

# Maritime Security Review



Issue No. 27

10 July 2017

MS | RISK

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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](mailto:info@msrisk.com).

# INCIDENTS AT SEA

Reporting Period: 3 - 8 July 2017

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

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

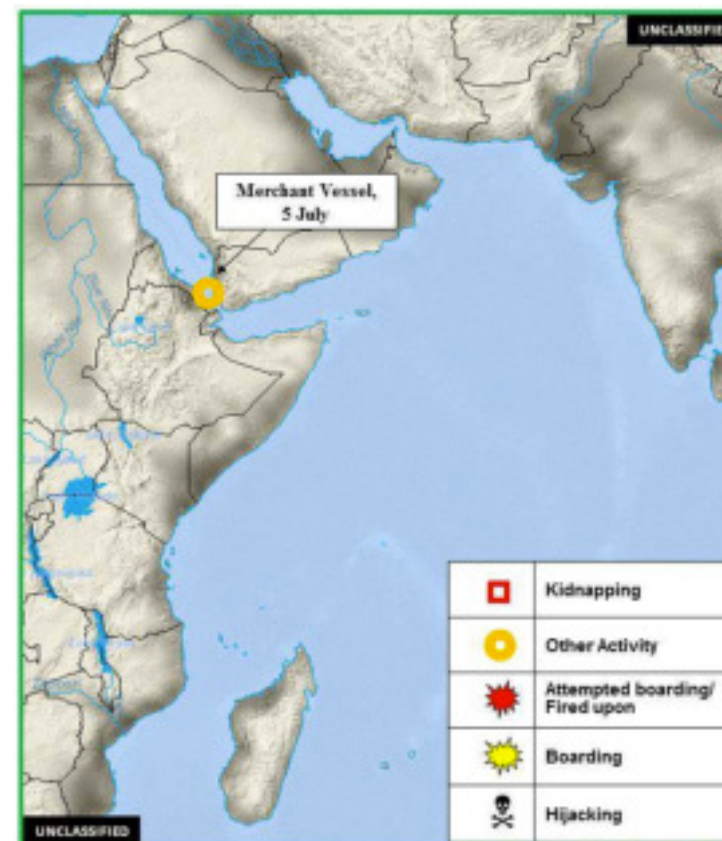
- No current incidents to report

#### OTHER ACTIVITY

- **5 July (Red Sea)** – A merchant vessel was approached by seven skiffs in position 14:17 N – 042:21 E, in the southern Red Sea. Closest point of approach was 320 metres. Five to six persons were sighted on each skiff, carrying weapons. Vessel and crewmembers on board have been reported safe.

#### INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



#### MARITIME REPORTING

- Nothing to report



# WEATHER FORECAST: GULF OF ADEN/ARABIAN SEA

## WEATHER FORECAST VALID FROM 6 – 12 JULY 2017

**NORTHERN ARABIAN SEA:** Southwest winds of 15 – 20 knots, gusting to 25 knots, with seas of 10 – 12 feet.

- **Extended Forecast:** Southwest winds of 15 – 20 knots, gusting to 25 knots, with seas of 10 – 12 feet.

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

- **Extended Forecast:** Westerly winds of 10 – 15 knots, gusting to 20 knots, and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with southwest winds of 10 – 15 knots, gusting to 20 knots, and seas of 3 – 5 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.

**GULF OF ADEN:** Southwest winds of 15 – 20 knots, gusting to 25 knots, and seas of 6 – 8 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with southwest winds of 15 – 20 knots, gusting to 25 knots, and seas of 6 – 8 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.

- **Extended Forecast:** Southwest winds of 15 – 20 knots, gusting to 25 knots, and seas of 5 – 7 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with southwest winds of 10 – 15 knots, gusting to 20 knots, and seas of 4 – 6 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.

**SOMALI COAST:** Southwest winds of 25 – 30 knots, gusting to 35 knots, and seas of 10 – 14 feet in the northern section of the coastline; with southwest winds of 15 – 20 knots, gusting to 25 knots, and seas of 7 – 9 feet in the southern section of the coastline.

- **Extended Forecast:** Southwest winds of 25 – 30 knots, gusting to 35 knots, and seas of 10 – 14 feet in the northern section of the coastline; with south-southwest winds of 20 – 25 knots, and seas of 7 – 9 feet in the southern section of the coastline.

**CENTRAL AFRICAN COAST/INDIAN OCEAN:** Southerly winds of 15 – 20 knots, gusting to 25 knots, and seas of 7 – 9 feet.

- **Extended Forecast:** Southerly winds of 15 – 20 knots, gusting to 25 knots, and seas of 7 – 9 feet.

**MOZAMBIQUE CHANNEL:** Southerly winds of 10 – 15 knots, gusting to 20 knots, and seas of 3 – 5 feet in the northern Channel; with easterly winds of 10 – 15 knots, and seas of 8 – 10 feet in the southern Channel.

