

# 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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  - Special assignments
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  - Crisis management
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- Virtual Security Director service for clients lacking a full time security executive.

References are always available.  
More information is found at [www.msrisk.com](http://www.msrisk.com)

## 24 hr Contact Information:

Email: [operations@msrisk.com](mailto:operations@msrisk.com)  
Telephone: +44 207 754 3555

## Summary (February 16 - 22, 2015 - Week 8; Edition 77)

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

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

**Somalia-Indian Ocean:** One incident reported during this period

**Southeast Asia:** One hijacking and five late reported incidents during this period

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

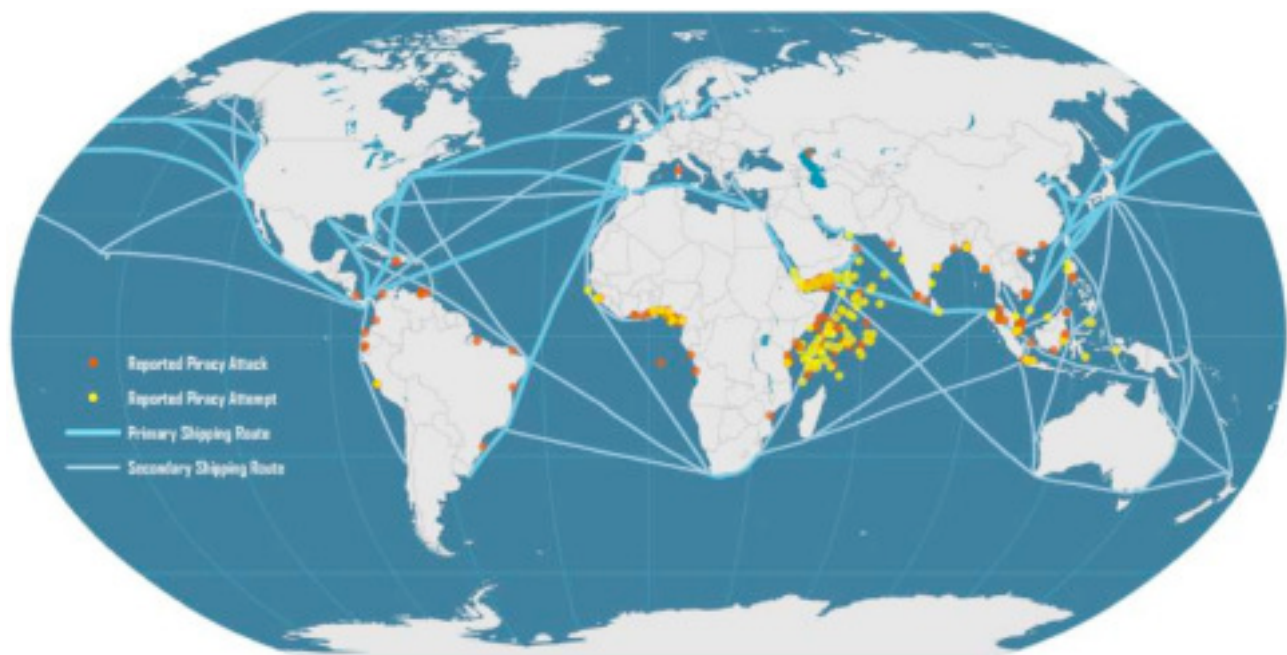
**North America:** No current incidents to report

**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. Sea conditions in the GoA IO are now increasingly favorable for pirate action groups. With three of the four incidents in the past week occurring north of the Bab el Mandeb, vessels transiting the region are advised to remain on high alert.

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:

- **17 February 2015** – At 1120 UTC, in position 14:51N – 052:20E, an MV reported seeing a suspicious vessel with a black hull approaching on the port side to within 2 cables at high speed. Vessel carried out evasive maneuvers and the armed security team on board fired rocket flares. The suspicious vessel then slowed down and changed direction. Ten minutes later, four more suspicious vessels with white hulls approached the vessel on the port and starboard sides at a distance of 5 cables. The MV again carried out evasive maneuvers until the distance increased and the suspicious vessels moved away. No weapons were sighted on board the suspicious vessels. MV and all crewmembers on board have been reported safe.

