

## Maritime Advisory

**Date:** 2 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 – 2 April 2026

UKMTO has received 26 reports of incidents affecting vessels operating in and around the *Arabian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz* and *Gulf of Oman*:

- 16 Attack Reports
- 10 Suspicious Activity Reports

## Situational Overview

The Strait of Hormuz remains severely restricted to commercial maritime traffic, with transit volumes remaining extremely limited and irregular, with only isolated, coordinated passages. Large numbers of vessels remain anchored or trapped in or around the Gulf region, reflecting sustained disruption to normal shipping flows.

The maritime threat level in this region remains severe, with drones and missile strikes continuing to target

tankers and port infrastructure. While a multi-national coalition, made up of some 40 countries, has started planning on potential re-opening strategies, including establishing rules for securing shipping lanes, this coordination is at the initial stages, and a reopening of the strait in the near-term remains unlikely given the continued regional hostilities.



## Key Developments (31 March – 1 April 2026)

### Confirmed Incidents

- **31 March (Arabian Gulf)** – UKMTO Has received a report of an incident 17 nautical miles north of Ras Laffan, Qatar. The Company Security Officer reported that the tanker **AQUA 1** has targeted by three cruise missiles coming from Iran. Two were intercepted while the third hit the tanker, causing damage to the hull above the water. Crewmembers have been reported safe. There is no environmental impact.

## Other Reporting

- **2 April (Strait of Hormuz)** – Bahrain’s Foreign Minister Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani told the UN Security Council Thursday that he hopes for a council vote on Friday on a resolution Bahrain has drafted to protect commercial shipping in and around the Strait of Hormuz. Bahrain has presented Security Council members with a fourth draft of a resolution that would authorize “all necessary means” to protect commercial shipping in and around the strait. It had previously dropped an explicit reference to binding enforcement in a bid to overcome objections from other countries, notably China and Russia, and the latest draft sets a six-month time limit for the steps.
- **1 April (Strait of Hormuz)** – French President Macron stated Thursday that it would be unrealistic to launch a military operation to force open the Strait of Hormuz, this after US President Trump challenged US allies to work towards reopening it. President Macron told reporters during a trip to South Korea that “this was never the option we have supported because it is unrealistic,” noting “it would take forever, and would expose all those who go through the Strait of Hormuz to risks from the Revolutionary Guards but also ballistic missiles.” The French leader, who has worked with European and other allies to build a coalition to guarantee free passage through the strait once hostilities have stopped, stated that this could only be done by talking to Iran.
- **1 April (Strait of Hormuz)** – Britain stated on Thursday that about 40 countries are discussing joint action to reopen the Strait of Hormuz to stop Iran holding “the global economy hostage.” British Foreign Minister Yvette Cooper stated that Iran’s “recklessness” in blockading the waterway was “hitting our global economic security” as she chaired the virtual meeting, which included France, Germany, Canada, the United Arab Emirates and India. According to one official, the US did not attend the talks. The discussions, involving representatives of some 40 countries, took place after US President Trump stated on Wednesday evening that the strait could open “naturally” and that it was the responsibility of countries that rely on the waterway to ensure it was open. While initially, European countries refused the US leader’s demands to send their navies to the area over fears of being dragged into the conflict, concerns about the impact of the rising cost of energy on the global economy have prompted them to try to form a coalition to see how they can defend their own interests. European diplomats have indicated that putting the coalition together was at an early stage, with Britain and France leading. France’s Armed Forces spokesperson disclosed in a news conference on Thursday that the process would be multi-phased, noting however it could not happen until hostilities had calmed or ended. A key focus of the talks would be how to ensure ship-owners could feel confident enough for vessels to resume travelling through the area and to bring down insurance premiums. There would also eventually need to be coordination with Iran to ensure that there will be security guarantees for vessels, something that the French spokesperson indicated was unlikely for now. Britain has said that it will host a meeting of military planners for talks next week.

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

**Kuwait**

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

**Oman**

PORT	OPERATIONAL STATUS
<b>Asyad Drydock - Duqm</b>	Port operating normally
<b>Port of Duqum</b>	Port operating normally ; vessels calling at port must submit an official letter stating that they are not carrying any dangerous goods on board.
<b>Port Sultan Qaboos</b>	Port operating normally
<b>Muscat</b>	Port operating normally; ISPS Level 3
<b>Mina Al Fahal</b>	Port operating normally; ISPS Level 3
<b>Port of Sohar</b>	Port operating normally
<b>Qalhat LNG Terminal – Sur</b>	Port operating normally ; ISPS Level 3
<b>OMIFCO Terminal – Sur</b>	Port operating normally
<b>Port of Salalah</b>	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
<b>Hamad Port</b>	Normal port operations and vessel movement; Activity levels are lower than pre-conflict
<b>Doha Port</b>	Normal port operations and vessel movement; Activity levels are lower than pre-conflict

<b>Al Ruwais Port</b>	Normal port operations; port is restricted to small craft only, including dhows and barges; Activity levels are lower than pre-conflict
<b>Mesaieed Port</b>	Port operations ongoing
<b>Ras Laffan Port</b>	Port operations ongoing
<b>Al Shaheen Offshore Terminal</b>	Operations suspended until further notice
<b>Halul Island Offshore Terminal</b>	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 2 April 2026)

**As of 30 March, the outlook for the Strait of Hormuz and connected waterways remains unstable. Currently there is no realistic short-term return to normal shipping.** Major global powers assess that reopening the strait cannot be done by force while hostilities continue, due to Iran's layered anti-access capabilities. Consequently, consensus amongst governments is that safe navigation likely depends on a ceasefire and negotiations with Iran, not unilateral military action. Around 40 countries are now coordinating on a response, however the immediate focus currently remains on diplomatic pressure and negotiations, and planning (not yet executing) naval escort and mine-clearing operations. In the near term, Iran is expected to maintain a selective access regime, effectively allowing passage for certain partners while others remain restricted. Its fortified island positions and surveillance and strike capabilities give it sustained leverage over the strait. Consequently, the strait will continue to function as a high-risk war zone, with ongoing threats of vessel attacks and unpredictable enforcement of passage rules. Even if limited transits do occur, they will remain exception-based, politically mediated, and high-risk and not a return to open commerce. **As of 2 April, the outlook is prolonged disruption with no quick fix. The Strait of Hormuz is expected to remain operationally constrained. Any meaningful restoration of safe, routine maritime traffic will likely require a ceasefire followed by coordinated international and Iranian agreement, placing this timeline likely closer to weeks or longer, not immediate recovery.**