

Maritime Security Review



Issue No. 14

10 April 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 becomes available.

We encourage our readers to confidentially report any incidents or suspicious activity to info@msrisk.com.

INCIDENTS AT SEA

Reporting Period: 3 – 9 April 2017

Region	Current Incidents Reported	Late Reported incidents	Threat level
MAIN REGIONS			
Gulf of Aden/Arabian Sea	3	1	Medium
Gulf of Guinea	0	2	Low
Southeast Asia	0	3	Medium
WORLDWIDE			
North America	0	1	Low
Central America/Caribbean/South America	1	4	High
Atlantic Ocean Area	0	0	Low
Northern Europe/English Channel/Baltic	0	0	Low
Mediterranean/ Black Sea	0	0	Low
Arabian Gulf	0	0	Low
East Asia/Indian Subcontinent	0	0	Low
Southern Africa	0	0	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: VESSEL HIJACKING

During this reporting period, pirates hijacked three vessels, with the recent hijackings effectively marking the end of a five-year hiatus in Somali piracy. During this period, pirates also approached a merchant vessel, likely in an attempt to hijack it, however they were deterred by armed guards onboard the vessel. Further such incidents and hijackings are likely to take place, and all vessels transiting this region are advised to remain vigilant.

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 week'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

- **8 April (Somalia)** – Somali pirates hijacked vessel *OS35* 120 km (75 miles) off the coast of Yemen. **Update (9 April)** – Nineteen crewmembers on board the vessel were freed by a Chinese team, which boarded the ship early on Sunday.
- **4 April (Somalia)** – Somali pirates hijacked *SALAMA I* off the coast of central Somalia. The vessel is reportedly carrying a cargo of food.
- **1 April (Somalia – Late Report)** – Somali pirates hijacked the Indian cargo dhow *AL KAUSAR*, which was carrying 11 crewmembers while en route to Bossaso. The dhow is reportedly in Somali coastal waters in the Galmudug region.

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

- **3 April (Red Sea)** – A merchant vessel reported that it was approached by six skiffs, each with five persons on board, 15 nautical miles southwest of Mokha in the southern Red Sea. The vessel reported sighting ladders and hooks on board the skiff, and the approach prompted the vessel's crewmembers to raise the alarm. Armed guards on board the vessel took up position, causing the skiffs to move away.

OTHER ACTIVITY

- No current incidents to report

MARITIME REPORTING

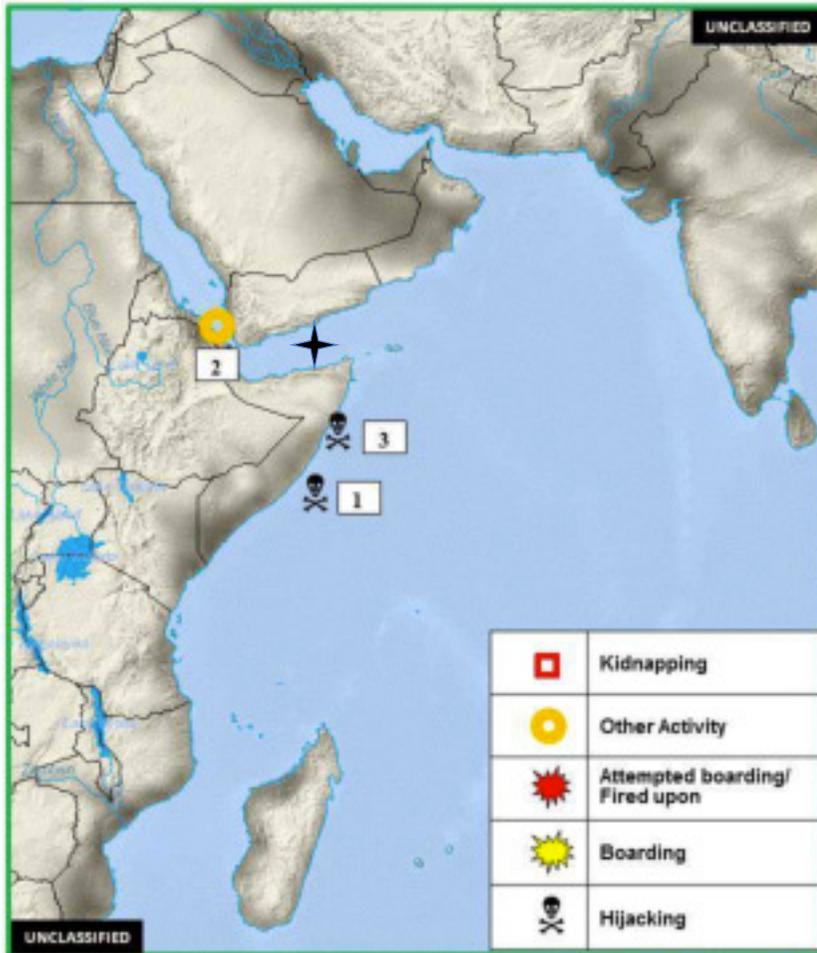
- **8 April (Somalia)** – The head of a maritime security company disclosed on Saturday that Somali pirates are suspected of hijacking a bulk carrier ship, in what is the latest in a string of attacks after years of calm. A security source working at the Puntland Marine Police Force disclosed that the vessel was Tuvalu-flagged and is known as *OS35*. The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) disclosed on its website that it had received a notification earlier on Saturday from a vessel in the area in the Gulf of Aden that was under attack and had been boarded about 120 km (75 miles) from the coast of Yemen. **Update (9 April)** – On Sunday, nineteen crewmembers were freed from a ship captured by Somali pirates in the Gulf of Aden. Ships from three countries diverted to its path, with a Chinese team boarding the vessel early on Sunday. A spokesman for UKMTO has confirmed that all crewmembers on board the hijacked ship are safe and heading to an unnamed destination under escort.
- **3 April (Somalia)** – On Monday, Somali pirates hijacked the Pakistani vessel *SALAMA 1* off the coast of Somalia, in what is the fourth successful pirate attack in the region this year.
- **3 April (Somalia)** – Reports emerged on Monday that Somali pirates have hijacked an Indian cargo ship with 11 crewmembers on board. The vessel was hijacked on Friday 31 March, with one of the crewmembers calling the vessel owner on Saturday evening and informing officials about the hijacking. The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) disclosed that it had received information that a dhow had been hijacked “in the vicinity of Socotra (Island).” It named the vessel *Al Kausar*, and disclosed that it had been en route from Dubai to the port of Bossaso in northern Somalia’s semi-autonomous Puntland region. The EU naval force, which patrols off the coast of Somalia, disclosed on Monday after noon that the dhow had been spotted further south, off the Somalia port of Hobyo. A statement on its website disclosed that “an EU Naval Force maritime patrol aircraft has confirmed the exact location of the dhow and has attempted to establish radio communications but without success,” adding “investigations and operations are ongoing.” Burhan Warsame, the minister for ports and sea transport for the region of Galmudug disclosed that authorities there would not allow the

ship to dock in Hobyo, which falls under its jurisdiction, adding “we assure you pirates cannot bring it here. We have strong Galmudug forces at Hobyo.” Muse Osman Yusuf, district commissioner in the Puntland port of Eyl, disclosed on Monday that authorities were ready to confront whoever had seized the Indian dhow.

