



The SENTINEL Watch

IMSC Monthly Security Update - July 2021



IMSC Update

Welcome to the July 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.

Mariners are encouraged to remain in international waters, avoid Iranian territorial waters, keep IMSC bridge cards handy, and if hailed, ships should respond with name, flag, and advise they are proceeding in accordance with International Law.

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
- TTW avoidance guidance
- UK & US Carrier Strike Groups sail to AOR

Security Update

The threat in the Southern Red Sea and Bab-el-Mandeb continues to be LOW-MODERATE for IMSC flagged vessels. Areas closest to the Yemeni coast line, as well as potential Houthi misidentification or miscalculation present the primary threats. Separately, the threat for IMSC flagged vessels in the Arabian Gulf and Gulf of Oman remains LOW-MODERATE.

Shipowners and operators are reminded of the guidance found in UKMTO NOTICE 008/FEB/2021 which can be accessed by clicking [here](#). Vessels are advised to remain in international waters and avoid transiting Iranian territorial waters including the areas claimed by Iran such as Abu Musa 25° 52'N 55° 02'E, Greater Tunb 26° 15'N 55° 16'E, and Lesser Tunb 26° 14'N 55° 08'E.

A UK Carrier Strike Group led by HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH comprising of British destroyers, anti-submarine frigates, jets and attack helicopters has set sail for a 28-week deployment through the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean, among other seas, for military exercises with the UAE, India, Japan and other countries. Similarly, the USS RONALD REAGAN (CVN 76), its escorts, and Carrier Air Wing 5 recently deployed to the Middle East region to maintain a strong presence in the AOR.

Fair winds and following seas to our Merchant Navy Liaison Officer, Mr. Christopher Scothern, and our N3 Maritime Trade Officer, Lieutenant Commander Danielle Centeno. Chris and Danielle were key contributors to the success of CTF SENTINEL and we wish them the best of luck. Chris heads to Scotland for a new position in maritime security. Danielle returns to her civilian role as a Marine Insurance Vice President and drilling reservist in New York.

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

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Keep up to date with the latest IMSC news

IMSC in the News

Please check out IMSC's mission being highlighted a recent podcast in the Maritime Executive:
Maritime Executive Podcast: ([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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