



# The SENTINEL Watch



## IMSC Monthly Security Update - April 2021



### IMSC Update

Welcome to the April edition of the International Maritime Security Construct update, 'The SENTINEL Watch'. 'The SENTINEL Watch' provides the merchant shipping industry with an update on IMSC initiatives and maritime security incidents within the Middle East Region.

On March 30th, Commodore Craig Wood CBE, Royal Navy turned over command of Coalition Task Force Sentinel to Commodore Adrian Fryer, Royal Navy. Fair winds and following seas to Commodore Wood and welcome aboard Commodore Fryer.

Our new website, [imscsentinel.com](http://imscsentinel.com), is now live and will be continually updated with our latest news and guidance.

### Security Events

- Arab coalition destroys explosive-laden boat
- Southern Red Sea/BAM threat is LOW-MODERATE
- Arabian Gulf/Gulf of Oman threat is LOW-MODERATE
- Explosion in Arabian Sea & GPS interference in the maritime domain

### Security Update

On March 16, 2021, Reuters reported the Arab coalition had destroyed an explosive-laden boat, possibly preventing an attack off the port of As-Salif, Yemen. The threat within the Southern Red Sea and Bab-el-Mandeb Strait (BAM) remains unchanged for IMSC flagged vessels at LOW-MODERATE. Houthi misidentification and criminal conduct continue to present a threat for merchant shipping in the region, especially in vicinity of the Yemen coast or in Yemen ports. While there were no incidents in the Arabian Gulf or Gulf of Oman last month, the threat remains LOW-MODERATE for IMSC flagged vessels based on recent malign activity in the region and continuing geo-political tension.

MARAD alert of March 25, 2021, [2021-004A](#), reported a small explosion in the Arabian Sea. Though reported in some media outlets as a potential missile strike on the MV LORI, the incident is highly unlikely a MARSEC event.

Reports of GPS interference continue to plague the maritime domain. Mariners are encouraged to report any such activity in real time noting critical information such as location, date, time, duration of outage, and photographs of equipment failure. More information can be found at the USDOT MARAD advisory [2021-004 Various GPS Interference](#).

Warships and aircraft continue to provide overwatch to merchant vessels throughout the IMSC area of operation. Vessels transiting the area can expect to hear IMSC conducting Maritime Awareness Calls (MAC) on a regular basis. Masters are encouraged to report incidents to IMSC via UKMTO. Ship Owners, Operators, and Masters are advised to follow guidance in accordance with BMP 5 and national authorities and review the guidance and responses contained within the IMSC Bridge Cards. BMP 5 Ship Protection Measures are highly encouraged:

- Provide additional, fully briefed lookouts
- Maintain an all around lookout from an elevated position
- Consider shorter rotation of the watch period to maximize alertness of the lookouts
- Maintain sufficient binoculars for the enhanced bridge team, preferably anti-glare
- Consider the use of thermal imagery optics and night vision aids as they provide a reliable all-weather, day and night surveillance capability

**Surveillance      Vigilance      Assurance**



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## Show Us Your Bridge Cards

Tag us in a photo on social media with your bridge card for a chance to win IMSC CTF Sentinel merchandise.  
Twitter @IMSC\_Sentinel: ([click here for link](#)) Facebook @IMSCSENTINEL: ([click here for link](#)) LinkedIn: ([click here for link](#))

## IMSC in the News

Please check out IMSC's mission being highlighted by BIMCO's Bulletin in the feature entitled "Information Sharing and Exposure Key to Persian Gulf security." ([click here for link](#))

Also, please check out the following pieces covering the Sentinel Shield 21-2 and our change of command: Coalition Task Force Sentinel Change of Command ([click here for link](#)), and Royal Navy coverage: ([click here for link](#)) Sentinel Completes Third Joint Exercise in the Arabian Gulf ([click here for link](#))

## CTF Sentinel Change of Command

On March 30th, Commodore Craig Wood CBE transferred command to Commodore Adrian Fryer, who is now the fifth commander of Coalition Task Force Sentinel. During the nearly five months of Commodore Wood's tenure the task force has deepened relationships across partner navies and the coalition's relationship with the shipping industry. During Commodore Wood's tour, SENTINEL accumulated the following metrics in support of maritime security:

- Employed 79 different warships assigned from 6 nations in support of our mission
- Accumulated 19,000 collective hours of coverage by major warships
- Employed approximately 14,000 hours of aircraft reconnaissance flights
- Provided overwatch resulting in the incident-free transit of over 900 IMSC-flagged merchant vessel transits totaling nearly 85,000,000 tons of cargo through the highly contested maritime choke points of the Strait of Hormuz and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait during a period of significant international political unrest
- Executed 3 Sentinel Shield Exercises with IMSC partner nation navies
- Executed the Second Stakeholders Conference, which drew three times as much industry participation as the initial conference in September 2020

Commodore Fryer joins CTF Sentinel after extensive experience working in the maritime environment and after successful command of the Royal Navy's Patrol and Underwater Exploration and Diving mission. Welcome Commodore Fryer!

## Reporting

In the event of a security incident, follow reporting guidance in accordance with BMP 5, Section 7 ([click here for link](#)) and national authority.

When operating in the Middle East region, merchant shipping is encouraged to report through UKMTO, Telephone **+44 2392 222 060** or email **watchkeepers@ukmto.org**

In addition to the guidance provided in BMP5, merchant shipping is encouraged to report the following to UKMTO as detailed in the IMSC Bridge Cards:

- Threatening or harassing conduct directed at a merchant vessel.
- Threatening or harassing language transmitted on VHF.
- Boarding or search of a vessel without a valid legal pretext.
- Unnecessary manoeuvring in unsafe proximity of a merchant vessel.
- Intentional close manoeuvring so as to restrict a vessel's ability to manoeuvre without lawful justification.
- Aircraft operating at an unsafe altitude or distance that results in a threat to a merchant vessel.
- Unprofessional or inappropriate queries - Queries that include asking questions beyond flagged state, port of departure and port of arrival. Including questions relating to:
  - Whether warships or aircraft are operating in the area.
  - Asking unnecessarily probing questions about the crew or cargo.
- Sighting of suspicious floating objects (possible mine or waterborne improvised explosive device) in the area.
- On receiving a distress call from another Merchant Vessel that reports being harassed or attacked.

\* If you would like to be added to our distribution list, Email <IMSC.MTO@me.navy.mil> with the subject "SENTINEL Watch Distribution List"

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