- **3 April (Somalia)** – UKMTO has reported on its website that early on Monday, six skiffs had approached a vessel in the southern Red Sea, adding that ladders and hooks had been sighted. UKMTO went on to say that armed guards on board the vessel took up positions, resulting in the skiffs departing, leaving the vessel unharmed.

INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



WEATHER FORECAST: GULF OF ADEN/ARABIAN SEA

NORTHERN ARABIAN SEA: Northerly winds of 15 – 20 knots, with seas of 4 – 6 feet.

- **Extended Forecast:** West-northwest winds of 8 – 13 knots, with seas of 2 – 4 feet.

GULF OF OMAN: North-northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots, gusting to 20 knots, and seas of 3 – 5 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with North-northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots, gusting to 20 knots and seas of 3 – 5 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.

- **Extended Forecast:** Variable winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with variable winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.

GULF OF ADEN: East-northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with east-northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.

- **Extended Forecast:** East-northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with east-northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.

SOMALI COAST: East-northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots, and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the northern section of the coastline; with easterly winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the southern section of the coastline.

- **Extended Forecast:** East-northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the northern section of the coastline; with easterly winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the southern section of the coastline.

CENTRAL AFRICAN COAST/INDIAN OCEAN: Variable winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.

- **Extended Forecast:** Variable winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.

MOZAMBIQUE CHANNEL: Southeast winds of 15 – 20 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the northern Channel; with southeast winds of 15 – 20 knots and seas of 7 – 9 feet in the southern Channel.

- **Extended Forecast:** Southeast winds of 13 – 18 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the northern Channel; with east-southeast winds of 15 – 20 knots and seas of 5 – 8 feet in the southern Channel.

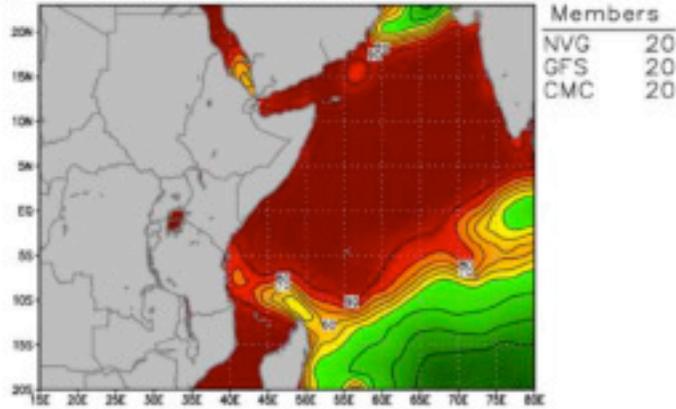
SURFACE CURRENTS: The northern Arabian Sea and Gulf of Aden currents are variable with most areas having an average speed of 1 knot. The Mozambique Channel currents are variable having an average speed of 2 knots. Currents' speeds along the Somali Basin are northeasterly averaging between 2 – 3 knots.

SYNOPTIC DISCUSSION: High pressure continues to dominate the weather over the region, producing light winds across the Arabian Gulf, Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea. Expect increased wind flow through the Strait of Hormuz and the Bab el Mandeb Strait due to funneling effects.

WEATHER MAP

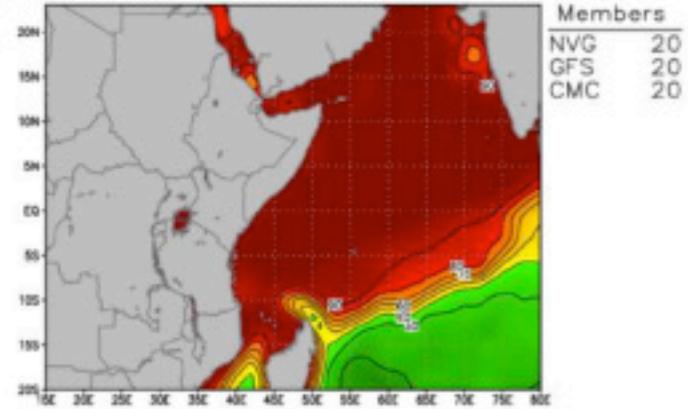
Source: ONI

Winds < 15.0 kts and Wave Heights < 5.0 ft



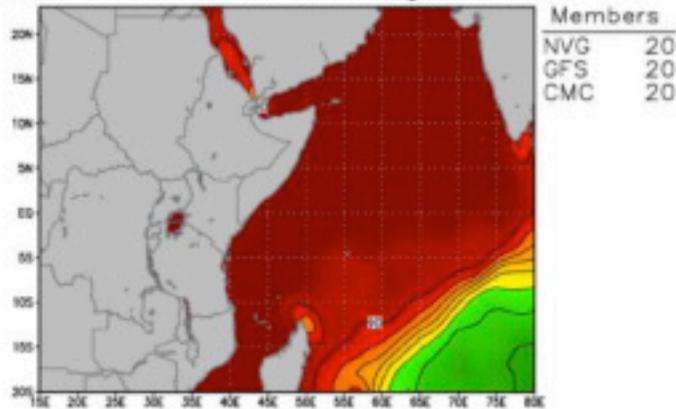
Valid Time: 1200Z 06 APR 2017

Winds < 15.0 kts and Wave Heights < 5.0 ft



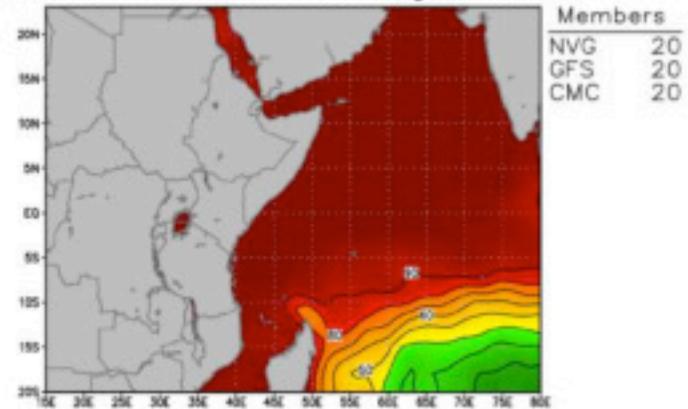
Valid Time: 0000Z 09 APR 2017

Winds < 17.0 kts and Wave Heights < 7.0 ft



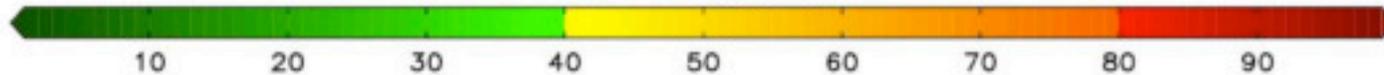
Valid Time: 1200Z 11 APR 2017

Winds < 17.0 kts and Wave Heights < 7.0 ft



Valid Time: 0000Z 14 APR 2017

probability (%)