- **Extended Forecast:** Southeast winds of 15 – 20 knots and seas of 3 – 5 feet in the northern Channel; with southeast winds of 15 – 20 knots, gusting to 25 knots, and seas of 7 – 9 feet in the southern Channel.

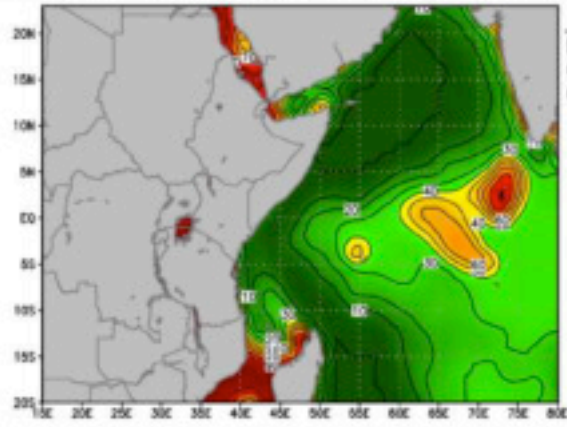
**SURFACE CURRENTS:** The northern Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Aden currents are variable with most areas having an average speed of 1 knot. The Mozambique Channel currents are variable having an average speed of 2 knots. Currents speeds along the Somali Basin are northeasterly averaging between 2 –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

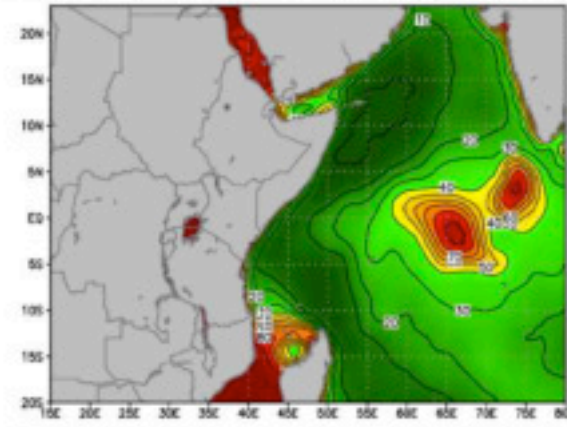
Winds < 15.0 kts and Wave Heights < 5.0 ft



Members	
NVG	20
GFS	20
CMC	20

Valid Time: 1200Z 07 JUL 2017

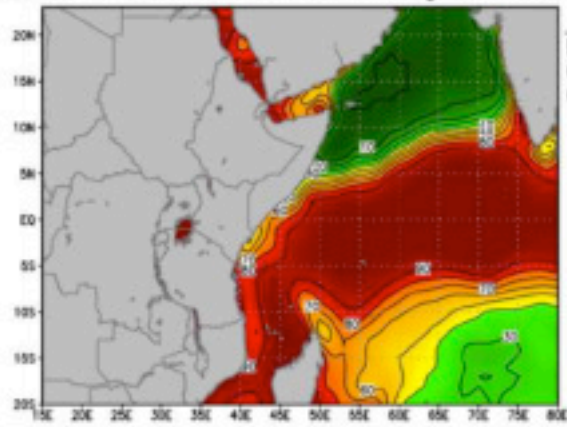
Winds < 15.0 kts and Wave Heights < 5.0 ft



Members	
NVG	20
GFS	20
CMC	20

Valid Time: 0000Z 10 JUL 2017

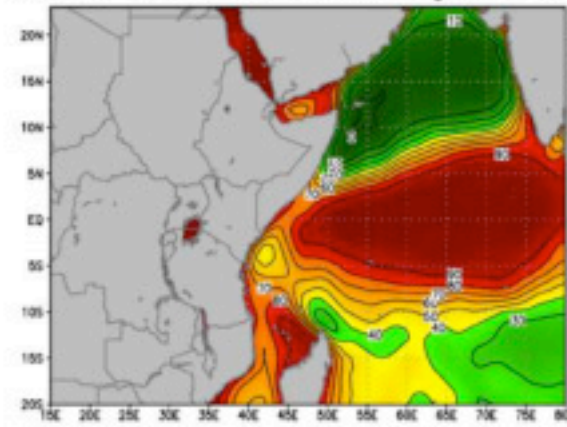
Winds < 17.0 kts and Wave Heights < 7.0 ft



Members	
NVG	20
GFS	20
CMC	20

Valid Time: 1200Z 12 JUL 2017

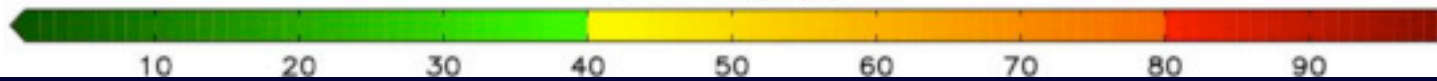
Winds < 17.0 kts and Wave Heights < 7.0 ft



Members	
NVG	20
GFS	20
CMC	20

Valid Time: 0000Z 15 JUL 2017

probability (%)



## SPOTLIGHT ON YEMEN

### PORT STATUS AS OF 9 JULY 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 <b>WARNING*</b>	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

Security conditions surrounding **Hodeida port** are subject to change. Shipmasters and crew are urged to remain abreast of current conditions in the area, and ensure that security measured aboard vessels are in place.

