

Maritime Security Review



Issue No. 32

14 August 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.

INCIDENTS AT SEA

Reporting Period: 7 - 13 August 2017

Region	Current Incidents Reported	Late Reported incidents	Threat level
MAIN REGIONS			
Gulf of Aden/Arabian Sea	0	0	Low
Gulf of Guinea	1	2	Medium
Southeast Asia	0	1	Low
WORLDWIDE			
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	3	0	Medium
Arabian Gulf	0	0	Low
East Asia/Indian Subcontinent	0	2	Medium
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

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

- No current incidents to report

INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



MARITIME REPORTING

- Nothing to report

WEATHER FORECAST: GULF OF ADEN/ARABIAN SEA

WEATHER FORECAST VALID FROM 10 - 16 AUGUST 2017

NORTHERN ARABIAN SEA: Southwest winds of 15 – 20 knots, gusting to 25 knots and seas of 8 – 10 feet.

- **Extended Forecast:** Southwest winds of 15 – 20 knots, gusting to 25 knots, and seas of 8 – 10 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:** Variable winds of 5 – 10 knots gusting to 15 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 western section of the Gulf.

GULF OF ADEN: Southwest winds of 20 – 25 knots, gusting to 30 knots, and seas of 7 – 9 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with southwest winds of 15 – 20 knots, gusting to 25 knots, and seas of 7 – 9 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.

- **Extended Forecast:** Southwest winds of 10 – 15 knots, gusting to 20 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 5 – 7 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.

- **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 5 – 7 feet.

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

MOZAMBIQUE CHANNEL: Southeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 3 – 5 feet in the northern Channel; with easterly winds of 10 – 15 knots, gusting to 20 knots, and seas of 10 – 12 feet in the southern Channel.

- **Extended Forecast:** Southeast winds of 20 – 25 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the northern Channel; with southwest winds of 20 – 25 knots and seas of 6 – 8 feet in the southern Channel.

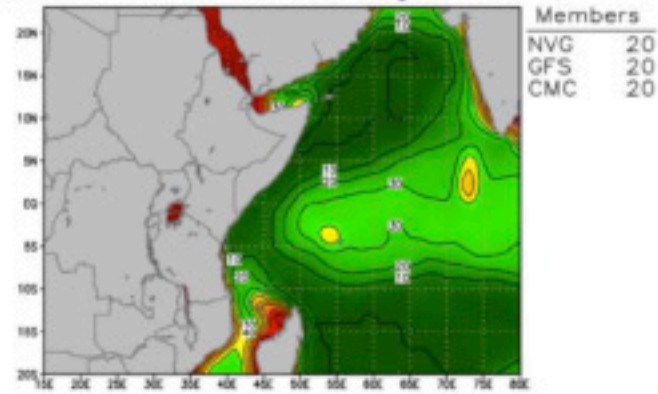
SURFACE CURRENTS: The northern Arabian Sea and Gulf of Aden currents are variable with most areas having an average speed of 1 knot. The Mozambique Channel currents are variable having an average speed of 2 knots. Current's speeds along the Somali Basin are northeasterly averaging between 2 – 3 knots.