### Map

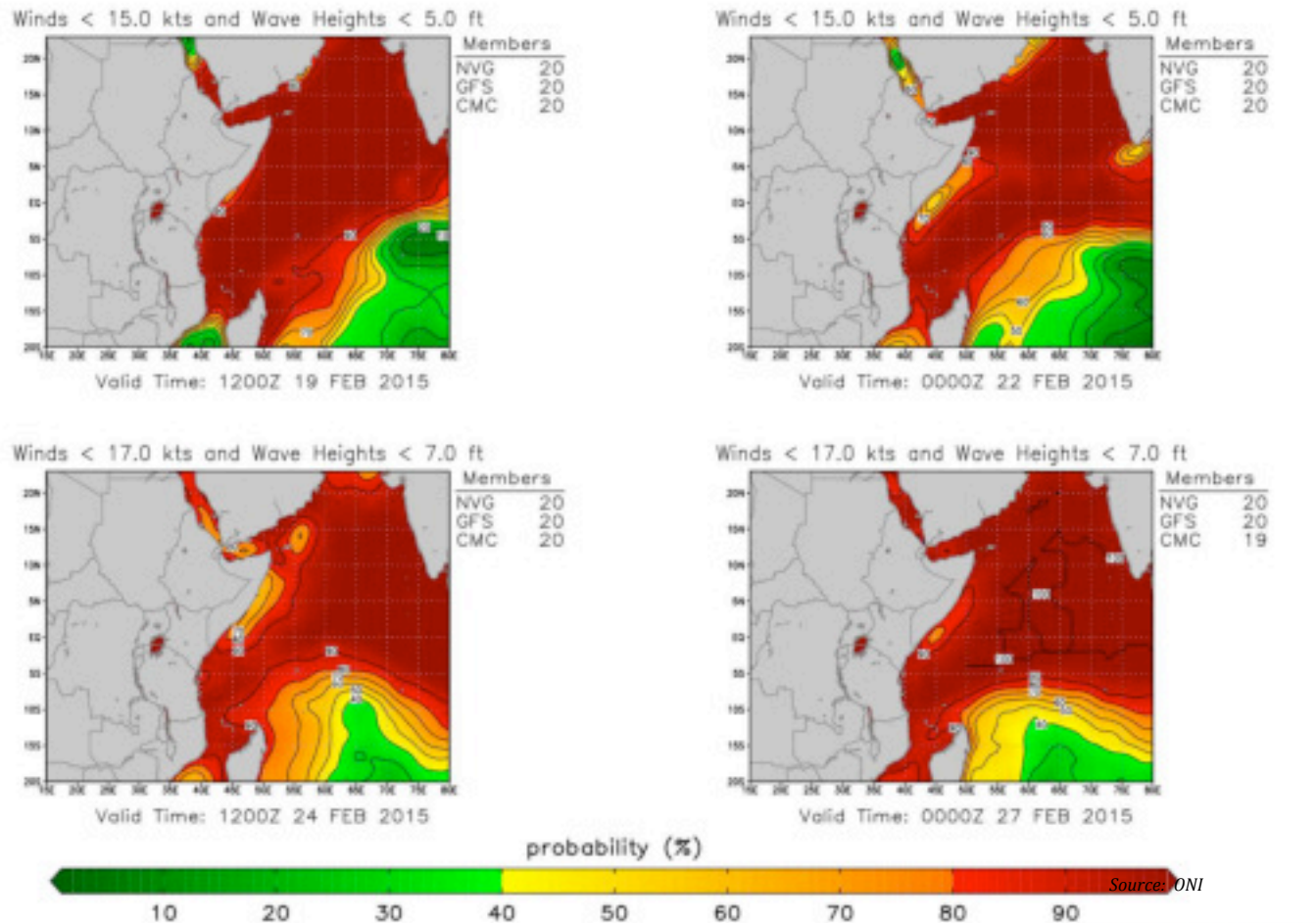




## Weather Analysis

- **North Arabian Sea** – West-southwest winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.
  - **Extended Forecast** – Northwest winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.
- **Gulf of Oman** – West-southwest winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with west-southwest winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.
  - **Extended Forecast** – Easterly winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with southeast winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.
- **Gulf of Aden** – Easterly winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the western section of the Gulf; in the eastern section of the Gulf, winds will be east-northeasterly at 13 – 18 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.
  - **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.
- **Somali Coast** – Northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.
  - **Extended Forecast** – Northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.
- **Central African Coast/Indian Ocean** – Northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.
  - **Extended Forecast** – East-northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.
- **Mozambique Channel** – Northerly winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 4 – 6 feet in the northern Channel; with northerly winds of 12 – 17 knots and seas of 6 – 8 feet in the southern Channel.
  - **Extended Forecast** – Northerly winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 4 – 6 feet in the northern Channel; with northerly winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 4 – 6 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** – The Northeast Monsoon season continues to influence the region. Decreasing winds and abating seas are expected in the Arabian Gulf, with increasing winds and building seas with moderate restricted visibility due to dust in the Gulf of Aden.

## Sea Conditions for the Following Week



\*\*\* 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

- **23 February 2015** - A video, purported to be by Somalia's al-Qaeda-linked militant group al-Shabaab, is urging Muslims to attack shopping malls in the United States, Canada, Britain as well as other Western countries. The video comes just days after the militant group carried out a major attack in central Mogadishu, which targeted ministers of the internationally-backed government. The threat, urging attacks on Western shopping malls, came in the final minutes of a more than hour-long video in which the extremist group also warned neighbouring Kenya of more attacks, similar to the September 2013 assault that targeted the Westgate Shopping Centre in Nairobi, in which 67 people were killed. The newly released video depicted footage from major news organizations showing the assault on the mall and said that it was in reprisal for alleged abuses by Kenyan troops against Muslims in Somalia. The masked narrator concluded the video by calling on Muslims to attack shopping malls, specifically the Mall of America in Minnesota, as well as the West Edmonton Mall in Canada and the Westfield Mall in Stratford, England. The narrator, who had his face wrapped in a black-and-white scarf and was wearing a camouflage jacket, spoke with a British accent