## ACTIVITY REPORTING

### HODEIDAH PORT WARNING

- 5 July – Multiple reports indicate that Houthi rebels and Saleh supporters, with the aid of Iran's Revolutionary Guards, have planted a number of Iranian-made, camouflaged naval mines of different sizes in the area around Hodeidah port.** These reports follow previous information that Houthi rebels have used locally produced moored mines near the port of Midi. The use of moored mines is a shift from the free-floating sea mines, such as the one that a Yemeni Coast Guard vessel struck in March, killing two and injuring eight. A joint maritime alliance, including the US, Saudi Arabia, Britain and France and other countries has stepped up deployment after recent attacks on merchant ships. **Vessels are warned to proceed with extreme caution in the areas surrounding Hodeidah port.**
- 5 July –** There have been 275,987 suspected cholera cases and 1,634 deaths from the illness in Yemen between April 27 and July 5, the WHO said in a statement Wednesday. Children under the age of 15 make up 41% of these cases, and people older than 60 account for 33% of the deaths. The WHO said in a statement last week, "we are now facing the worst cholera outbreak in the world." All but two of the nation's governorates have been hit by the outbreak.
- 2 July –** Two suspected al Qaeda militants were killed in a drone strike while traveling on a motorbike in southern Yemen late on Saturday, residents said. The men died on the outskirts of al-Wadei town in Abyan province, said residents who identified one of them as a local leader for the militant group called Ibrahim al-Adani. There was no immediate statement from the militants or from U.S. forces who have repeatedly launched drone and air strikes on Yemen's al Qaeda branch, Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP).



### **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.

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## HIJACKS

- 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

## KIDNAPPING

- No current incidents to report

## SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

- No current incidents to report

## OTHER ACTIVITY

- No current incidents to report

## MARITIME REPORTING

- Nothing to report

## WEATHER FORECAST: GULF OF GUINEA

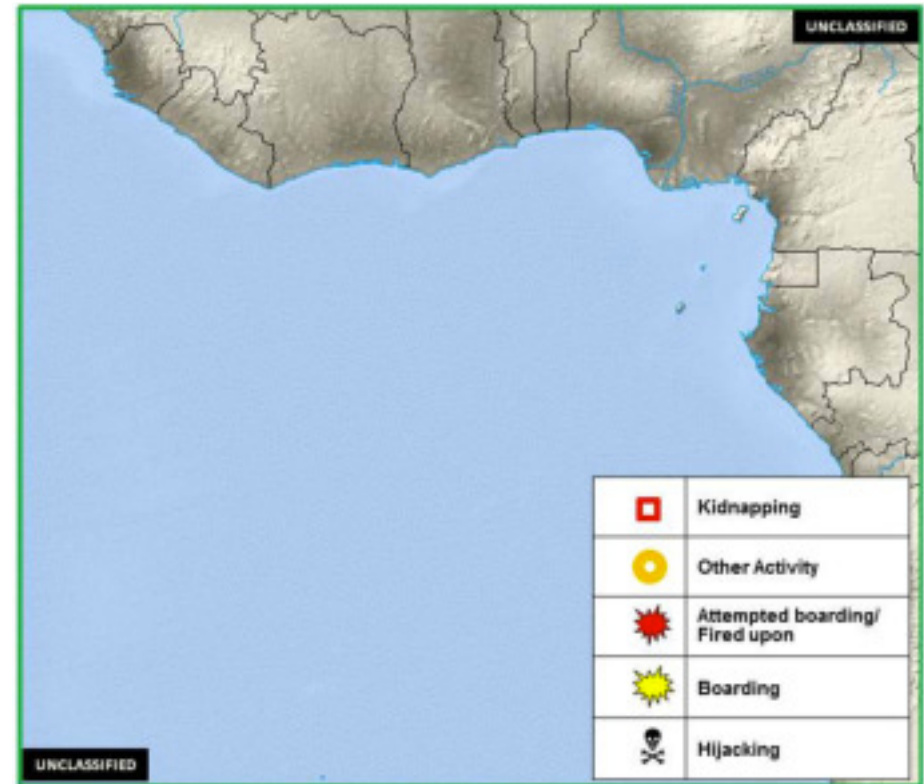
**GULF OF GUINEA:** Southerly winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 5 – 7 feet.