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

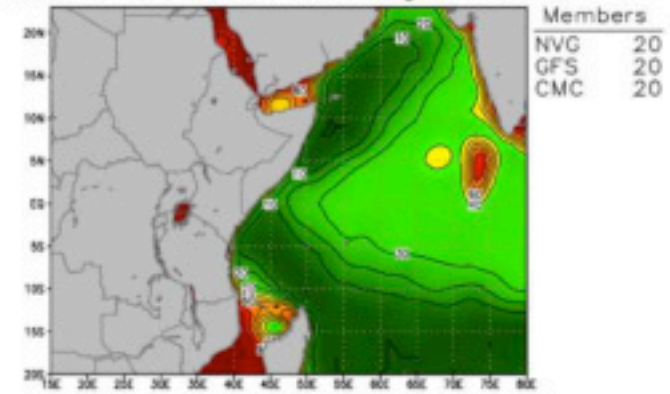
Source: ONI

Winds < 15.0 kts and Wave Heights < 5.0 ft



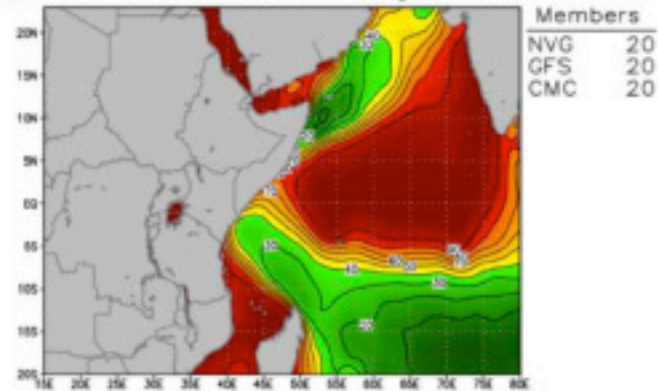
Valid Time: 1200Z 10 AUG 2017

Winds < 15.0 kts and Wave Heights < 5.0 ft



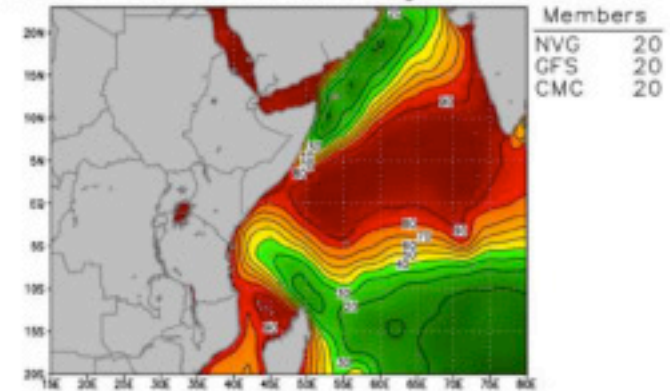
Valid Time: 0000Z 13 AUG 2017

Winds < 17.0 kts and Wave Heights < 7.0 ft



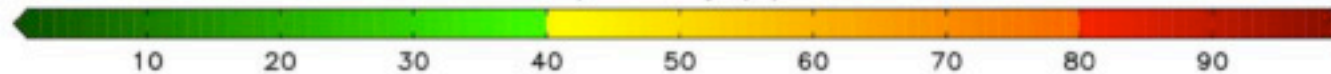
Valid Time: 1200Z 15 AUG 2017

Winds < 17.0 kts and Wave Heights < 7.0 ft



Valid Time: 0000Z 18 AUG 2017

probability (%)



SPOTLIGHT ON YEMEN

PORT STATUS AS OF 13 AUGUST 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.

ACTIVITY REPORTING

- 10 August** – At least 19 migrants have died after being deliberately drowned, the UN's migration agency says. Many of the drowned were thought to be teenagers originating from Somalia and Ethiopia. Hundreds of migrants were forced from a boat off the coast of Yemen for the second time in two days. A spokeswoman for the International Organisation of Migration (IOM) said the incidents "may be the start of a new trend". "Smugglers know the situation is dangerous for them and they could be shot at, so they drop them near the shore."
- 9 August** – For the second time in ten days, international maritime navigation in the Red Sea came under direct threat from Yemen's Houthi militias. Official reports stated that Houthi militias launched a ballistic missile from Hajjah governorate. The missile was directed south and most likely fell in international waters in the Red Sea, according to sources. The missile is the second threat to the navigation in the Red Sea following the attack on al-Mokha port with a bomb-laden boat. The Saudi-led coalition called it a threat to international navigation and regional and international security, adding that the threat impeded the arrival of humanitarian and relief aid to the Yemeni people.
- 8 August** – Four soldiers and six suspected al Qaeda attackers were killed and 10 soldiers wounded when a suicide bomber and gunmen tried to storm an army camp in southern Yemen, a local security official said. "This was a terrorist attack and it has been foiled," the official said of the attack in Juhayn, Abyan province. Last week, Yemeni forces, backed by U.S. and UAE soldiers, deployed in neighbouring Shabwa province where al Qaeda also operates. Local residents and officials said the militants withdrew into the mountains without a fight.
- 7 August** – UN envoy to Yemen, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, hinted at the possibility of holding talks between Yemen's warring parties in Oman without giving a specific date. Cheikh Ahmed revealed a meeting expected with the delegation of the Houthis to discuss the United Nations initiative on the port of Hodeidah. A Yemeni source said the Omani mediation reject the Houthis group's position that obstructs the peace process. The UN envoy said that the United Nations is not demanding the extradition of the port of Hodeidah to the Yemeni government, but instead to a third party to manage the port, adding

that efforts are underway to resolve the issue of salaries of state employees in Yemen and the opening of Sanaa airport.