SPOTLIGHT ON YEMEN

PORT STATUS AS OF 8 APRIL 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

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

- 5 April** – Thirteen rebels were killed as air raids by the Saudi-led Arab coalition struck their positions on the coast of western Yemen. Warplanes and Apache helicopters took part in the raids that targeted rebel positions in Taif and Nakhliya, six miles south of Hodeidah, a military official said. Medical officials said 13 rebels were killed in the strikes. The raids destroyed five fishing boats allegedly used by the Houthi rebels to deliver arms to the isle of Tarfa.
- 5 April** – The UN called on Yemen's warring parties on Wednesday to safeguard the strategic Red Sea port of Hodeidah as a lifeline for millions of Yemenis facing potential famine. The Yemeni government and its Arab allies are preparing an assault on Hodeidah port, which has been the entry of nearly 80 percent of Yemen's food imports, because they say the Iran-aligned Houthis use it to smuggle weapons and ammunition. Local officials say the government and its allies have positioned two recently-trained brigades for a possible attack. One is 140 miles north of Hodeidah and the other 80 miles to the south, so they would have to cross large areas of Houthi-held territory if they set off to seize the port. "The continued military escalation in Yemen, specifically the militarization of large regions on its Western Coast and the associated increase of humanitarian access obstacles and population movement restrictions, are of grave concern to the humanitarian community," the Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator in Yemen said in a statement issued on Tuesday.
- 2 April** – **The port of Aden has issued a statement stating that it is now ready to take on the role of Yemen's primary gateway to meet the logistics needs of the war-torn country.** In the statement, senior management indicated that Aden Container Terminal has increased its storage space to allow the port to

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>.

receive more containers and as a result it now has “the full ability to cover Yemen’s traffic effectively.” The statement continued: “As a result of the stabilisation of security in Aden and the abolition of all the checkpoints that had been developed after the war to cover all the liberated areas, the terminal was able to handle about 270,000 teu in 2016.” The Aden Container Terminal has agreed with the World Food Program to provide special warehouses to store relief items and has the ability to make similar arrangements with other relief organisations as required. Other cargoes transported by general cargo and bulk ships, such as steel, wood, cement and wheat, including relief materials, can be handled in Ma’alla Wharf while Aden Gulf Marine Terminal, a specialised bulk grain and edible oil terminal, can accommodate the largest ships calling at any terminal in Yemen.

- **28 March – The U.S. Maritime Administration has issued an advisory warning that continued regional tensions in Yemen have increased the risks to U.S.-flagged commercial vessels transiting the Southern Red Sea.** "The Houthi rebels have conducted attacks against a Saudi warship and UAE logistics vessels, as well as an attempted but failed attack against U.S. Navy ships in the southern Red Sea," says the advisory. "There has been increased fighting along the Red Sea coast and there is a risk that U.S.-flagged commercial vessels operating in the area could be associated with anti-Houthi operations, or otherwise at risk. U.S. flagged vessels operating in this vicinity should exercise extreme caution." The advisory recommends that U.S. flagged commercial vessels avoid entering or loitering near Yemen's Red Sea ports, and that vessels at anchor, operating in restricted manoeuvring environments or at slow speeds, be especially vigilant. Vessels transiting the region should conduct a pre-voyage risk assessment and incorporate appropriate protective measures into their vessel security plans. U.S. flagged commercial vessels in the region should operate under a heightened state of alert due to the potential for direct or collateral damage. Transit by yachts and privately owned sailing vessels through the region is also extremely hazardous and may result in capture. The U.S. Coast Guard advises against all operation of yacht and pleasure craft in these areas.

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.

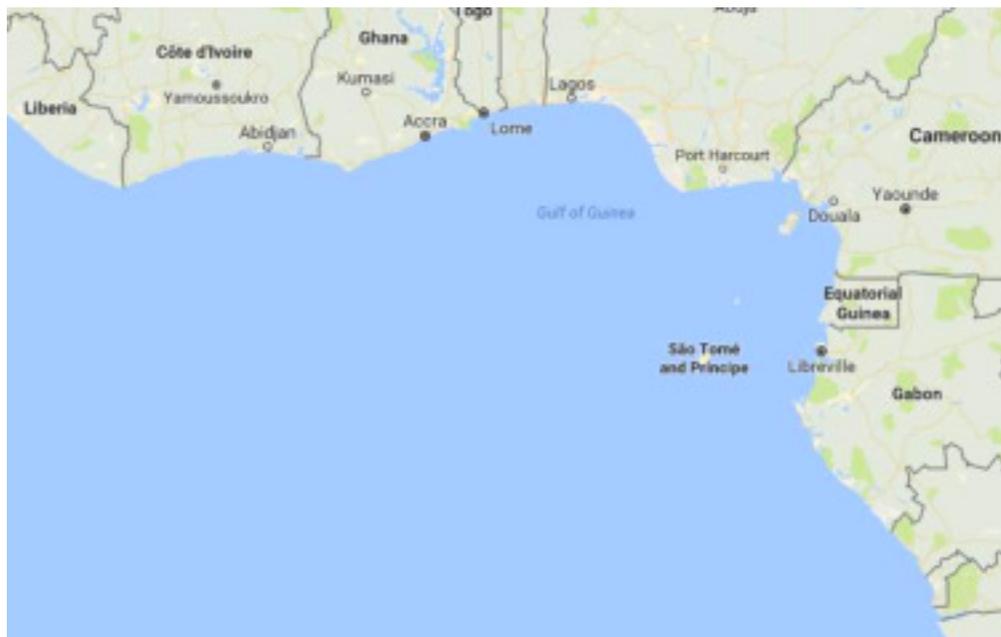
SAUDI COALITION INSPECTIONS

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

- **29 March (Nigeria – Late Report)** – Armed pirates in a boat chased and fired upon a tanker underway near position 04:05 N – 004:42 E, 64 nautical miles southwest of the Bayelsa Coast. The onboard armed naval security team returned fire resulting in the pirates aborting the attack and moving away. All crewmembers have been reported safe. The tanker continued her voyage to the next port.