and appeared to be of Somali origin. Speaking in the video, the man stated, "what if such an attack were to occur in the Mall of American in Minnesota? Or the West Edmonton Mall in Canada? Or in London's Oxford Street?" He then called for Britain's Westfield shopping centre to be targeted. In response to the video, US Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson has urged people to remain vigilant, adding that he took the threat serious. Speaking on morning talks show in the US on Sunday, Mr Johnson called the video "the new phase" of the global terrorist threat, stating "these groups are relying more and more on independent actors to become inspired, drawn to the cause and they'll attack on their own," adding "I am very concerned about serious potential threats of independent actors here in the United States. We've seen this now in Europe, we've seen this in Canada." When asked about the specific threat against the Mall of America, Mr Johnson stated, "any time a terrorist organization calls for an attack on a specific place we've got to take that seriously. What we're telling the public is you've got to be vigilant.... There will be enhanced security there that will be apparent, but public vigilance, public awareness and public caution in situations like this is particularly important. It's the environment we're in." A statement released by the Mall of America, which is located in Bloomington, Minnesota and which is one of the nation's largest shopping centre's, indicated that officials are "aware of a threatening video which includes a mention and images of the mall," adding that additional security have been put in place. On the ground sources have reported that shoppers seemed undeterred Sunday by threat. In Kenya, the government has dismissed the new video. Interior Ministry spokesman Mwenda Njoka stated Sunday that al-Shabaab is "...using propaganda to legitimize what cannot be legitimized. When you lead a group to go and attack a shopping mall and kill innocent shoppers that cannot be legitimized, those were not soldiers.... Muslims also died in the Westgate attack. It's in our interest to ensure Somalia is stabilized because the instability affects us. The video is cheap propaganda trying to re-write history and to get more support from those (who) support them." Although al-Shabaab has carried out attacks in neighbouring Kenya, Uganda and Djibouti, which all have troops that are fighting the extremist group as part of the multinational African Union (AU) force, al-Shabaab, which is affiliated with al-Qaeda, has never operated outside East Africa and the Horn of Africa. Minnesota, which is home to the largest Somali population in the United States, has been the target of terror recruiters in the past. Since 2007, more than 22 young Somali men from Minnesota have travelled to Somalia in a bid to join al-Shabaab. Authorities have reported that within the last year a handful of



Minnesota residents have also travelled to Syria to fight with militant groups operating in the region. At least one Minnesotan has died while fighting for the Islamic State group. On Thursday, a 19-year-old Minneapolis man, who was stopped at a New York City airport in November 2014 as he and three others were allegedly attempting to travel to Syria, was indicted on charges associated with supporting the Islamic State group.