- **6 August** – Thousands of Yemeni troops are conducting a clearing operation aimed at driving Qaeda militants from one of their major strongholds in southern Yemen, according to Arab and American security officials. The offensive in Shabwa Province started last week and includes about 2,000 Yemeni forces backed by dozens of advisers from the United Arab Emirates, and a handful of United States Special Operations commandos providing intelligence and planning assistance, American officials said. It is the largest military operation against Qaeda fighters in Yemen since Yemeni troops in armoured vehicles and backed by airstrikes seized this major port city in April 2016, after the militants had used it as a base from which to storm through the southern part of the country. The continuing operation is the latest phase of an increased campaign against the Yemeni militants since President Trump took office. It also reflects Mr. Trump's general embrace of President Barack Obama's strategy to aid local allies fighting insurgents in hot spots like Yemen, Somalia and Nigeria, rather than dispatch large numbers of American troops.
- **6 August** – The head of the European Union delegation to Yemen is visiting the country for talks with Shiite Houthi rebels over a U.N. plan regarding a disputed key port. Houthi officials say Ambassador Antonia Calvo Puerta arrived in Sanaa on Sunday to discuss the U.N. proposal for Hodeida port to be run by a third neutral party under U.N. supervision.

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

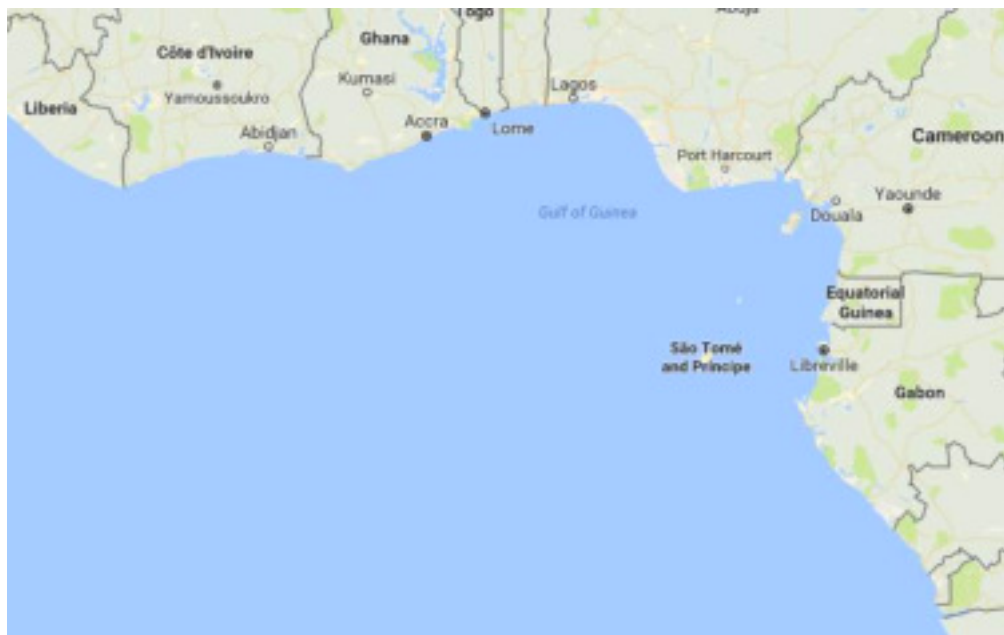
All vessels calling at Yemeni ports will only be allowed to enter Yemeni territorial waters following an inspection by the Saudi Arabian coalition forces. Upon arrival outside Bab Al-Mandab, the shipmaster should call the naval forces of the Saudi

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

- No current incidents to report

VESSELS BOARDED

1. **7 August (Nigeria)** – A duty crewman onboard a tanker berthed near position 06:27 N – 003:22 E, Folawiyo Terminal, Apapa Lagos, noticed two robbers trying to insert a flexible hose into a cargo tank. He immediately informed the duty officer who raised the alarm. Upon seeing the alerted crewmembers, the robbers escaped with their flexible hose. A search of the tanker was carried out however nothing was reported stolen. Port control was informed.