VESSELS BOARDED

- No current incidents to report

KIDNAPPING

- **30 March (Nigeria – Late Report)** – Four persons in a small boat boarded a bulk carrier as it approached the pilot boarding station, near position 04:01 N – 006:48 E, 32 nautical miles southwest of Bonny. They kidnapped six crewmembers and escaped.

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

- No current incidents to report

OTHER ACTIVITY

- No current incidents to report

MARITIME REPORTING

- No current incidents to report

WEATHER FORECAST: GULF OF GUINEA

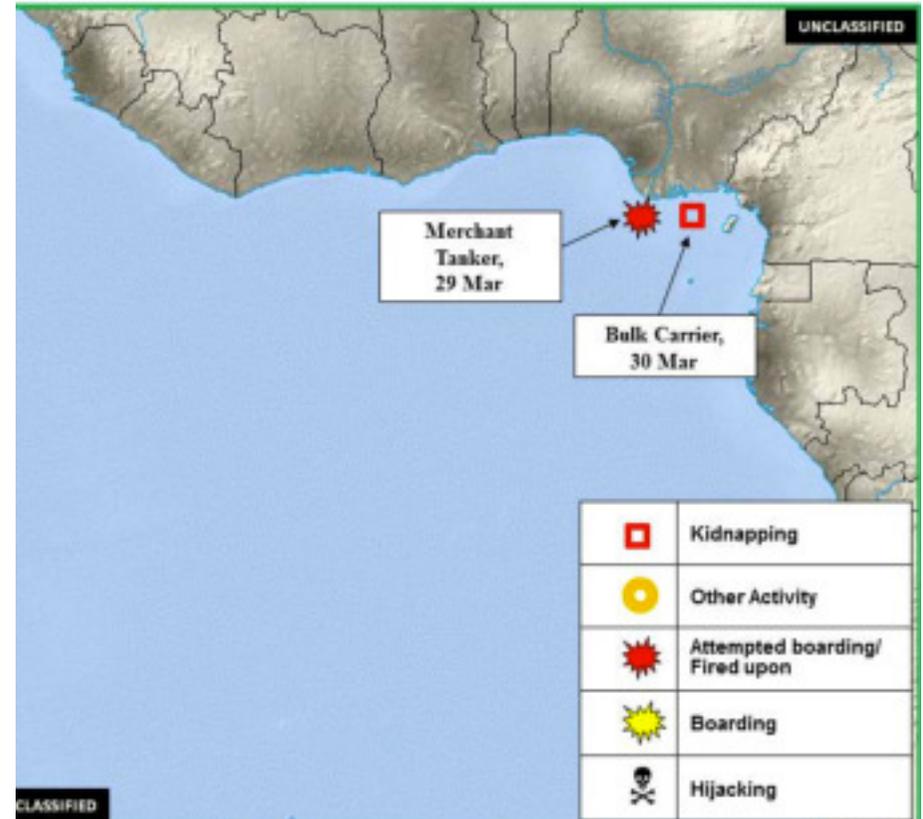
GULF OF GUINEA: South-southwest winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.

- **Extended Forecast:** South-southwest winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 2 – 4 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 African coasts and 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.



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

- **26 March (Indonesia – Late Report)** – One robber attempted to board an anchored product tanker near position 01:43 N – 101:26 E, Lubuk Gaung Anchorage, Dumai. Alert crewman noticed the robber and raised the alarm.

Upon seeing the crew's alertness, the robber escaped in a boat with three accomplices. The robbers were apprehended by Indonesian Marine Police who were patrolling in the vicinity.

INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI

VESSELS BOARDED

- **26 March (Indonesia – Late Report)** – Duty crewman on routine rounds onboard a bulk carrier anchored near position 03:43 S – 114:23 E, Taboneo Anchorage, noticed that the forecastle store room door lock was broken. Further checks made on the forecastle indicated that the hawse pipe cover securing arrangements were cut through. The crewman informed the bridge and the alarm was raised. The crew was mustered and went to the forecastle and found the ship's stores were stolen. Port control was informed.
- **21 March (Philippines – Late Report)** – One robber boarded an LPG tanker anchored near position 13:40 N – 121:03 E, JG Summit Berth, Batangas, during loading operations. An alert duty crewman saw the robber hiding near the starboard winches. When confronted, the robber threatened the crewman with a long knife. The alarm was raised and the crew was alerted. Upon seeing the alerted crew, the robber escaped in a waiting boat with his accomplice. On searching the tanker after the incident, the crew reported ship's properties were stolen. Local authorities and local agents were informed.

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

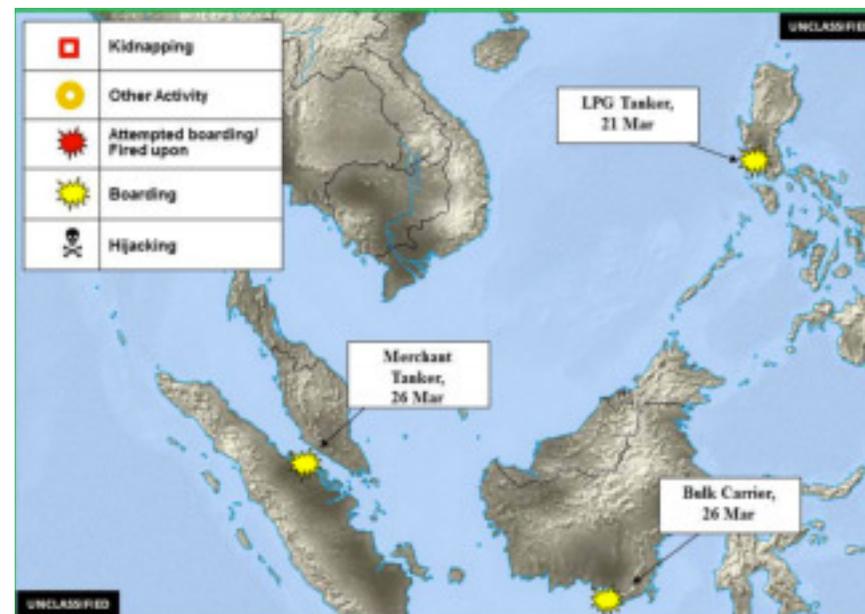
- No current incidents to report

OTHER ACTIVITY REPORT

- No current incidents to report

MARITIME REPORTING

- Nothing to report



WEATHER FORECAST FOR SOUTHEAST ASIA

SOUTHERN SOUTH CHINA SEA: East-northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.