- **21 February 2015** – Somali intelligence sources disclosed Saturday that twin bombings at a Mogadishu hotel popular with officials and ministers were carried out by Dutch nationals. Somali intelligence officials believe that both suicide bombers, a man and a woman, were Dutch-Somali citizens who infiltrated the Central Hotel, which is located close to the presidential palace, ahead of the attack. Sources within the Somali National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) have disclosed that the man, who has been identified as Ismail Muse, exploded a bomb in a car parked at the hotel while the woman, Lula Ahmed Dahir, detonated her explosive vest inside the hotel's prayer room. According to an intelligence report, the woman "worked part time in the hotel for up to four months... Her relationship to the male attacker... is not yet known but thought to be very close, if not husband." Friday's attack killed twenty-five people, including two MP's, the deputy mayor of Mogadishu, the Prime Minister's private secretary and the deputy PM's chief of staff. Deputy PM Mohamed Arte, the minister of transport and minister of port and marine resources were amongst the dozens injured. Al-Shabaab fighters have staged a number of assaults in a bid to overthrow the country's internationally-backed government. In the past, the militant group has targeted hotels, the international airport, the presidential palace, a UN compound and restaurants. The last most deadly attack, which targeted the government, occurred in December 2009, when al-Shabaab gunmen went room-to room in the Shamo Hotel, killing twenty-five people, including three ministers.
- **20 February 2015** – At least twenty people have been killed and several MP's injured in an attack that targeted a hotel in the center of the Somali capital Mogadishu on Friday. Two large explosions followed by gunfire were heard at the Central Hotel, which is often frequented by politicians. According to police officer Major Nur Mohamed, "first the car bomb exploded at the gate of the hotel, then a suicide bomber blew himself up in the hotel compound," adding, "there were ministers and legislators inside the hotel. I have seen many people with injuries, including a lawmaker." The blast occurred around lunchtime on Friday, when hotels are often busy for the Somali weekend. Police officials have reported that the country's deputy prime minister and transport minister were amongst those wounded in Friday's attack. Shortly after the attack, al-Shabaab claimed responsibility.
- **17 February 2015** – On Tuesday, a renowned businessman was shot and killed in the Hiran regional capital of Beledweyne in the central region of Somalia. Security officials have disclosed that unidentified assailants killed Omar Muhumad Nur along with a bodyguard in front of his home. On the ground sources have reported that the attackers fled the scene shortly after the attack. No group has claimed responsibility for the incident. Somali government forces along with African Union (AU) troops have launched search operations in several neighborhoods. **Update (18 February)** – Somali security forces, with the help of AU troops, have arrested fifty people suspected of being involved in the killing of a renowned businessman who was gunned down on Tuesday. Beledweyne Mayor Mohamed Osman told reporters Wednesday morning that the fifty suspects have been taken to the local police station where they will be questioned about Tuesday's incident.
- **16 February 2015** – On Monday, militants killed four airport workers in a drive-by shooting in the center of Mogadishu. According to a police officer, the Mogadishu airport's deputy director was one of the people

killed in Monday's attack, which took place near the airport in the K4 neighborhood, which is a busy business district. Police officer Nur Ismail disclosed "armed men in a car opened fire on Mogadishu aviation workers... The workers died then and there and the attackers escaped." Sheikh Abdiasis Abu Musab, al-Shabaab's military operations spokesman, confirmed that the militant group was behind Monday's attack and warned that al-Shabaab will "...step up killing those who work for the government or at their airport." Al-Shabaab has in the past targeted Mogadishu's main airport, Aden Adde International Airport, with suicide bombers and mortar attacks. The airport has in recent years been refurbished and several major upgrades are planned as more international airlines are expressing interest in flying to Somalia.

