



The SENTINEL Watch

IMSC Monthly Security Update - May 2021



IMSC Update

Welcome to the May 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.

Commodore Fryer's inaugural remarks: "I am excited to help ensure we maintain and build upon our edge through empowering this team and continuing to deepen our military and industry cooperation as we work to deter and expose efforts to undermine the rules based international system on which our global economy relies."

Please visit our website, imscsentinel.com,

Security Events

- Southern Red Sea/BAM threat is LOW-MODERATE
- Arabian Gulf/Gulf of Oman threat is LOW-MODERATE
- WBIED threats thwarted in Yemen and Yanbu
- MV Saviz & MV Hyperion Ray incidents
- MT Hankuk Chemi released on April 9th

Security Update

In April, Saudi forces thwarted two WBIED threats in the Red Sea. First, on April 3, Reuters reported the Saudi led coalition destroyed an explosive laden boat in the Southern Red Sea. Second, Saudi forces intercepted and destroyed a remotely operated booby trapped boat near Yanbu on April 27. UKMTO released [WARNING 001/APR/2021](#) regarding this incident which occurred ~2 NM from Yanbu Port. These incidents mark the fourth and fifth WBIED threats thwarted in 2021.

Separately, on April 7, Iran reported the MV Saviz sustained an explosion and suffered light damage. The MV Saviz is believed to be a base for the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard and has been anchored for years in the Red Sea off Yemen. Iran described MV Saviz as aiding in "anti-piracy" in the Red Sea and the Bab el-Mandeb strait. The threat for IMSC flagged vessels remains unchanged in the Southern Red Sea and Bab el-Mandeb strait at LOW-MODERATE, with the higher threat level being focused around Yemen and Saudi Arabia Red Sea ports.

On April 14, multiple news outlets reported that Israeli-owned and Bahamas-flagged vehicles carrier MV Hyperion Ray was attacked off of Fujairah. Ship owners reported the ship did not sustain damage and continued at full speed on its original voyage. This incident was reported by MSCHOA's Industry Releasable Threat Bulletin (IRTB) Issued: 15APR21 026 and [UKMTO ADVISORY NOTICE 003 APR-2021](#).

On April 9, South Korean flagged product tanker MT Hankuk Chemi was released after being held by Iran for 3 months. The Hankuk Chemi release occurred days ahead of a visit by South Korean Prime Minister Chung Sye-kyun to Iran which marked the first visit by a South Korean Prime Minister to Iran in 44 years. The threat within the Arabian Gulf and Gulf of Oman remains LOW-MODERATE for IMSC flagged vessels, with the higher level being focused around the Strait of Hormuz and Western Traffic Separation Scheme north of Abu Musa and Siri Island. CTF SENTINEL does *NOT* recommend use of the Western Traffic Separation Scheme for transits to the central Arabian Gulf.

Warships and aircraft continue to provide overwatch to merchant vessels throughout the IMSC area of operation. Vessels transiting the area can expect to hear CTF SENTINEL conducting Maritime Awareness Calls (MAC) on a regular basis. Masters are encouraged to report incidents to CTF SENTINEL via UKMTO. Note the recent inclusion of drones in our reporting guidance regarding aircraft operating at an unsafe altitude or distance that results in a threat to a merchant vessel on the second page of The SENTINEL Watch. Mariners are advised to follow guidance in BMP 5 (as modified by national authorities) and review the guidance and responses contained within the IMSC Bridge Cards.

Surveillance

Vigilance

Assurance



The SENTINEL Watch

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.
For more information please visit: www.imscsentinel.com/bridgecards
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 our two most recent press releases:
Merchant Shipping Reassurance through Deterrence ([click here for link](#))
Coalition Task Force Sentinel Change of Command ([click here for link](#)),

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 (including drones) 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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