

Maritime Advisory

Date: 10 April 2026

Areas of Concern: Arabian/Persian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz, Gulf of Oman, Northern Arabian Sea & adjacent waters; wider region including Red Sea, Bab el-Mandeb Strait, Gulf of Aden; eastern Mediterranean Sea

Threat Level: **Severe**

28 February – 10 April 2026

UKMTO has received 28 reports of incidents affecting vessels operating in and around the *Arabian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz* and *Gulf of Oman*:

- 17 Attack Reports
- 11 Suspicious Activity Reports

Situational Overview

As of 10 April, the situation in the Strait of Hormuz remains highly unstable despite a US-Iran ceasefire agreed earlier in the week.

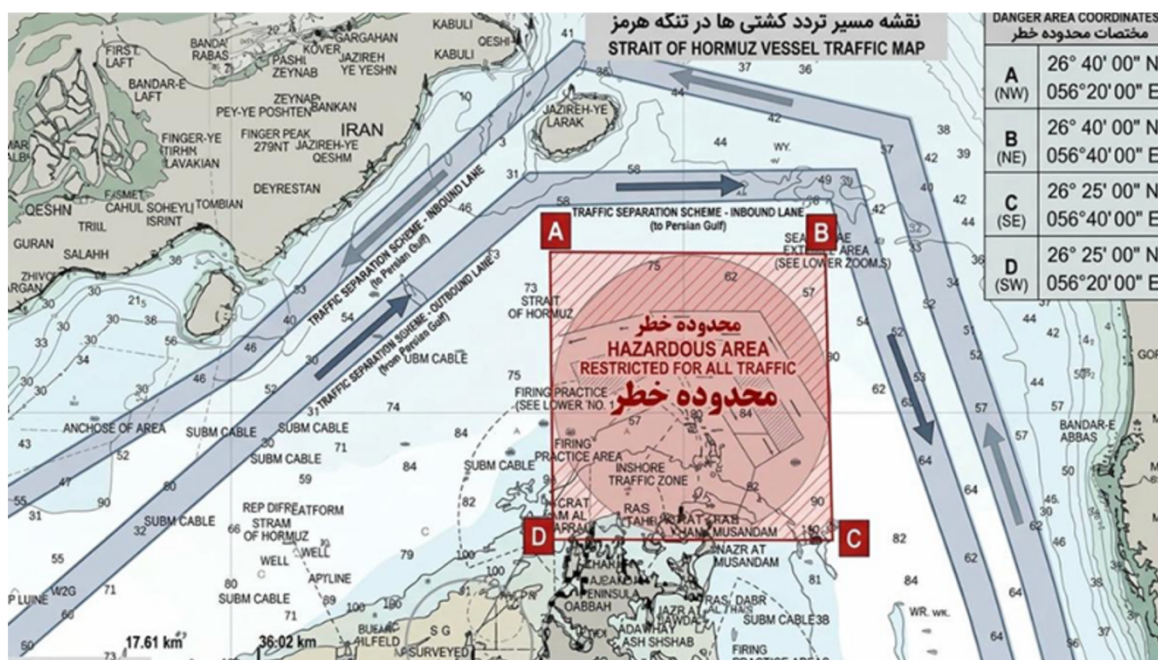
While the truce has halted large-scale direct fighting, it has not restored normal shipping, with traffic through the strait still only a fraction of usual levels. Iran continues to exert de facto control over passage – requiring coordination with its military and in some cases imposes fees – while the US insists that the waterway must fully reopen as part of the ceasefire terms. Ongoing tensions, particularly linked to Israeli military actions in Lebanon and unresolved ceasefire conditions, are undermining trust and keeping shipping companies cautious. Consequently, the ceasefire is widely seen as fragile, with the status of the strait emerging remaining an unresolved issue.