KIDNAPPING

3. **31 July (Nigeria – Late Report)** – Pirates attacked a tanker near position 04:07 N – 007:00 E, 21 nautical miles south-southwest of Bonny. The pirates kidnapped three crewmembers and stole the crews' personal belongings. A Nigerian navy Patrol boat escorted the vessel to Bonny anchorage.

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

2. **3 August (Mauritania – Late Report)** – A merchant vessel was approached near position 16:48 N – 016:51 W, approximately 30 nautical miles from Mauritania, by a small vessel claiming to be Mauritanian Navy, which requested the MV to stop or they would open fire. Evasive manoeuvring commenced and the small vessel moved away. The vessel and crewmembers have been reported safe.

OTHER ACTIVITY

- No current incidents to report

MARITIME REPORTING

- **7 August** – The family of a Moroccan merchant navy officer abducted by Nigerian pirates in the Gulf of Guinea a week ago, has issued an appeal to the government to intervene amidst silence surrounding the kidnapping of the crew of a Panamanian vessel. Independent news website Hespresse reported on Monday that it has received an appeal letter from the family of one of the two kidnapped Moroccan officers, one a captain and the second an engineer. In the letter, the family demand that the Moroccan authorities intervene through the Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of International Cooperation with the Nigerian authorities in order to rescue the men and begin negotiations with the kidnapers. The report disclosed that in its first reaction, the Moroccan government confirmed that it was following the matter. It quoted the Moroccan government spokesman, Mustapha al-Khaliji, making a statement in which no new details had been disclosed. Last week, Moroccan and Nigerian media outlets reported that unidentified pirates had intercepted a vessel carrying the Panamanian flag about 15 nautical miles southwest of the island of Bonny.

INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



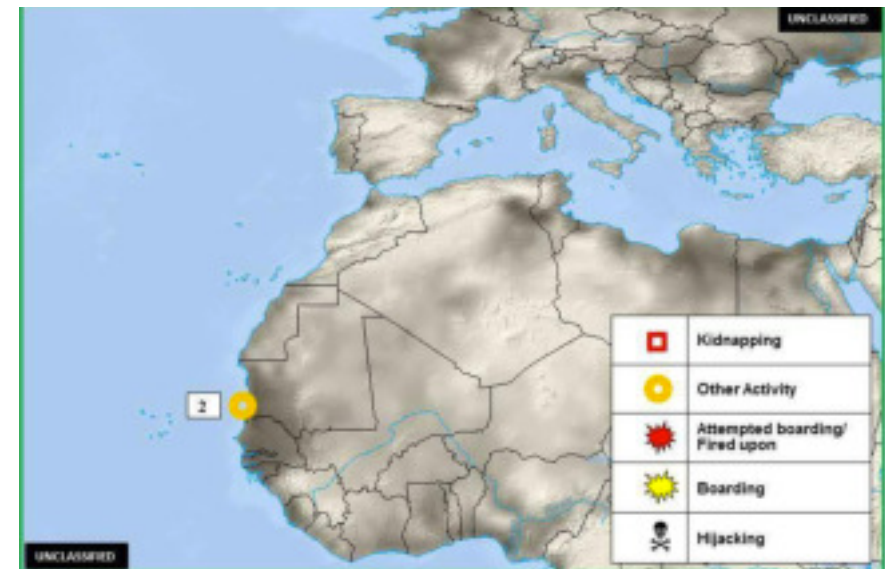
WEATHER FORECAST: GULF OF GUINEA

WEATHER FORECAST VALID FROM 10 - 16 AUGUST 2017

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

- **Extended Forecast:** Southerly winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 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.