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

**SYNOPTIC DISCUSSION:** High pressure continues to dominate the weather in the region producing relatively light winds across the Somali Basin. Isolated thunderstorms and rain showers can be routinely expected along the Somali and West Africa 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.

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### HIJACKS

- No current incidents to report

### KIDNAPPING

- **11 November 2016 (Philippines – Incident Update)** – Ten persons armed with guns approached the underway bulk carrier *ROYAL 16* near position 06:40 N – 12:31 E, 10 nautical miles north-northeast of Basilan Island. The vessel's Master raised the alarm and activated the SSAS. The armed persons boarded the vessel and took its crew hostage. They stole ship's property, kidnapped six crewmen, and escaped. One crewman was injured during the incident, which was reported to the Philippines coast Guard. A patrol vessel was dispatched and the authorities boarded and escorted the vessel to a safe port. **Update (5 July)** – The Philippine military has reported that two Vietnamese men have been

beheaded by Philippine Islamist group Abu Sayyaf. Their bodies were found on Basilan Island in the country's south, a stronghold of the group. The two victims were part of six Vietnamese sailors, onboard bulk carrier *ROYAL 16*, kidnapped by the militants last year. Three of the hostages are thought to be still held while one was freed last month. The southern Philippines region has seen a surge in Islamist militancy with recent fighting in the city of Marawi claiming more than 400 lives since May 2016.

#### UNSUCCESSFUL ATTACKS/ROBBERIES

- No current incidents to report

#### VESSELS FIRED UPON/ATTEMPTED BOARDINGS/ATTACK

- No current incidents to report

#### VESSELS BOARDED

- **13 June (Indonesia – Late Report)** – Duty crewman onboard an offshore supply vessel anchored near position 01:00 – 104:14 E, Singatac Anchorage, Pulau Bintan, noticed four suspicious persons in a small boat near the ship's whistle and shouted at the robbers. Upon seeing the alerted crewmembers, the robbers escaped. A search of the vessel was carried out and nothing was reported stolen.

#### SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

- No current incidents to report

#### OTHER ACTIVITY REPORT

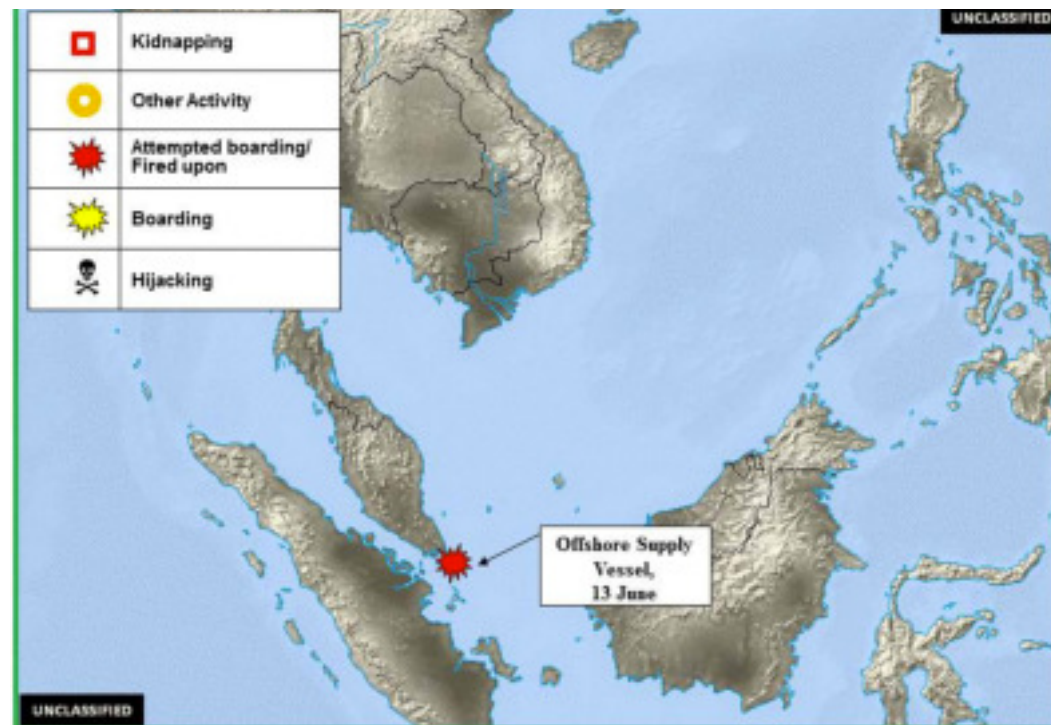
- No current incidents to report

#### MARITIME REPORTING

- Nothing to report

#### INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI





## WEATHER FORECAST FOR SOUTHEAST ASIA

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

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

**MALACCA STRAIT:** Northwest winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the northern Strait; with southeast winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 2 feet in the southern Strait.