- **Extended Forecast:** East-northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet with a northerly swell.

MALACCA STRAIT: Northwest winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 2 feet in the northern Strait; with northerly winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 2 feet in the southern Strait.

- **Extended Forecast:** Northwest winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 2 feet in the northern Strait; with northerly winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 2 feet in the southern Strait.

ANDAMAN SEA: North-northeast winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting up to 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the northern section; with north-northeast winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the southern section.

- **Extended Forecast:** North-northeast winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the northern section; with north-northeast winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the southern section.

SOUTHERN SULU SEA – NORTHERN CELEBES SEA: Variable winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 3 feet.

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

SURFACE CURRENTS: Currents in the southern South China Sea, Malacca Strait and Andaman Sea are generally less than 1 knots with a few areas in the southern South China Sea averaging 1 knot.

SYNOPTIC DISCUSSION: The return of monsoonal flow late in the forecast period will produce increased winds and seas throughout 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 daytime heating.

ABDUCTION OF CREWMEMBERS FROM SHIPS IN SULU-CELEBES SEA & WATERS OFF EASTERN SABAH (UPDATE MARCH 2016 – MARCH 2017)

OVERVIEW

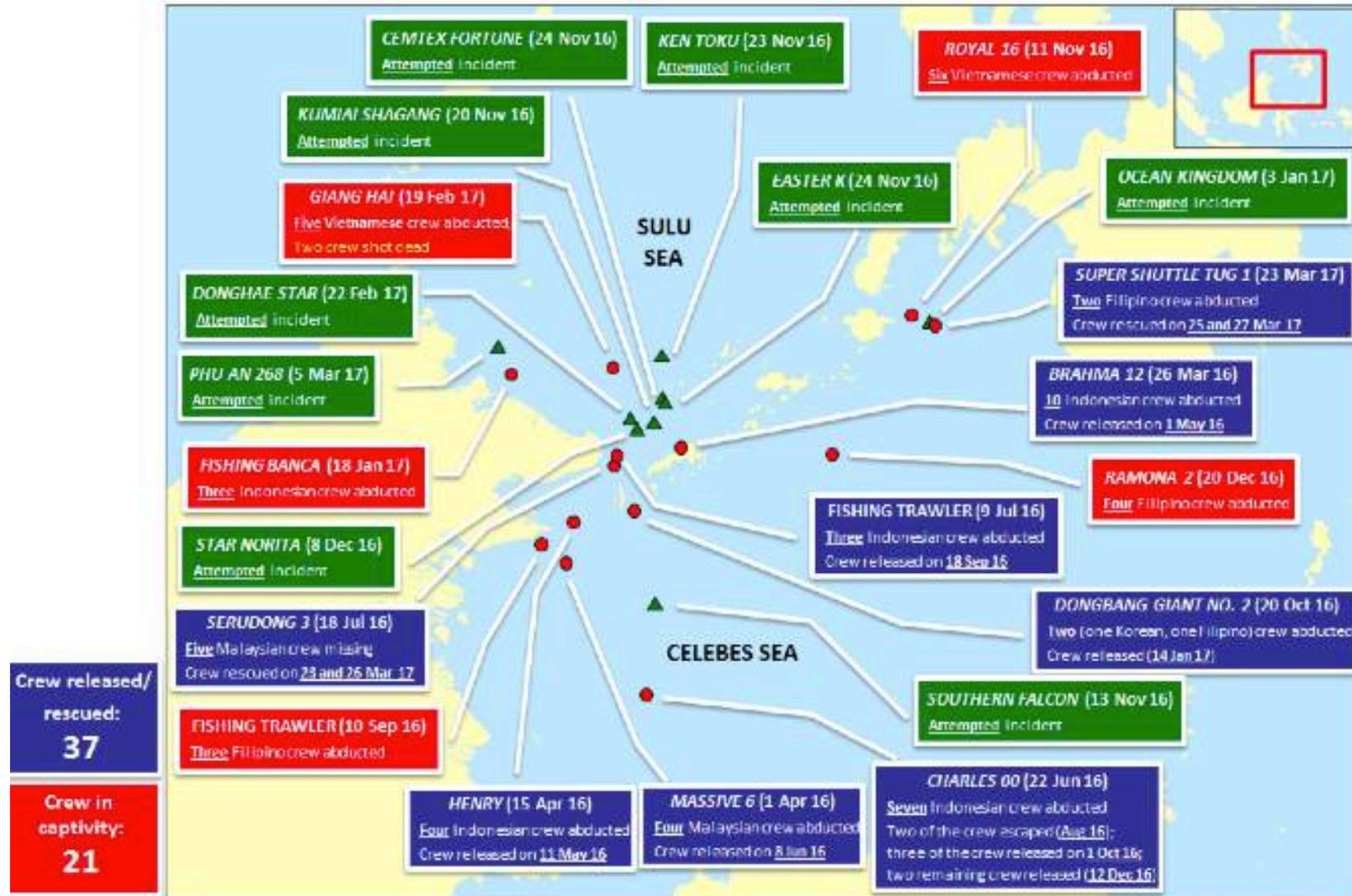
Between March 2016 and March 2017, there were a total of 22 incidents of abduction of crewmembers from vessels while underway in the Sulu-Celebes Sea and off eastern Sabah region. This figure comprises of thirteen actual incidents and nine attempted incidents, with most incidents being claimed by the Abu Sayyaf Group. As of 31 March 2017, 27 crewmembers have been released/rescued, and 21 remain in captivity.

Between March – September 2016, the perpetrators mostly targeted tug boats towing barges and fishing trawlers. This modus operandi however has changed since October 2016, with the perpetrators increasingly attacking vessels of larger tonnage. In an attempt to board some of these larger vessels, the perpetrators initially fired at them, as was evidenced in the 23 November 2016 incident involving Panama-registered bulk carrier *KEN TOKU*, when the perpetrators fired at the starboard side of the vessel; and in the 3 January 2017 incident involving Antigua and Barbuda-registered container ship *OCEAN KINGDOM* when the perpetrators fired continuously at the ship, resulting in multiple bullet shots at the bridge area and different parts of the ship. No crewmembers were injured in either incident. The incident involving Indonesia-registered tugboat *HENRY* on 15 April 2016 did result in one crewmember being wounded during a shoot-out between the perpetrators and the Malaysian Marine Police, while the incident involving Vietnam-

registered bulk carrier *ROYAL 16* on 11 November 2016 resulted in two crewmembers being wounded when the perpetrators fired at the cabin doors of the ship. Since these incidents, perpetrators appear to have become increasingly violent, with the latest incident, which occurred on 19 February 2017, involving Vietnam-registered general cargo ship *GIANG HAI* resulting in one of the crewmembers being shot when he tried to deny the perpetrators' access to the bridge. He later died from his injuries. Furthermore, of the six abducted crewmembers, one of them was reportedly killed by the perpetrators during transport and his body was thrown overboard.