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

- **2 August (Indonesia - Late Report)** – An unnoticed robber boarded a tanker anchored near position 01:24 N – 104:33, 10 nautical miles north of Tanjung Berakit, Pulau Bintan, stole the ship's properties and escaped. The theft was noticed by the deck crewmembers the following day.

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 VALID FROM 10 - 16 AUGUST 2017

SOUTHERN SOUTH CHINA SEA: Southwest winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 3 feet.

- **Extended Forecast:** Southwest winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 3 feet.

MALACCA STRAIT: Westerly winds of 5 – 10 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 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.

- **Extended Forecast:** Southwest winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 3 – 5 feet in the northern section; with southwest winds of 10 – 15 knots, gusting to 20 knots, and seas of 4 – 6 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. **Forecaster's Note:** The west Pacific Ocean's Tropical Cyclone Season runs from April until October. Expect numerous Tropical Cyclones to impact the region during this timeframe.

WORLDWIDE

NORTH AMERICA

- No current incidents to report

CENTRAL AMERICA/CARIBBEAN/SOUTH AMERICA

1. **5 August (Ecuador – Late Report)** – A Robbers, unnoticed by the crew, boarded a berthed container ship near position 01:00 N – 07:39 W, Esmeraldas Port. The thieves stole brass sounding pipe covers and escaped. The theft was noticed by duty crewmembers on routine rounds.

INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



ATLANTIC OCEAN AREA

- No current incidents to report

NORTHERN EUROPE/ENGLISH CHANNEL/BALTIC

- No current incidents to report

MEDITERRANEAN/BLACK SEA

1. **8 August (Spain)** – The general cargo vessel *LADY BOSS* was intercepted by the Spanish Tax Agency, Agencia Tributaria, east of the Strait of Gibraltar in the Alboran Sea. The vessel was suspected in possible drug trafficking after she was spotted by a Tax Agency surveillance plane in an area known for being used by traffickers for loading drugs. Customs and Tax Agency teams intercepted the vessel and took her to Almeira, where she was inspected. They found 600 bales of hashish, approximately 18 tons. The vessel and crewmembers, comprising of 11 Ukrainians and 2 Bulgarians, were arrested.
2. **7 August (Libya)** – The Libyan Navy rescued 155 migrants off the coast of Sidi Bilal west of Tripoli. Social networking sites posted an article stating that a coastal guard patrol from the Tripoli region rescued the migrants, who were on a rubber dinghy 10 miles from the coast of Sii Bilal. They have since been transported to the Tripoli Navy base and were handed over to local shelters.
3. **7 August (Turkey)** – According to a statement release by the Mersin Chief Prosecutor's office, police raided a Liberia-flagged cargo ship near Mersin Port after a tipoff that it was carrying drugs. The containers, which were filled with bananas, were unloaded for a police search. During the police search, which was carried out with the support of x-ray devices and specially trained dogs, officers found drugs stuffed in the bananas. They also found almost 123 kilograms of cocaine in 102 different packages that were placed on the ceiling of the containers. Seven suspects were detained by the police.

INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



ARABIAN GULF

- No current incidents to report

EAST ASIA/INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

- No current incidents to report

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

rescue migrants who have paid large sums to cross the sea in flimsy boats, claiming that the groups are complicit in human trafficking.



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. The route towards Spain has also seen a number of migrants trying to cross to reach Europe.

- **7 August** – A port director in Tunisia has disclosed that authorities have instructed commercial ports in the North African country to deny access to a vessel rented by European identity groups and sailing the Mediterranean Sea with an anti-migrant message. Fishermen and human rights activists in the Tunisian city of Zarzis unfurled a banner reading “No Racism” as the C Star, the flagship of operation Defend Europe, sailed in international waters off the coast of Tunisia over the weekend. Zarzis port director Karim Noura has disclosed that while the vessel has never asked to dock at Zarzis, and sailed north towards Sfax, Tunisia’s Transport Ministry has told ports to forbid C-Star’s entry. Defend Europe has disclosed that it is monitoring aid groups that

SPOTLIGHT ON LIBYA

PORT STATUS AS OF 13 AUGUST 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