- A military court in Somalia's semi-autonomous region of Puntland has sentenced four suspects to the death penalty for having links to al-Shabaab. The four men were found to have links to the extremist group, which is affiliated to al-Qaeda. Their trial, which took place in the port town of Bossaso, lasted several hours. Two other members were sentenced to serve life in prison. Prosecutor Abdifatah Haji Adan has indicated that the men were preparing to participate in a terrorist operation in Puntland. In recent years, Puntland authorities have launched a series of operations that have targeted al-Shabaab militants while the region's military has sentenced members and other individuals linked to the terrorist group, handing out tough punishments, including the death penalty. In 2013, Puntland executed 13 suspected al-Shabaab members, including a woman, after the military court found them guilty of orchestrating an assassination of a famous scholar, Dr Ahmed Haji Abdirahman. Al-Shabaab however denied that the individuals were part of the group.

# GULF OF GUINEA

## Executive Summary

Pirate and maritime crime activity in waters off West Africa is currently at a medium level. Over this reporting period, there was one reported hijacking, two reported kidnappings and one reported attack. All vessels transiting this region are reminded to remain vigilant.

## At Sea

### Hijacks:

- None reported during this period.

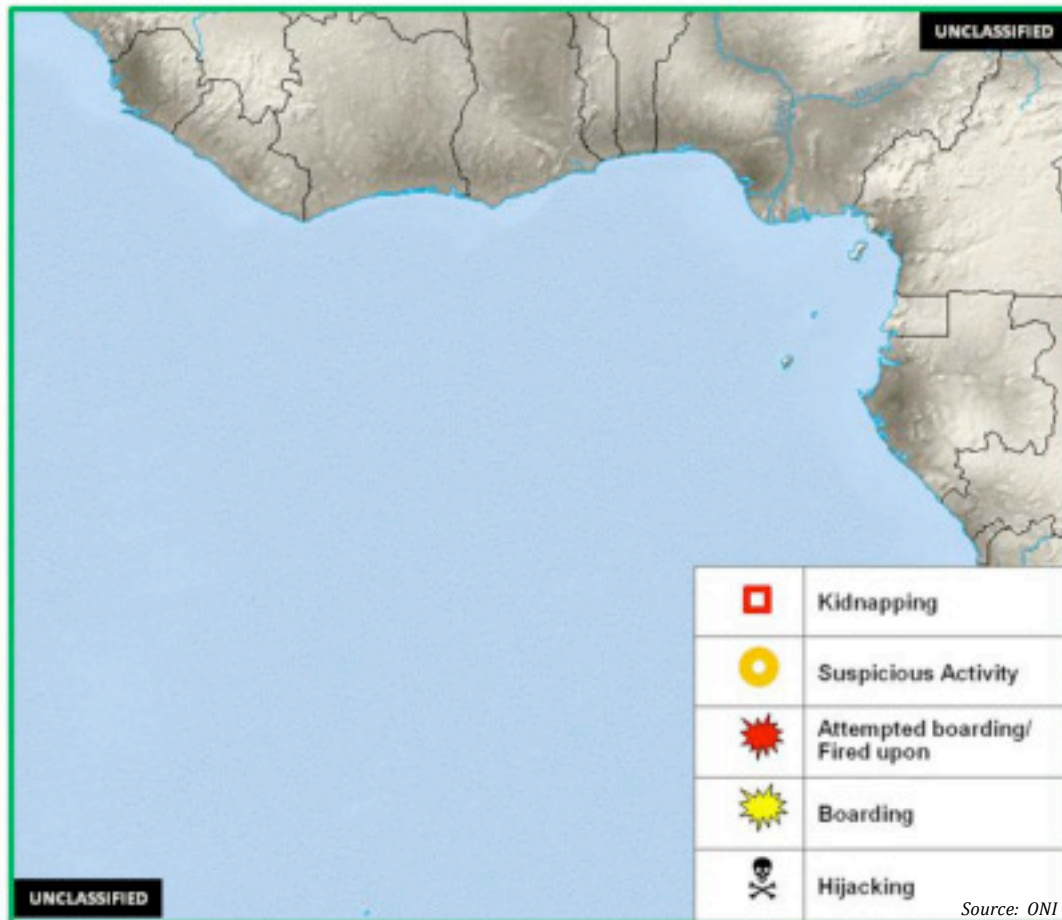
### Unsuccessful Attacks/Robberies:

- None reported during this period.

### Suspicious Activity:

- None reported during this period.

