

### Executive Summary

While there have been no recent reported incidents in this region, the threat of violent attacks and robberies remains high in waters throughout South America. Masters are reminded to remain vigilant at all times and in all regions, including ports and anchorages. Attacks and robberies can occur at any time.

### At Sea

**Hijacks:**

- None reported during this period.

**Unsuccessful Attacks/Robberies:**

- None reported during this period.



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