- 10 August** – Several Middle Eastern news outlets are reporting that Libyan National Army (LNA) forces have clamped down their control of Derna. Derna was one of the established strongholds for Daesh extremists before being rooted out last year. According to some reporting, the city's head council, who supports the UN backed Government of National Accord (GNA), claimed that Derna's humanitarian situation is nearing catastrophic and life-threatening. The chief described the LNA-imposed siege on the city as equivalent to genocide. For the past week, all roads in and out of the town have been blocked. Fearing a humanitarian disaster, Derna's council of elders issued an appeal. "The town is being slaughtered in cold-blood by the siege. We call on all to put an end to it," it said. In contrast, the ultra-hardline Shura Council of Mujahideen in Derna announced that their affiliated militias are more than prepared to respond to the recent LNA-led offensive. In a televised broadcast, a Mujahideen in Derna spokesman said LNA forces were

preventing food supplies and medical aid from being delivered to the city, which is home to about 120 thousand people. Defending his group's position, the spokesman said that "LNA have no right to guardianship over the people of Derna," and stressed that the Mujahideen factions "will not allow LNA forces to enter and shed blood." The Shura Council of Mujahideen in Derna was created by former Libyan Islamic Fighting Group member Salim Derby on 12 December 2014. Besides seeking to implement strict social mores in Derna, the alliance is known for its open opposition to LNA Chief Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar and the Libyan ISIS affiliates. LNA forces publicly launched an extensive ground operation to liberate the city from the grip of militias, which have controlled Derna for nearly four years.

- **10 August** – The Libyan navy ordered foreign vessels to stay out of a coastal "search and rescue zone" for migrants headed for Europe, a measure it said targeted NGOs. Libya has become a key departure point for migrants risking their lives to cross the Mediterranean to Europe. General Abdelhakim Bouhaliya, commander of the Tripoli naval base, said: "No foreign ship has the right to enter" the area without authorisation from the Libyan authorities. Libya has "officially declared a search and rescue zone", said Bouhaliya, without specifying the scope of the exclusion zone. The measure was aimed against "NGOs which pretend to want to rescue illegal migrants and carry out humanitarian actions". He urged humanitarian organisations to "respect our will... and obtain authorisation from the Libyan state even for rescue operations". Italy has also said it wants to keep a tighter rein on NGOs helping the multinational search and rescue operation by making them sign up to a new code of conduct. Italian authorities last week impounded a boat operated by German aid organisation Jugend Rettet on suspicion its crew effectively collaborated with people traffickers in a way that facilitated illegal immigration.
- **8 August** – The Libyan navy fired two warning shots after a migrant rescue ship was seen patrolling near Libyan waters on Monday. Open Arms, a humanitarian aid vessel belonging to the Spanish NGO ProActiva said it was chased away by Libyan coast guards although it was within its territorial bounds at around 1.5 miles from Libyan territorial waters. In a statement, the Libyan navy said the Open Arms rescue boat was within the remit of the

Libyan Coast Guard's search and rescue operation and asked the boat to leave. When it didn't, they opened fire into the air. The Libyan Coast Guard said the Open Arms ship had been "wishing for a precious trophy" of illegal immigrants. Libyan Brigadier Qassem said, "We are capable of conducting rescue work. Our presence cancels their presence [...] We are fed up with these organizations. They increased the number of immigrants and empowered smugglers. Meanwhile, they criticize us for not respecting human rights."

- **7 August** – Libya's largest oil field has restarted on Monday morning, after shutting down following an armed protest on Sunday evening. According to a Libyan oil official, the control room overseeing the Sharara oil field in Zawia was targeted by armed gunmen seeking the release of Libyan nationals that were detained in late June while on pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia. Relatives of the detained Libyans blocked the pipelines that supplied gasoline and jet fuel between Al-Zawia oil refinery and Tripoli. The move was in protest of the perceived negligence by the UN-backed Government of National Accord toward their case. Saudi authorities arrested three Libyans while performing the Umrah religious journey to Mecca in Saudi Arabia. The two leaders are first lieutenants in the police force. Mahmoud Bin Rajab is commander of the Central Security Battalion in Zawia, and Mohammed Hussein is a captain in the force. While speculation abounds, there has been no official statement on the cause for arrest and detention. The GNA in June asked Saudi Arabia to explain their arrest at Jeddah airport as; the Libyan foreign ministry said they are following up on the case. A statement from Libya's National Oil Corporation says, "The armed protesters were evacuated from the control room, pumping returned to its natural level and production is being restored." NOC Chairman Mustafa Sanalla restated a plea to local factions not to disrupt oil supplies, which represent Libya's only significant source of income, adding, "Personal grievances and demands cannot be resolved through inflicting harm on everyone, and closure tactics are an unacceptable negotiating method." No official comment has yet been made by Spain's Repsol SA, which is the field's main foreign partner. Officials familiar with the situation reported that pumping has restarted, and output has resumed to normal levels.