## Map



## Weather Analysis

- **Gulf of Guinea** – Southerly winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 3 – 5 feet.
  - **Extended Forecast** – Southwest winds of 10 – 15 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:

- **13 February 2015 (Late Report)** – Six to eight robbers, armed with pistols and knives, hijacked the MT Lapin from a small boat near position 03:11N – 100:43E, approximately 40 nautical miles west-southwest of Port Klang, Malaysia. The perpetrators gathered the crewmembers and took control of the tanker. Later, an unknown vessel came alongside the LAPIN and siphoned a total of five tons of diesel and 2,000 tons of bunker oil from the ship. After the pirates had siphoned the fuel and oil, they destroyed the communication devices on board the vessel and stole the ship's property and crewmember's belongings. The perpetrators also tied the crewmembers and informed them that an improvised explosive package was left on board. The threatened the crewmembers not to move before they escaped. The crewmembers managed to free themselves and obtained assistance from a passing vessel, where they informed authorities of the incident. An investigation carried out by Thai authorities found that the alleged bomb onboard the vessel was fake.

#### Unsuccessful Attacks/Robberies:

- None reported during this period.

#### Suspicious Activity:

- **14 February 2015 (Late Report)** – Ten robbers armed with knives boarded a berthed bulk carrier near position 03:47N – 098:41E, Berth 107, Belawan Port. When the duty crewman spotted the robbers, the alarm was raised and the robbers fled with cargo from the vessel. Local authorities later boarded the vessel and carried out an inspection.
  - Five robbers boarded an anchored vessel near position 20:36.9N – 106:51.3E, Haiphong OPL Anchorage. When the duty crewman on routine rounds saw the robbers on the forecastle deck, he raised the alarm and the crew was mustered. Upon hearing the alarm and seeing the crew's



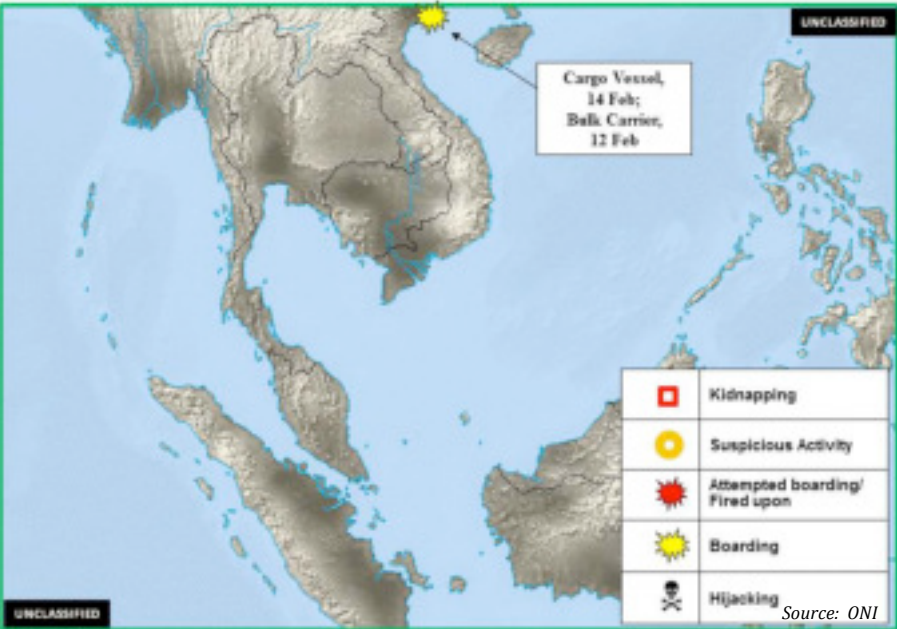
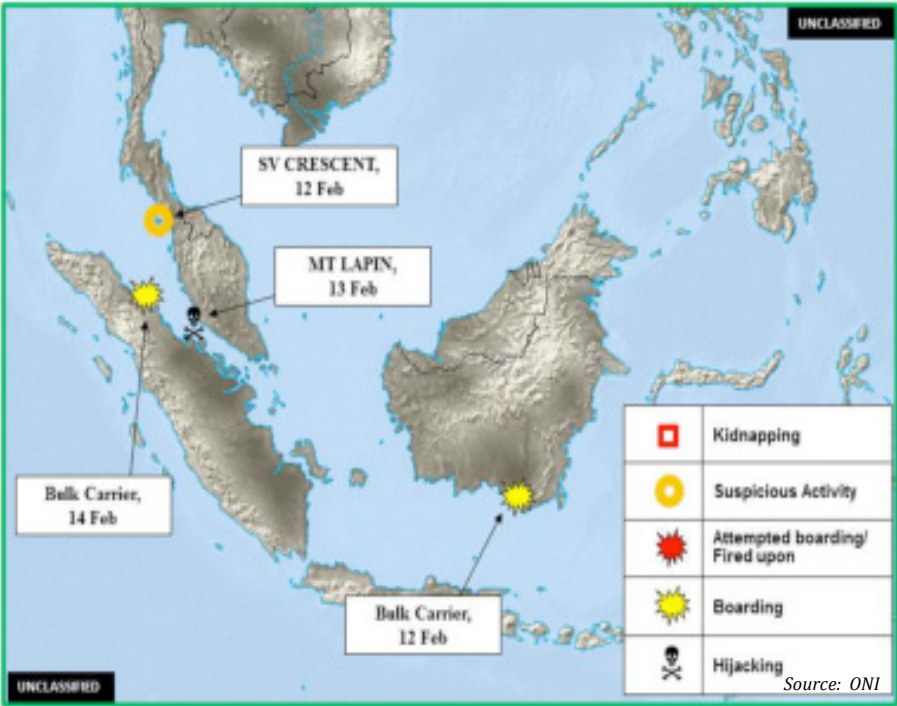
response, the robbers escaped in their wooden motorboat. An investigation carried out by the crew revealed that the paint store door was damaged and ship's stores were stolen.