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As of 9 April 2026, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Navy has warned in its latest announcement that vessels opting to transit the Strait of Hormuz must do so via two proscribed routes, in order to avoid potential naval mines, and must coordinate the passage with the IRGC Navy. According to the force, eastbound traffic (out of the Middle East Gulf) will continue to use a route similar to the existing traffic-separation scheme, however westbound traffic (into the Middle East Gulf) will be diverted northwards, towards the Iranian coast and around Larak Island. This route has been used by tankers transiting the strait in both directions for some time now, with the IRGC using Larak Island as a checkpoint to verify the credentials of vessels seeking to transit. The new designated alternative routes, seen below in a map published by the IRGC, will be in place “until further notice.” Additionally, Iran’s deputy foreign minister Saeed Khatibzadeh told ITV that the Strait of Hormuz was open for commercial shipping. This is contrary to continued reports of IRGC announcements that the waterway

remains closed. Khatibzadeh stated that the strait was open to everyone, provided that they coordinate with Iranian forces, noting that “technical restraints” and “wartime conditions” were behind the new separation scheme, including the potential for mines. It remains unclear whether the strait has actually been mined, with suggestions emerging that this new transiting route could be a way for Iran to further control the vital waterway as vessels are likely to opt for a safer route amidst unconfirmed reports that the strait is mined.



Source: Iran's National Security Commission

Key Developments (8 - 10 April 2026)

Confirmed Incidents

- No new incidents reported over the last several days, with the last confirmed incident occurring on 6 April 2026.

Other Reporting

- **9 April (Strait of Hormuz)** – Reports have emerged that US President Trump has floated the idea of a “joint venture” to set up tolls in the Strait of Hormuz, in a move that the European Commission says would be unlawful. The European Commission firmly rejected any attempt by Iran or the US to charge vessels for crossing the Strait of Hormuz, though it admitted that the final decision on whether to pay a fee would ultimately be entirely at the discretion of affected companies. The pushback comes just a day after the US leader stirred concern across Europe by suggesting a “joint venture” with Tehran to impose a pay-to-pass system on the waterway, stating that “it’s a way of securing it, also securing it from lots of other people.” White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt later stated that while the idea would “continue to be discussed,” she stressed that the “immediate priority” was reopening the shipping lane “without any limitations, whether in the form of tolls or otherwise.”
- **8 April (Ceasefire – Iran)** – Iran and the US have agreed to a conditional two-week ceasefire, during which shipping traffic will be allowed through the Strait of Hormuz. Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who has been mediating negotiations, stated early on Wednesday that the ceasefire was effective immediately. US President Trump stated that he had agreed to “suspend the bombing and attack of Iran

for a period of two weeks” if Tehran agrees to reopen the Strait of Hormuz. **Update (Strait of Hormuz)** – While a ceasefire remains in place, the Strait of Hormuz was closed again on Wednesday after Israel launched massive strikes against Lebanon, which Iran considered to be a violation of its version of the 10-point plan. The White House however has fiercely contested the plan, stating that Lebanon was excluded from the agreed terms. **Update (9 April – Strait of Hormuz)** – As of Thursday, confusion remains over the Strait of Hormuz, with shipping data indicating that only a handful of vessels have managed to sail through. Reports also indicate that Iran is operating a new system that charges each vessel USD 1 per oil barrel carried on board. The payment can be made either in Chinese yuan or cryptocurrency – two options that effectively bypass Western financial oversight.

- **8 April (Strait of Hormuz)** – Maersk stated on Wednesday that the two-week ceasefire between the US and Iran could open some opportunities for vessels in the Strait of Hormuz, however it did not yet provide enough security certainty to resume normal operations through the waterway. In a statement, Maersk disclosed that “at this point, we take a cautious approach, and we are not making any changes to specific services.” It went on to say that “any decision to transit the Strait of Hormuz will be based on continuous risk assessments, close monitoring of the security situation, and available guidance from relevant authorities and partners.”
- **8 April (Strait of Hormuz)** – Hapag-Lloyd has voiced cautious optimism on the prospect of resuming shipping through the Strait of Hormuz following a two-week ceasefire agreed between the US and Iran, stating however that resuming normal traffic throughout its network would take at least six to eight weeks. CEO Rolf Habben Jansen also echoed remarks made by Maersk that more security assurances were needed.
- **8 April (Strait of Hormuz)** – Shippers stated on Wednesday that they needed more clarity on the terms of the US-Iran ceasefire before resuming transit through the Strait of Hormuz, this as Iran said that the waterway remained closed to vessels sailing without a permit. Iran stated that it would offer safe passage in coordination with its armed forces, though its coastguards warned on Wednesday that any vessel attempting to sail without permission would be “targeted and destroyed.” A radio message received by two ship owners stated that “transit in the Strait of Hormuz is closed yet, and you must receive permission from Iranian Sepah navy.” Separately, state TV reported on Wednesday that the first vessel had transited the strait with Iran’s permission following the ceasefire. While the vessel’s identity has not made clear, ship tracking data indicates that two Greek-owned and two Chinese-owned bulk carriers had passed through the strait since early Wednesday.
- **8 April (Strait of Hormuz)** – The UK stated on Wednesday that it would work with the shipping, insurance and energy sectors to try to restore confidence in the Strait of Hormuz “as quickly as possible,” following the US-Iran ceasefire. In a statement, British Foreign Minister Yvette Cooper disclosed that “Iran must cease all mining, drone attacks, and other attempts to block commercial shipping in the Strait immediately.”