INCIDENT MAP (MARCH 2016 – MARCH 2017)

Source: ReCAAP



MODUS OPERANDI

In the 22 incidents reported during this period, the modus operandi of the perpetrators has been fairly similar, with the exception of two incidents where the perpetrators were more violent when they opened fire at the vessels and in one incident where the perpetrators opened fire at the crewmembers.

TYPE OF VESSEL TARGETED

While between March and September 2016, the perpetrators targeted tugboats, towing barges; and fishing trawlers, towards the end of 2016, they would go on to target larger vessels.

Tugboats and fishing boats/trawlers were initially targeted due to their slow speed and low free board. A total of ten incidents involving tugboats and fishing trawlers were reported. Since late 2016 however the perpetrators have started to target ships of larger tonnages – accounting for 12 of the 15 incidents that occurred between October 2016 and March 2017. The types of these twelve vessels targeted were bulk carriers (7); general cargo ships (3); container ship (1); and product tanker (1). Of the twelve vessels, nine managed to successfully avoid boarding by conducting evasive manoeuvres and implementing effective anti-piracy measures. Three vessels – *DONGA BANG GIANT NO. 2* (general cargo ship); *ROYAL 16* (bulk carrier); and *GIANG HAI* (general cargo ship) – were boarded by the perpetrators who abducted some of the crewmembers on board.

TIME INCIDENT OCCURRED

Eighteen of the incidents that occurred during this reporting period happened during daylight hours (between 0700 hrs and 1800 hrs), with the remaining four incidents occurring during hours of darkness (between 2359 hrs and 0330 hrs).

TYPE OF BOATS USED BY PERPETRATORS

In a majority of the incidents that occurred during this period, speedboats were commonly used by the perpetrators. The colours of the speedboats observed so far include grey, white green with white stripes, white with red lining, grey with blue stripes, blue and white/blue. Aside from speedboats, green and red 'jungkong' pump boats, which are small wooden traditional fishing boats, were also used by the perpetrators.

NUMBER OF PERPETRATORS

The number of perpetrators involved in each incident varied. Of the 22 incidents reported, 8 involved more than 7 men; 10 incidents reported perpetrators in a group of 3 – 6 men; and four incidents had no information regarding the number of perpetrators.

WEAPONS USED BY PERPETRATORS

In 20 of the 22 incidents that occurred during this period, the perpetrators carried firearms. They discharged their firearms in five incidents – *HENRY* (shoot-out between the perpetrators and the Malaysian Marine Police); *CHARLES 00* (fire at tugboat to force her to stop); *ROYAL 16* (fire at cabin doors to open the doors); *KEN TOKU* (fire at the vessel to force her to stop, however the ship managed to escape); and *GIANG HAI* (fire at a crewmember who tried to deny the perpetrators' access to the bridge).

TREATMENT OF CREWMEMBERS

In most of the incidents that were reported, the perpetrators did not harm the crewmembers. However, there were reports that the crewmembers on board vessels *HENRY* and *ROYAL 16* did suffer some injuries. Furthermore, the incident involving vessel *GIANG HAI* resulted in a crewmember being shot when he tried to deny the perpetrators' access to the bridge. That crewmember later died as a result

of his injuries. One of the abducted crewmembers on board that vessel was reportedly killed during transport.

VESSEL FLAG

Currently there is no evidence that indicates that certain flag ships were targeted by the perpetrators, with most incidents being opportunistic in nature and ships that are slow moving or had a low freeboard being particularly targeted.

Of the 22 ships that were targeted, five were Malaysia-registered ships, four were Panama-registered ships, three were Indonesia-registered ships, three were Vietnam-registered ships and two were Philippine-registered ships. The other five were vessels of flag from Korea, Marshall Island, Singapore, Norway and Antigua and Barbuda.

NATIONALITY OF ABDUCTED CREWMEMBERS

There is no indication that certain nationality of crewmembers was targeted. Of the crewmembers that were abducted over the course of this reporting period, 27 were Indonesians, 11 were Vietnamese, 10 were Filipinos, 9 were Malaysians and one was a Korean national.

ECONOMIC LOSS

The primary target of the perpetrators has been the abduction of crewmembers, however in some incidents, ship equipment has been stolen. In five of the thirteen actual incidents that occurred during this reporting period, the perpetrators stole the ship GPS, VHF radio, navigational equipment and compass.

AREAS WHERE INCIDENTS OCCURRED

ATTEMPTED INCIDENTS

Of the 9 attempted incidents that were reported during this period, six occurred in the vicinity of northwest of Tawi-Tawi and southwest of Doc Can Island. All six incidents involved bulk carriers and occurred between 0700 hrs and 1140 hrs.

LOCATION OF ATTEMPTED INCIDENTS

Source: ReCAAP



Three attempted incidents occurred in close proximity with each other within a duration of two days (23 – 24 November 2016).

On 23 November 2016 at 0920 hrs, nine men attempted to board *KEN TOKU* however they were unsuccessful. The following day, at about 1030 hrs, a group of ten men attempted to board *CEMTEX FORTUNE*. The vessel was south of the location of the attempted board of *KEN TOKU*. The perpetrators again failed in boarding the vessel. After an interval of 10 minutes, at about 1040 hrs, a group of ten men, possibly the same group, attempted to board *EASTER K*.

Due to the close proximity of the location of the incidents, it is highly likely that the same group of perpetrators was involved in the three attempted incidents.

CONCLUSION

MS RISK continues to advise all vessels to re-route from the area, where possible. This is due to the continuing high threat of abduction of crewmembers in the Sulu-Celebes Sea. This advisory is for all types of vessels. Otherwise, we strongly urge vessels to conduct voyage risk assessment, adopt piracy countermeasures in order to mitigate the risk, exercise enhanced vigilance, make immediate reports prior to entering the area, continue to maintain communication with the littoral States' enforcement agencies, and report all incidents to the relevant authorities.

WORLDWIDE

NORTH AMERICA

- **29 March (United States – Late Report)** – Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission officials inspected a boat 20 miles north of Key West and located forty sets of illegal shark fins, an indication that illegal finning still occurs in Florida waters despite being banned more than sixteen years ago. The investigation is continuing and so far no charges have been filed.

INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI

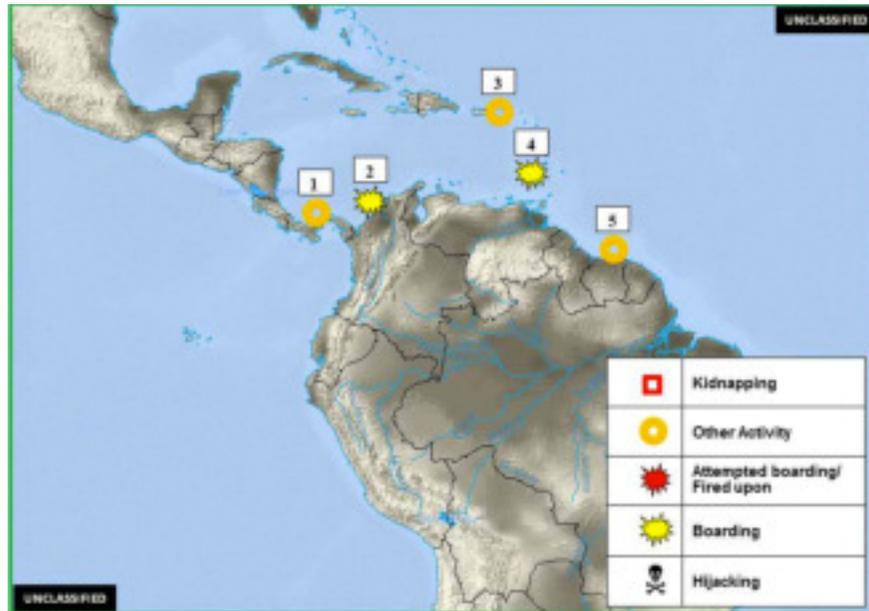


CENTRAL AMERICA/CARIBBEAN/SOUTH AMERICA

1. **3 April (Panama)** – A boat ran aground close to Juan Hombron Beach at the Gulf of Panama and was found to be carrying illegal drugs. In that recent operation by the National Aeronaval Service, its agents captured three crewmembers, transporting 661 kilograms of illegal substances that were hidden in the boat.
2. **28 March (Colombia – Late Report)** – Four robbers boarded an anchored tanker near position 10:19 N – 075:32 W, Cartagena Anchorage. The alarm was raised and the crew was mustered. Upon seeing the crew's alertness, the robes escaped with stolen ship's properties. Port Control was informed of the incident.
3. **27 March (Puerto Rico – Late Report)** – US Customs and Border Protection agents inspected a boat near Puerto Rico, found to be carrying 3,545 pounds of cocaine. The boat was intercepted 60 nautical miles southeast of Dorado, and its four occupants were arrested.
4. **26 March (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines – Late Report)** – A dinghy and small outboard motor were stolen from a yacht anchored in Saline Bay. The incident was reported to the local area authorities.
5. **16 February (Suriname – Late Report)** – According to the US Coast Guard, four Guyanese citizens were arrested after 4.2 tons of cocaine worth US \$125 million were seized from a fishing boat that was sailing north of Suriname. The operation occurred on 16 February after the US Coast Guard detected the 70-foot-long fishing boat in the Atlantic Ocean. The fishing vessel, the *LADY MICHELLE*, was towed to St. Vincent. The four men on the boat were taken to the US Virgin Islands to face criminal charges at the US District Court of the Virgin Islands.

INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

- No current incidents to report

NORTHEAST ASIA

- No current incidents to report

PACIFIC OCEAN/SOUTHERN OCEAN

- **Late March (Papua New Guinea – Late Report)** – In late March, a group of 13 persons, including two foreign missionaries, were robbed at knife point as they were travelling to Fergusson Island, Milne Bay province via motor boat. The pirates stole almost everything from the group, with the exception of one mobile phone, which was later used to call for help.

NORTHERN EUROPE/ENGLISH CHANNEL/BALTIC

- No current incidents to report

MEDITERRANEAN/BLACK SEA

- No current incidents to report

ARABIAN GULF

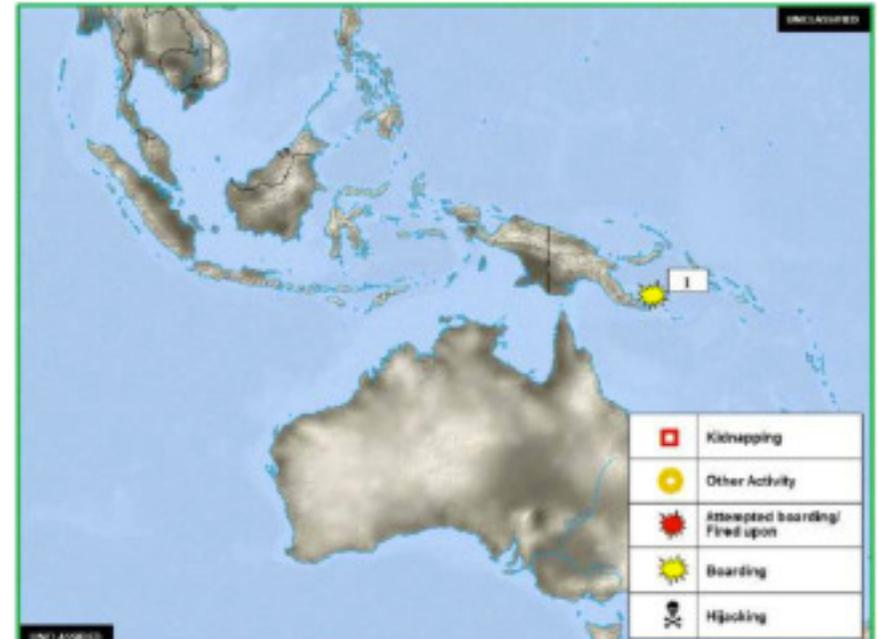
- No current incidents to report

EAST ASIA/INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

- No current incidents to report

INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



MIGRATION



than 300 people from three boats in international waters off the coast of the Libyan city of Sabratha. Meanwhile the Aquarius, which is operated by SOS Mediterranean and Doctors Without Borders (MSF), went to the aid of four rubber boats. The Italian coast guard has disclosed that no bodies were found in the rescues on Wednesday.

- **3 April** – A four-day-old baby was amongst nearly 500 migrants who were rescued while trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea on Saturday. The newborn girl was travelling on one of two rubber boats bound for Italy, which was carrying more than 200 migrants from Africa, the Middle East and Asia. They were spotted by search and rescue ships drifting 22 nautical miles north of the Libyan town of Sabratha – which is the most common departure point for people smugglers in the North African country. The rescue operation was carried out by Spanish NGO Proactiva Open Arms and lasted three hours. The migrants were transferred to other vessels and arrived in Italy on Sunday and on Monday.