- **Extended Forecast:** Northwest 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, gusting to 20 knots, and seas of 3 – 5 feet in the northern section; with southwest winds of 10 – 15 knots, and seas of 4 – 6 feet in the southern section.

- **Extended Forecast:** Southwest winds of 10 – 15 knots, gusting to 20 knots, and seas of 3 – 5 feet in the northern section; with southwest winds of 10 – 15 knots, and seas of 3 – 5 feet in the southern section.

**SOUTHERN SULU SEA – NORTHERN CELEBES 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 – 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 day time heating.

# WORLDWIDE

## NORTH AMERICA

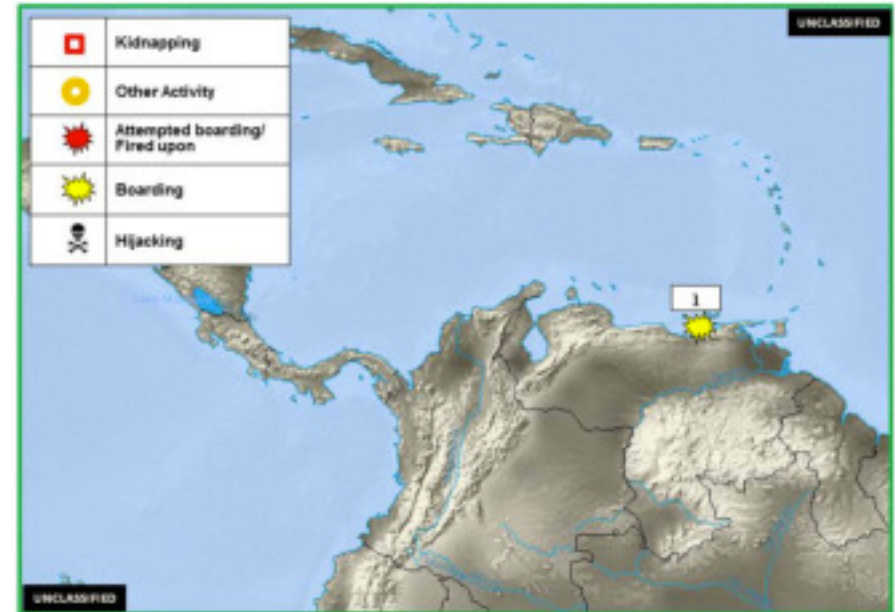
- No current incidents to report

## CENTRAL AMERICA/CARIBBEAN/SOUTH AMERICA

1. **30 June (Venezuela – Late Report)** – Five robbers boarded a chemical tanker anchored near position 10:16 N – 064:42 W, Puerto La Cruz Anchorage. The robbers entered the forepeak storeroom. Alert crewman noticed the robbers and raised the alarm, resulting in the robbers escaping without stealing anything.

## INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



## NORTHERN EUROPE/ENGLISH CHANNEL/BALTIC

- No current incidents to report

## MEDITERRANEAN/BLACK SEA

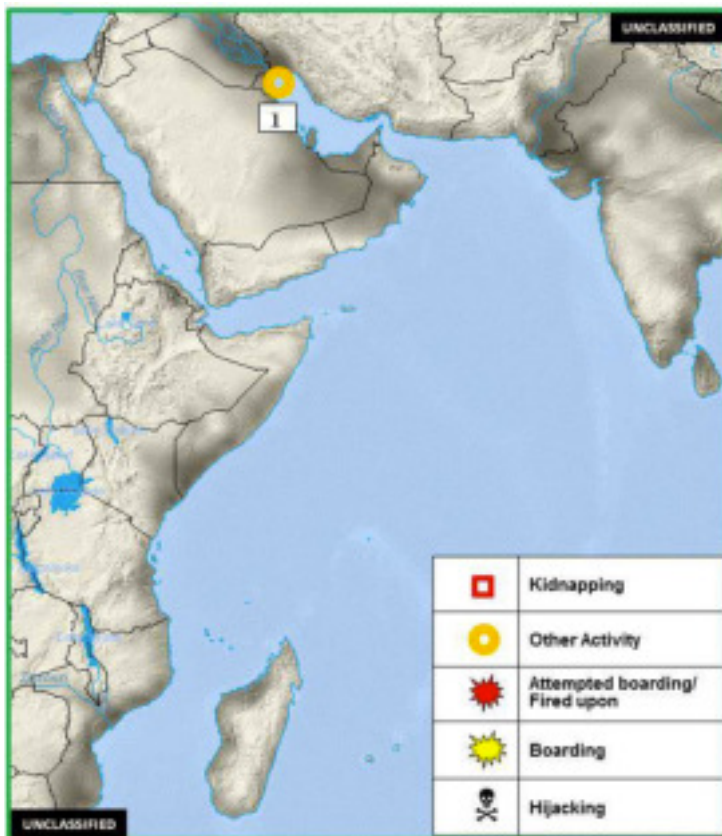
- No current incidents to report

## ARABIAN GULF

1. **5 July (Kuwait)** – Kuwaiti officials stated that they had arrested two Egyptians and one Kuwaiti for attempting to smuggle drugs into the country by sea. The smugglers were caught with 47 kilograms of hashish, one kilogram of heroin and 9,000 captagon pills.

### INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



## EAST ASIA/INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

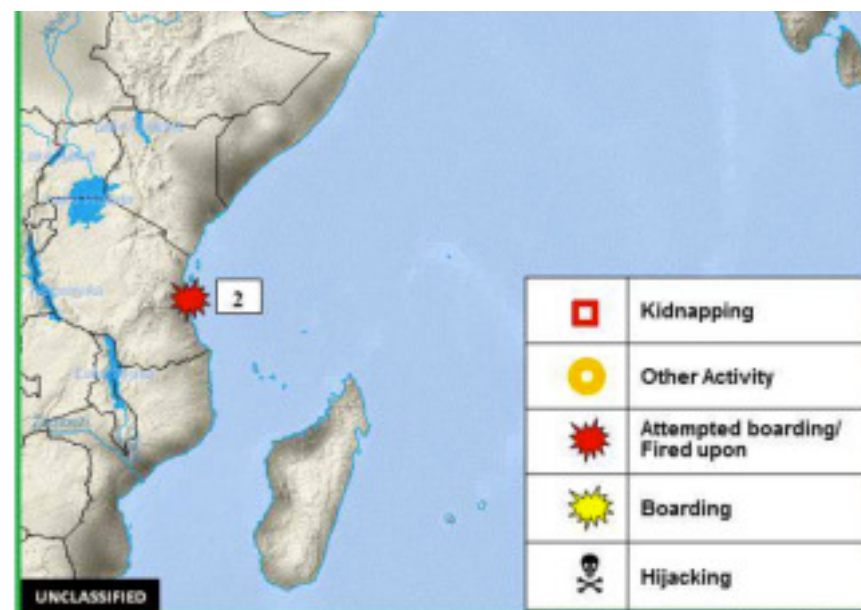
- No current incidents to report

## EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

2. **2 July (Mozambique – Late Report)** – A duty crewman onboard a container ship anchored near position 14:22 S – 040:42 E, Nacala Anchorage, noticed two robbers attempting to board the ship. The alarm was raised and the crew was mustered. Upon seeing the crew's alertness, the robbers escaped without stealing anything.

### INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



## NORTHEAST ASIA

- No current incidents to report

## PACIFIC OCEAN/SOUTHERN OCEAN

1. **29 June (Australia – Late Report)** – Authorities found 92 kilograms of cocaine in a shipping container onboard the container ship *SPIRIT OF SHANGHAI* in the port of Melbourne.

### INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



# MIGRATION



***During this summer period, migrants are likely to continue to attempt the perilous crossing to Europe by transiting the central Mediterranean route in rubber dinghies and rickety boats from lawless Libya, where people smugglers continue to operate with impunity.***

- **8 July** – According to a coast guard officer, Libyan coast guards rescued about 85 migrants off the shore east of Tripoli on Saturday, adding that about forty migrants are believed to be missing. Muammar Mohamed Milad, a local coast guard official, disclosed that the migrants were rescued about 10 km (6 miles) northwest of the town of Garabulli after fishing boats spotted them at sea. He stated, “due to the heavy load on the rubber boat, the wooden base got broken and it started sinking,” adding “according to the survivors about 40 others are missing, including seven children.” The body of one woman had already been recovered. Garabulli is located about 50 km (30 miles) east of the capital and is a common departure point for migrants trying to reach Europe. Smugglers

usually cram the migrants into flimsy rubber boats with homemade wooden bases.