- **12 February 2015 (Late Report)** - Five robbers armed with knives boarded an anchored bulk carrier near position 20:41N – 107:12E, Hongai Outer Anchorage. When the Duty Officer saw movement on the forecastle, he instructed the duty crewman to check the area. When the crewman arrived at the forecastle, he saw the robbers escaping in a small boat. Upon checking the vessel, the crew discovered that the ship's stores and property were stolen by the robbers.
  - Two robbers boarded an anchored bulk carrier using hooks attached with ropes near position 03:41S – 114:28E, Taboneo Anchorage. When the duty crewman spotted the robbers, the alarm was raised and the crew was mustered. Upon seeing the crew's response, the robbers escaped in their boat. Upon investigation, it was found that two padlocks were broken however nothing was stolen.

#### Other:

- **12 February 2015 (Late Report)** – Police seized five rifles and hundreds of bullets from the sailing yacht CRESCENT, berthed in Langkawi and owned by a South African man who has since gone missing. State Police Chief Datuk Zamri Yahya has stated that three telescopic sights and silencers were also recovered from the yacht. The sailboat was reportedly left at the Rebak Marina jetty last August by its owner. According to the Police Chief, all the firearms, ammunition and equipment were hidden in a bedroom at the rear of the boat. Police are also investigating whether there is a link between this seizure and that of two previous cases, in which 23 firearms and thousands of bullets were seized from foreign-registered boats in Langkawi last September. The Police Chief stated that the owners of the boats in the previous cases were also South Africans.

Map



## Weather Analysis

- **South China Sea** – Northeast winds of 10 - 15 knots and seas of 4 - 6 feet.
  - **Extended Forecast** – Northeast winds of 5 - 10 knots with seas of 2 - 4 feet.
- **Malacca Strait** – West-southwest winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the northern Strait; with variable winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the southern Strait.
  - **Extended Forecast** – Northerly winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the northern Strait; with variable winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the southern Strait.
- **Andaman Sea** – Northwest winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.
  - **Extended Forecast** – Northwest winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.
- **Surface Currents** – Currents in the South China Sea and in the Malacca Strait will average speeds of 1 knot while currents in the Andaman Sea will average between 1 – 2 knots.
- **Synoptic Discussion** – Expect increasing cloud 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.



South Suite, Ragnall House, 18 Peel Road  
Douglas, Isle of Man, IM1 4LZ

24 hr Global Contact: +44 207 754 3555

[www.msrisk.com](http://www.msrisk.com)

### **Directors**

S.J. Bingham, V.K. Prentice, P.O.J Tracy

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