- 6 August** – A ship carrying far-right campaigners who aim to turn migrant boats back to Africa followed an NGO rescue vessel with an AFP reporter on board in waters off Libya. The activists' "Defend Europe" mission has been financed by a crowd-funding initiative organised by young anti-immigration campaigners from France, Italy, and Germany. Their 40-metre ship named *C-Star*, hired by "Generation Identity", arrived on Saturday in an area where tens of thousands of migrants have been rescued from unseaworthy trafficker boats over recent months and years. The boat spent 30-45 minutes tracking the *MS Aquarius* at a distance of a few hundred metres, before continuing to follow it from further back. The *Aquarius*, a converted coastguard patrol boat, is operated by French aid group SOS Mediterranee and the international humanitarian organisation Doctors without Borders (MSF). Its crew would not comment on whether they regarded the C-Star's proximity as intimidating. Maritime charts indicated the NGO boat's speed doubled in the time the far-right vessel was close to it. The two boats were about 20 nautical miles off Libya in an area east of the capital Tripoli. On its website, the Defend Europe alliance accuses NGOs of "smuggling hundreds of thousands of illegal migrants to Europe, endangering the security and future of our continent" and vows to "do something against it." French activist Clement Galant posted a video from the boat on Twitter on August 1st, in which he says the C-Star will accompany any migrant boat it comes across back to the African coast. The Defend Europe initiative has been denounced by humanitarian organisations as a potentially highly dangerous publicity stunt.
- 6 August** – According to press reports, Qatar continues to send massive amounts of weapons and cash to Islamist militants battling the Western-backed government in Libya. Reports by the UN and Egyptian newspaper *al-Masry al-Youm* states that Doha has provided more than 750 million euros to extremist groups in Libya since 2011. Arab officials believe that this assistance arrives in Western Libya by way of a commercial airline that is bankrolled by Qatar. The Arab states are not simply bothered by Qatar's support for garden variety Islamists. They allege that Qatar is directly backing the worst of the worst. And they appear to be correct. According to Kristian Coates Ulrichsen of the Baker Institute for Public Policy, "Qatar developed close links with key Islamist militia commanders such as Abdelhakim Belhadj, once the head of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group and, in 2011, the commander of the Tripoli Brigade." The LIFG is an al-Qaeda affiliate group that was sanctioned by both

the US and the UN. Ulrichsen also notes the connection between Qatar and "Ismael al-Salabi, the leader of one of the best-supplied rebel militias, the Rafallah al-Sahati Companies. Qatar was widely suspected of arming and funding al-Salabi's group, whose sudden munificence of resources in 2011 earned it the nickname of the 'Ferrari 17 Brigade.'" The leader's brother, Ali al-Salabi, is a prominent Libyan cleric close to the emir of Qatar. The LNA has charged that Qatari intelligence General Salim Ali al-Jarboui supported al-Qaeda, the Islamic State, and the Muslim Brotherhood by transferring \$8 billion from the Qatari Tunisian National Bank to the Housing Bank of Tataouine Governorate in southern Tunisia. According to the LNA, Qatar supported the assassination of senior officials, facilitated training of Islamist extremists by Hamas, and helped transport Libyan Islamists to Syria. The allegations of Qatari malign behaviour in Libya continue. The Libyan army spokesman just last week described Qatar, Sudan, and Turkey as "the triad of terrorism" in Libya. He also stated that, "a number of Qatari aircraft are regularly landing in Libya in 2017 to support terrorist groups."

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.

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