- **7 July** – The number of migrants crossing into Spain by sea from North Africa has doubled in 2017 compared to last year, effectively outpacing the Libya-Italy route as the fastest growing entry point to Europe. The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) has reported that the spike in migrant boats is already placing a lot of stress on Spain’s insufficient migration structures. According to the UNHCR, more than 360,000 refugees and migrants arrived on European shores across the Mediterranean in 2016, with many escaping conflicts and poverty. So far this year, more than 85,000 have reached Italy. Officials are now indicating that while the Italian sea route remains the most popular overall, with 59,000 migrants taking this route between January and May 2017 – up 32 percent from last year, the Spanish route further west is gathering steam, with 6,800 migrants using this route during the same period – an increase of 75 percent from 2016. Officials have added that in June, the trend was even more pronounced, as 1,900 migrants, mostly young men originating from Guinea, Ivory Coast, Gambia and Cameroon, reached the shores of the southern region of Andalusia, effectively quadrupling the numbers that were registered in the same month last year. In West Africa, the number of migrants that have been spotted in the Agadez region of Niger, which is a key stop on the way to Libya from West Africa, has also dramatically fallen. Buba Fubareh, a 27-year-old mason from Banjul, Gambia, who tried and failed to get to Europe via Libya earlier this year, disclosed that “people are talking about going to Spain. It seems like it is safest to go through Morocco to Spain than through Libya. The difference is that Libya doesn’t have a president and Morocco does – there are no guns like in Libya.” Many African migrants who have passed through Libya have reported having been beaten up, detained in camps with no food or water and even traded as slaves before being held for ransom, forced labour or sexual exploitation. Officials have also noted that a similar reorganization has also taken place within the Western Mediterranean route itself, with the Alboran Sea, which connects northeastern Morocco and southeastern Spain, being now more popular than the previously favoured Gibraltar strait or Ceuta and Melilla land borders where policing has increased. According to government data, migrant arrivals on the Spanish coastline averaged just under 5,000 a year between 2010 and 2016, down from a peak of 39,180 in 2006. Government data shows that it is on track to top 11,000 this year. The UNHCR has indicated that the country was



unprepared to handle vulnerable groups, such as victims of trafficking or unaccompanied minors and refugees who should be channelled through asylum procedures. So far, Spain has given a lukewarm response to a request from Italy last month to fellow European union (EU) countries to allow rescue boats carrying African migrants across the Mediterranean to dock in their ports in a bid to help handle tens of thousands of arrivals. Spokeswoman for the UNHCR in Spain Maria Jesus Vega has stated that “what is clear is that, they (Spain’s government) have to get ready. They can’t be caught unprepared. What started happening elsewhere in Europe in 2015 cant be allowed to happen here,” adding “its not yet an emergency, but you have to take into account that there are no structures here to deal with more arrivals.”

- **6 July** – Spain’s marine rescue service has disclosed that in the past 24 hours, it has saved 183 migrants who had been trying to reach the country from North Africa. The service disclosed that one of its vessels intercepted a boat with 42 people aboard near the southwestern Trafalgar cape late on Wednesday, adding that hours later, it found another boat with 45 people on board, including women and children. That boat was located in the same area where the first boat was intercepted. On Wednesday, the service indicated that it had rescued 96 people in three boats about halfway between Spain and Morocco.
- **4 July** – The Spanish Coast Guard rescued three men on Tuesday from a half-sunk dinghy stranded in the Mediterranean, after a two-day search for a boat that had left Morocco with 52 people on board. In a statement, the Coast Guard disclosed that the rescued men, all from countries in sub-Saharan Africa, had stated that the rubber boat had been drifting since it set off from Morocco’s northern coast. The statement added that an informant had alerted the coast guard on Sunday that a boat had left from near Al Hoceima in Morocco, and that the area had been searched non-stop since then. The coast guard further stated that it was likely that the boat they had found was the same one that they were looking for. A helicopter transferred the three men, a 17-year-old and two 25-year-olds, to the Spanish port of Almeria, where medial services were treating

them. **Update (6 July)** – On Thursday, the Spanish Coast Guard disclosed that it has ended a search for further survivors. About fifty people are believed to have drowned after a boat believed to be carrying 52 migrants was found nearly sunken earlier this week.

## SPOTLIGHT ON LIBYA

### PORT STATUS AS OF 9 JULY 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	<b>Closed</b>	High
Port of Bouri (offshore port)	Open	Low
Port of Derna	<b>Closed</b>	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	<b>Open</b>	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

- 6 July** – Forces loyal to Libya's Tripoli-based UN-backed unity government announced they had repulsed two attacks — one by Daesh and another by forces led by commander Khalifa Haftar — in Sirte. "Our forces are fully prepared to meet any additional attacks by Daesh remnants or Al-Karama militiamen [i.e., pro-Haftar forces]," forces affiliated with the unity government said in a statement published on their official Facebook page. According to the same statement, the two attacks in Sirte were aimed at "destabilizing the city and threatening its security." The statement adds that while pro-government forces had been preparing to confront an assault by Daesh terrorists south of Sirte, they had come under attack by pro-Haftar forces from the nearby Al-Heniwah and Abu Hadi districts on the city's outskirts. "But our forces managed to repulse both attacks," the statement read, adding that no casualties had been sustained in the melee. In Tobruk, pro-Haftar forces made no comment on the assertions.