- **6 April** – The Italian coast guard and humanitarian ships rescued 1,350 migrants in twelve separate operations that occurred in the Mediterranean on Thursday, adding that one person was found dead. According to a spokesperson for the Coast Guard, the migrants were all found in an area some 25 km (16 miles) north of the Libyan coast, adding that they were travelling on a larger boat, five dinghies and 6 smaller vessels. A statement released by the Coast Guard disclosed that the body of a dead person was found on one of the dinghies, adding that search and rescue operations were carried out by the Coast Guard and two boats operated by NGOs Sea Watch and Proactiva Open Arms. The Coast Guard spokesman disclosed that operations were still being carried out and that there were still no details regarding where the migrants would be sent.
- **5 April** – According to Italy's coast guard, humanitarian groups operating rescue vessels off the coast of Libya picked up more than 700 migrants out of seven flimsy and overcrowded boats on Wednesday. The Phoenix rescue ship, which is operated by Malta-based non-governmental organization MOAS, rescued more

SPOTLIGHT ON LIBYA

PORT STATUS AS OF 9 APRIL 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	High
Port of Benghazi	Closed	High
Port of Bourri (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	Declared force majeure 30 March*	Low
Port of Misrata (Qasr Ahmed)	Open	High
Port of Ras Lanuf	Open**	High
Port of Tobruk	Open	Moderate
Port of Tripoli	Open	Moderate
Port of Zawiya (Zawia)	Open	Moderate
Port of Zueitina	Open	Low

* Force majeure was declared on Mellitah and Zawiya ports on 30 March. While Zawiya has resumed operations, sources indicate that Mellitah port is still closed.

**Ras Lanuf port was expected to resume activity on 26 March, however no scheduled arrivals have been identified.

PORT STATUS AS OF 8 APRIL 2017

Risk level assessments take into consideration recent events, the likelihood of future outbreaks of violence, regional instability and other mitigating factors that may impact operations at the port.





ACTIVITY REPORTING

- 6 April** – Four suspected migrant traffickers were killed in an exchange of fire with Libyan coastguards near Zawiya. Navy spokesperson General Ayoub Qassem said the traffickers were on a vessel escorting a migrant boat headed across the Mediterranean to Europe. The coastguards opened fire after coming under attack. Four of the group, armed with automatic weapons and rocket launchers, were killed, two arrested and one went missing. The migrants' boat had left the scene without being hit.
- 6 April** – The Libya Herald reports that the fuel and gas committee has launched The Mediterranean Storm Operation to cut off the routes of international fuel smuggling gangs off Libyan shores and elsewhere. "The operation will see a cooperation between the naval force and the air force in Libya." The committee said on Thursday. It added that among other aims, the operation will seize the vehicles to smuggle Libyan fuel. Two days ago, the committee disclosed that its members had received death threats by some Libyan nationals, who were directly affected by cracking down on fuel smuggling. The fuel and gas crisis committee has been tightening its grip on fuel smuggling in Nalut for weeks leading to shutting down filling stations, whose owners are storing fuel to be smuggled later to Tunisia.
- 5 April** – Libyan authorities released 28 Eritreans and seven Nigerians who were captured and enslaved by Islamic State in Sirte and had been held in detention since the jihadist group lost the city in December. The group, all but two of whom are women and children, escaped from Sirte, a former Islamic State stronghold in central Libya, while forces from Misrata battled to oust the militants late last year. Some of the women were on their way to Europe when Islamic State fighters kidnapped and held them as sex slaves. After they escaped from Sirte, they were investigated for possible ties to the group and held for several months in a Misrata prison. The Libyan attorney-general's office announced that it had cleared the women of any wrongdoing in mid-February, but their release was delayed for several more weeks, with no explanation.
- 3 April** – Libya's Sharara oil field resumed production after a week-long shutdown when a pipeline linking it to an export terminal was blocked. Crude from the field reached Zawiya terminal in the evening, a source said, declining to be identified. NOC declared force majeure on exports of Sharara crude on March 28, a day after the shutdown of the field. Reopening the pipeline allowed NOC to end its force majeure on liftings from Zawiya. However, the gas pipeline from the Wafa field is still blocked near Nalut; thus NOC is keeping force majeure at its Mellitah terminal.
- 31 March** – Ten maritime search and rescue NGOs are pushing back against media reports that allege that they are facilitating human trafficking. Leaders from the NGOs met with members of the European Parliament to discuss ways to address unfavourable accounts of their activities. Last month, the head of EU border authority Frontex alleged that the NGOs were facilitating the business of human trafficking by ferrying migrants to Italy. "We must avoid supporting the business of criminal networks and traffickers in Libya through European vessels picking up migrants ever closer to the Libyan coast," said Frontex leader Fabrice Leggeri in an interview with Die Welt. "This leads traffickers to force even more migrants on to unseaworthy boats with insufficient water and fuel than in previous years." Medecines Sans Frontieres has described Frontex's views on NGO activity as "extremely serious and harmful." While security agencies were invited to this week's meeting in Brussels, they did not attend. In the Sicilian port of Catania, prosecutor Carmelo Zuccaro has announced that he is running an

informal investigation into whether the NGOs are collaborating with human traffickers. "At times, there were 13 boats operated by NGOs working at once [last summer]. Do these NGOs all have the same motivations? And who is financing them?" he said, speaking to Reuters. He suggested that their overhead must be high, given the size and scope of the effort. "That's expensive, and we're just looking into who is financing them and why," he said. While he has spoken of an initial probe into the NGOs' activities, Zuccaro has not initiated a formal investigation. Lena Waldhoff, a spokeswoman for rescue NGO Jugend Rettet, said that this was an "absurd allegation." "We have a strong feeling that it is a matter of political will to criminalize rescuers and move them away from the operational zones," she said.

- **31 March** – Reports earlier this week that as many as 150 people drowned in the Mediterranean were wrong, aid organisations said on Friday. A 16-year-old boy from The Gambia was found clinging to a fuel can in the sea on Wednesday, and he told rescuers about 147 others on his vessel had died when it sank. Probably still in shock after he was taken to the Italian island of Lampedusa, the boy told humanitarian workers he was the only survivor of the wreck, Cecile Pouilly, a spokeswoman for the UNHCR, told reporters. When 140 others disembarked at a different port on Thursday, several identified the boy as having been on the same boat.

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

MS Risk is a privately-owned company domiciled in the Isle of Man. It is underwritten by a syndicate of Lloyd's of London for special risks case management in all jurisdictions. It also acts as retained advisors to syndicates in the Lloyd's of London specialty risk insurance markets: kidnap for ransom, extortion, hijack, illegal detention, illegal war tax, malicious product tamper, terrorism, political and war risk.

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MS Risk has a dedicated team of researchers, a 24/7 hotline service and a pool of trained and experienced consultants to support client needs.

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References are always available.

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