Risk Assessment

1. Arabian/Persian Gulf & Strait of Hormuz

Current Status – Effective Commercial Disruption

- Merchant traffic through the Strait of Hormuz has significantly reduced
- Multiple commercial vessels have been struck by projectiles in Gulf waters
- Heightened naval deployments from regional and international forces are ongoing
- GPS/AIS interference and electronic warfare activity have increased significantly

- Large numbers of tankers and container vessels remain anchored off UAE, Oman, Qatar, and Saudi ports awaiting security clarity
- War-risk premiums have risen sharply, and some underwriters are restricting coverage in high risk-zones

Primary Threats

- Missile and drone strikes
- Naval engagements and collateral damage
- Electronic interference (jamming/spoofing)
- Naval mines in the Strait of Hormuz
- Boarding/seizure risks
- Cyber-attacks targeting ship companies and port operators

2. Gulf of Oman & Northern Arabian Sea

- Elevated surveillance and naval operations
- Risk of spillover kinetic activity
- Increased maritime interdictions and monitoring

3. Red Sea, Bab el-Mandeb & Gulf of Aden

Risks remain elevated in - Red Sea, Bab el-Mandeb Strait, Gulf of Aden

Yemen's Houthi movement has signalled a possible renewed campaign targeting commercial shipping in this region.

Threat Profile:

- Anti-ship missiles
- Armed drones
- Small boat swarm tactics
- Targeting linked to vessel nationality or ownership

International naval missions remain present, however vessels should not assume universal protection coverage.

4. Eastern Mediterranean Sea

Heightened awareness is advised in waters off - Cyprus, Israel, Lebanon, Syria

Risk Factors:

- Air defence engagements over maritime zones
- Missile interception debris hazards
- Naval deployments
- Port disruptions linked to military posture shifts

Commercial traffic continues in the Mediterranean Sea, however the Eastern basin should be treated as a heightened alert zone.

Port Operations

Middle East Ports

United Arab Emirates

PORT	OPERATIONAL STATUS
Hamriyah Port	All terminal port operations are normal
Sharjah Port	All terminal port operations are normal
Jebel Ali Port	All terminal port operations are normal
Fujairah and Khor Fakkan	Fujairah Oil Tanker Terminal is partially operational; Khor Fakkan Terminal no disruption reported
Ras al Khaimah Ports	Open and operating normally
Khalifa Port	Operations resumed
Ruwais & Abu Dhabi Petroleum Ports	Operational; Ruwais PPA (ISPS Level 2); Abu Dhabi Ports (ISPS Level 1)

Kuwait

PORT	OPERATIONAL STATUS
Shuwaikh Port	Port operating normally; Security Level 2 protocols
Shuaiba Port	Port has temporarily suspended operations
Minal Al Ahmadi Port	Port operating normally; Security Level risen to Level 2
Mina Al Zour Port	Port operating normally; Security Level risen to Level 2

Oman

PORT	OPERATIONAL STATUS
Asyad Drydock - Duqm	Port operating normally
Port of Duqm	Port operating normally ; vessels calling at port must submit an official letter stating that they are not carrying any dangerous goods on board.
Port Sultan Qaboos	Port operating normally
Muscat	Port operating normally; ISPS Level 3
Mina Al Fahal	Port operating normally; ISPS Level 3
Port of Sohar	Port operating normally
Qalhat LNG Terminal – Sur	Port operating normally ; ISPS Level 3
OMIFCO Terminal – Sur	Port operating normally
Port of Salalah	Partially resumed operations for CT and GCT

Saudi Arabia – No alerts or warnings issued by the local port authorities; all operational activities are functioning at full capacity.

Bahrain – Vessel movements in Bahrain have gradually resumed, however operations remain limited due to the restricted availability of pilots. BAPCO operations remain suspended. APM Terminals has resumed operations from 0600 hrs to 2200 hrs. ISPS security level remains at Level 1.