- 5 July** – Libya's eastern commander Khalifa Haftar said on Wednesday his forces had taken full control of Libya's second city Benghazi from rival armed groups after a three-year campaign. "Your armed forces declare to you the liberation of Benghazi from terrorism, a full liberation and a victory of dignity," Haftar said, wearing a white uniform in a televised speech. "Benghazi has entered into a new era of safety and peace." Before he spoke, LNA forces made rapid progress through the seafront district of Sabri, using heavy artillery to blast their way through some of the final pockets of resistance. Haftar launched his "Operation Dignity" in Benghazi in May 2014, promising to crush Islamists blamed for a wave of assassinations and bombings. Over three years his forces have clashed with militants as well as with former anti-Gaddafi rebels resisting what they saw as an attempt to reimpose autocratic rule. The LNA suffered heavy losses, which its own officials put at more than 5,000 men. Haftar's critics accuse him of dragging Benghazi into a war that he has used to establish military control over much of eastern Libya. Parts of Benghazi have been wrecked by heavy shelling and air strikes. Having seized a string of key oil ports and southern air bases since last year, Haftar has made little secret of ambitions to enter Tripoli, where he portrays his rivals as beholden to Islamists and militia rule. He has backing from foreign powers including Egypt and the United Arab Emirates, and has cultivated closer ties with Moscow. The LNA has gradually grown bigger and better equipped but is still heavily dependent on alliances with local brigades and tribes. Though weak, the U.N.-backed government in Tripoli retains the formal support of most Western powers.
- 5 July** – Clashes between security forces at Tripoli's Mitiga International Airport and "outlaws" left five dead and 32 injured, after a shell fired by militia in Tripoli fell on unsuspecting sunbathers on a beach near the city's airport. Among the dead are two adult women, two girls and a young boy, who were visiting the beach in eastern Tripoli. One resident, familiar with security arrangements at Mitiga, states that the errant shell was fired by a member of the al-Boni militia, part of security operations at the airport, and nominally under the control of Tripoli's government. Tripoli has been plagued by skirmishes and clashes between the patchwork of militias formally incorporated into the security apparatus but in reality under the control of their own commanders. Increasing tensions between local Tripoli fighters and forces from the central Libyan city of Misrata, one of the most powerful military powers to emerge from the country's 2011 uprising against Muammar el-Qaddafi, have boiled over because of disagreements over the U.N.-backed government. However, rivalries between militia in Tripoli also have been fuelled by turf wars over lucrative smuggling networks. The Tripoli resident, whose name is being withheld for fear of reprisal, explained Mitiga was a hub for the black-market trade in currency and human trafficking.
- 3 July** – According to the General Electricity Company of Libya (GECOL) the eastern region went into a total blackout on Sunday after a technical fault in Tamimi power plant leading to a blackout in Tobruk and Green Mountain cities. GECOL added that the fault led also to a blackout in the whole eastern region, adding that engineers are trying to restore power and fix the malfunctions. "All citizens in Libya should help GECOL by cutting off their use of power these days so that we can stabilise the general electricity network in the country." GECOL said on its Facebook page. On Friday, western Libyan went into a total black out from Ras Ajdair to Sirte in central Libya amid high temperatures and a heatwave.
- 30 June** – The U.N. Security Council has extended sanctions on illegal oil exports from Libya to cover refined petroleum products as well, in a bid to stem rampant smuggling of subsidized fuel by sea. Entrenched and powerful smuggling networks have been trading fuel for years. The new resolution is designed to make explicit that fuel smuggling is illegal, so that smuggling vessels "can be identified, blacklisted, and prevented from disembarking their cargo," said a senior Western diplomat. It expands on a 2014 resolution banning illicit crude oil exports from Libya, authorizing the inspection of suspect ships, and calling on member states to take necessary measures to block attempted exports. It is unclear to what extent the resolution can be enforced. Fuel smuggling is concentrated around the western towns of Zawiya and Zuwara, and across Libya's western land border with Tunisia. Both the Zawiya branch of Libya's Petroleum Facilities Guard (PFG) and the local coastguard have been accused of involvement in fuel smuggling, which according to the U.N. investigators overlaps with lucrative smuggling of migrants from Libya to Italy. In a report to the Security Council earlier this month, the investigators said they continued to observe "vessels showing suspicious navigational patterns" off Zuwara. U.N. resolutions recognized the National Oil Corporation (NOC) in Tripoli as the sole legitimate exporter of oil. They have been used to block attempts by factions in eastern Libya to export crude through a parallel National Oil Corporation based in Benghazi. The Western diplomat said that Thursday's resolution was not expected to halt smuggling and that its application would depend on how the

U.N.-backed government in Tripoli, which requested the reference to refined products, chose to use it.

## LIBYA: PROCEDURE

### WARNING:

**THE SITUATION IN LIBYA CONTINUES TO BE EXTREMELY FLUID. 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. The reintroduction of the National Salvation government further complicates any endeavours at stability within the unstable nation. 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

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### **24 HR CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Email: [operations@msrisk.com](mailto:operations@msrisk.com)

Telephone: +44 207 754 3555





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, P.A. Crompton, P.O.J. Tracy  
Registered in the Isle of Man No. 007435V