

Red Sea - Indian Ocean



Incidents:

- UKMTO reported that on 01APR17 a small cargo Vessel (the Dhow Al Kaushar) was **hijacked** near the vicinity of Socotra while it was en route from Dubai to Bossaso. The EU NAVFOR later reported that the dhow was located near the location of Hobyo and El Hur.
- UKMTO also reported on 03APR17 a **suspicious approach** in the South Red Sea, in position 1310N 04303E when a MV reported that it was being approached by 6 light blue colored skiffs with 5 POB on each skiff, while ladders and hooks were sighted. Vessel raised alarm and Armed Security onboard took position on the bridge wings and the incident ended after 3 minutes.
- The Somali mayor of Hobyo reported to the Voice of America on April 04 that a Pakistan-owned small cargo vessel (the Dhow Salama 1) near the village of El Hur. The above information is yet to be confirmed by UKMTO.

Interesting information:

- The Dhow Casayr II that was hijacked along with two skiffs last week near the vicinity of Eyl Somalia, has being released along with its crew, while the skiffs and

the Pirates remain at large. It was first believed that the dhow was going to be used by Pirates as a mother-ship but apparently the pirates only held on to the skiffs.

- USMARAD issued its 2017-002 advisory reiterating the threats to Vessels sailing near South Red Sea and near the vicinity of the Yemeni coast as a result of the ongoing Yemeni conflict and the threat of being subject to direct or collateral damage.

- UKMTO also reiterated its earlier advisories that urge vessels to avoid the East TSS near Hanish Islands near the Bab el Mandeb straits. UKMTO states that despite the threat to vessels relating to the Yemeni conflict, a lot of Vessels continue to use the East TSS putting them in high risk.

- The Trump administration has given the US Forces additional powers to conduct more air strikes in Somalia in order to combat Al-Shabab.

- The ongoing drought and consequent famine along with the major cholera outbreak that is taking place in Somalia continues to plague the country while efforts by international organizations to make the situation better seem to just not be enough.

Threat Assessment:

- Instability in Somalia and the state of the civil war in Yemen will continue to affect the threat level to Merchant Vessels.

- First, in Somalia, the threat to Merchant Shipping remains either in the form of Piracy or the ongoing possibility of the Al Shabaab terrorist group targeting maritime assets. We have now entered a point that we have an apparent trend that signals the possible resurgence of Piracy. Pirates obviously have the intent to Pirate Vessels (driven among others from the famine and exacerbated by the results of the resurgence of heavy commercial fishing in the vicinity) and with every passing week we see that they seem to be building up their capability by targeting dhows and skiffs.

- Second, in Yemen, the high risk and almost inevitable spill over of violence stemming from the Yemen Civil war to the maritime domain in the form of terrorism, piracy or collateral damage from unrelated incidents remains. The Houthi rebel forces have an interest towards the maritime domain (especially in the South Red Sea-Bab al-Mandeb) as a major strategic objective. The fact that Military assets have been targeted proves that any vessel can be at risk at any time.

Sea Guardian continues to urge high levels of vigilance in the entire HRA with South Red Sea, Gulf of Aden and Somali Coast, remaining areas where caution needs to be exercised considering the recent trend of Piracy related incidents. ALL advisories in effect in South Red Sea and Yemeni Coast must be adhered by all. Reduced military presence in the area makes strict BMP Implementation (including IRTC and group transit scheme use) of the utmost importance.

West Africa



Incidents:

- On 29 MAR 2017 MDAT / GOG reported that a MV was reported attacked in position 04 08N 004 40E around 25nm south of Bonga Terminal Nigeria. Apparently the attack was averted due to the vessel having armed guards onboard.
- On 30 MAR 2017 am hrs MDAT / GOG reported a MV was attacked at position 04 01N 006 48E. Additional information states that the Pirates might have kidnapped some crewmembers as well.

Interesting information:

- More than half of all maritime kidnapping victims in 2016 were captured off West Africa while African nations may be losing \$1.3 billion each year to illegal fishing. Furthermore, the Nigerian Navy has confiscated \$1.34 billion worth of stolen crude oil and illegally refined diesel last year alone.

Threat assessment:

The month of March had numerous incidents in the GOG. Taking under consideration the overall trends, Gulf of Guinea remains the world's hotspot for piracy and maritime crime, particularly marine kidnapping for ransom. As long as corruption and militant disruptions can't be confined or even better eliminated, it is clear that maritime piracy and kidnapping will continue to plague the waters of West Africa. In any case all vessels operating in GOG waters should adopt strict BMP4

implementation measures, follow MDAT-GoG guidelines and report any suspicious activity.

South East Asia



Incidents:

- There are no Piracy related incidents to report for the reporting period.

Interesting information:

- According to the Financial Times, Southeast Asia's big island nations are about to launch a joint naval operation to combat piracy and Islamist militancy. "Ships and troops from the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia plan to deploy next week around seas where hijackings and kidnappings have surged" as fears of increased lawlessness and terrorist threats have increased.

Threat assessment:

By far Sulu-Celebes Sea and eastern Sabah region are the most dangerous waters in SE Asia the last six months and apart from several statements from officials of adjacent countries for common patrols to fight the terrorist groups and the announcement of several other measures to confine piracy activity, there is nothing tangible so far. In any case all vessel's transiting above-mentioned waters should remain vigilant while strictly implementing BMP4.

**Overall Map of Incidents can be found at <http://www.sguardian.com/risk-map/>
We would also like to encourage the recipients of this report, to follow Sea Guardian's Social networks for up to date and real time information**