Qatar – The official security status remains at Security Level 1, however as a proactive measure, all vessels are requested to exercise heightened caution and vigilance

PORT	OPERATIONAL STATUS
Hamad Port	Normal port operations and vessel movement; Activity levels are lower than pre-conflict
Doha Port	Normal port operations and vessel movement; Activity levels are lower than pre-conflict
Al Ruwais Port	Normal port operations; port is restricted to small craft only, including dhows and barges; Activity levels are lower than pre-conflict
Mesaieed Port	Port operations ongoing
Ras Laffan Port	Port operations ongoing
Al Shaheen Offshore Terminal	Operations suspended until further notice
Halul Island Offshore Terminal	Operations suspended until further notice

Egypt – The Suez Canal and all Egyptian ports remain fully operational; ISPS Level remains at Level 1

Jordan – All operations remain normal at Aqaba Port; terminals, marine services, cargo handling and gate operations are functioning without disruptions. Maritime navigation and cargo operations are proceeding smoothly and without delay.

Pakistan – All ports remain fully operational; ISPS Level remains at Level 1

Iraq – Ports of Umm Qasr and Khor Al Zubair are fully operational; Basra Oil Terminal and SPM Somo Terminal have ceased export operations.

Mediterranean Sea Ports

Cyprus – All ports remain fully operational. ISPS level remains at Level 1

Lebanon – All ports remain operational, with no alerts or warnings issued by the local port authorities. South of Lebanon remains in an unstable operational situation. ISPS Level remains at Level 1

Israel – Eilat, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Hedera, and Haifa are fully open for business and functioning at full capacity.

Recommendations

Voyage Planning

- Conduct risk assessments immediately prior to transit
- Closely monitor official advisories from flag states and maritime security centres
- Do not rely on anticipated naval escort operations unless formally confirmed
- Minimise loitering near territorial waters of high-risk states
- Consider alternative routing via the Cape of Good Hope where commercially viable
- Assess war-risk insurance implications before entering designated high-risk areas

Transit Procedures (if entering high-risk areas)

- Maintain maximum safe speed during transit of chokepoints
- Avoid unnecessary deviation towards military or energy infrastructure
- Increase bridge water levels and radar vigilance
- Minimise deck crew exposure
- Prepare for GPS/AIS disruptions with alternative navigation methods

- Conduct drills for: Missile/drone alerts, Emergency manoeuvring, Fire response. Casualty/injury managements
- Maintain continuous monitoring of VHF Channel 16 and naval broadcast frequencies
- Ensure Ship Security Plans are fully implemented at the highest appropriate security level

Port Planning

- Confirm port operational status directly with agents prior to arrival
- Anticipate berth congestion and extended anchorage delays
- Factor potential pilotage suspension into passage plans
- Reconfirm war-risk insurance coverage for port calls

Reporting & Coordinating

- Register movements with UKMTO and relevant maritime security centres
- Use Voluntary Reporting Schemes where applicable
- Immediately report any suspicious activity, projectile sightings or electronic interference

Outlook (As of 10 April 2026)

The short-term outlook for the Strait of Hormuz as of 10 April is fragile and highly uncertain, with more downside risk than recovery. Despite the ceasefire, there has been no meaningful normalization of shipping – transits remain extremely low.

Three key dynamics are shaping the outlook:

- Ceasefire durability – this remains weak as the agreement is already under strain due to disputes over its scope, particularly ongoing Israeli operations in Lebanon, which Iran cites as a violation and justification for keeping the strait effectively closed.
- Iran is maintaining leverage – by not fully reopening the Strait of Hormuz, and announcing an alternative passageway, Tehran continues to tightly control or restrict passage, suggesting that it views the strait as a bargaining chip rather than something to normalize quickly.
- Commercial confidence – this remains absent as major shipping firms remain cautious, with insurers and operators unwilling to resume normal traffic without clear security guarantees – meaning even if conditions on the ground and regional tensions improve, recovery is likely to be slow.

Bottom Line – The most likely near-term scenario is a prolonged partial blockage of the Strait of Hormuz – not a full closure, however far below normal capacity – keeping oil markets tight and prices elevated. A meaningful reopening depends on a broader, more stable regional settlement, including Israel-Iran dynamics, which currently does not appear to be imminent.