



Industry Releasable Threat Bulletin (IRTB) 031
Issued: 28 MAY 22
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1. **Foreword.** This IRTB has been written by Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) and European Union Naval Force (EU NAVFOR). It is intended to help shipping operators who are responsible for merchant and large commercial fishing vessels that pass through or operate in the Persian Gulf (in this specific incident), Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (GOA).
2. **Purpose.** The purpose of an **Industry Releasable Threat Bulletin (IRTB)** is to bring a specific incident or threat to the attention of the shipping industry in advance of the publication of our next quarterly Industry Releasable Threat Assessment (IRTA).
3. **Incident.** Maritime Security Event – Disruption of Commercial Shipping.
4. **Date/time.** 271110Z MAY 2022
5. **Location.** Persian Gulf: MV PRUDENT WARRIOR (In the vicinity of (ivo) Forur Island, Iran). MV DELTA POSEIDON enroute to the Straits of Hormuz approximately 22nm from Siraf, Iran.
6. **Incident Description.** On 27 May 22 the Greek-Flagged Suezmax Oil Tanker, MV PRUDENT WARRIOR (IMO 9753545) was heading Eastbound from Ras Laffan in the Tumb Farar TSS (ivo Forur Island, Iran). The owner, confirmed that the company had lost communication with the vessel's crew of 24 persons. A vessel in the vicinity reported that a helicopter had enabled boarding and the vessel then proceeded to anchor just to the north of where she was seized.
7. On the same day at similar timings a parallel incident occurred on the Greek-Flagged Suezmax Oil tanker MV DELTA POSEIDON (IMO 9468671). Various reports in open sources have highlighted a similar operation of a helicopter landing armed personnel onboard the vessel, seizing the vessel and crew. The vessel was 22nm off the coast of Iran in the Arabian Gulf. Both vessels had recently been loaded with crude at Basrah, Iraq.
8. Various official Iranian news outlets reported the statement from the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) public relations office; stating that the IRGC Naval forces had detained the two Greek oil tankers

9. **Comment.** This IRTB is based on information from multiple sources. CMF and EU NAVFOR will continue to investigate this incident and will issue a further report if necessary.
10. This incident whilst outside of routine IRTB reporting areas (Red Sea and Gulf of Aden) may impact merchant traffic in other areas under CMF and EU NAVFOR responsibility.
11. The seizure of these vessels is a response by the Iranian Authorities to the detention by Hellenic Authorities, of the Russian/Iranian Flagged Aframax, MV LANA, formerly known as PEGAS (IMO 9256860). The vessel was reportedly carrying Iranian crude oil and was detained on 15 April 22 when at anchor off the port of Karystos on Evia, Greece. At the time, it was under a Russian flag with a crew of 19 Russians, being replaced by an Iranian flag 1 May 22. The Hellenic Coast Guard stated it was detained due to suspicions it had breached EU sanctions imposed against Russia due to the war in Ukraine. It later became apparent that the MV LANA was transporting Iranian oil, sanctioned by the US and subsequently transferred to the former at its request.
12. The seizure of the Greek vessels was a culmination of increasing protest by Iran over the MV LANA issue. Prior to the seizure of the Greek vessels on the 27 May 22, a press release by an Iranian media outlet close to Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), spoke of "punitive measures" against Greece due to the detention of a ship, bearing the Iranian flag. **Comment Ends.**
13. **Assessment:** Based on the current available information, the assessment is that the incident is an act of retribution pursuant to the detention of MV LANA. Currently there is no further indication of a threat to other shipping outside of specific interest by Iranian units. **Assessment Ends.**
14. **Recommendations.** Vessels are requested to remain vigilant and to adhere to BMP5¹ when transiting the region. While these waters are routinely patrolled by CMF, EU NAVFOR and other warships, the timely and comprehensive reporting of incidents and suspicious activity remains crucial to allow for a rapid incident response.

We request that, where possible, and without endangering the vessel or crew, vessels obtain and report as much factual detail as possible of incidents and suspicious activity, to include logs, photographs, video, and radar footage. CSOs and Master are strongly recommended to register their vessel with MSCHOA when entering the Voluntary Reporting Area (VRA) and to report any incidents to UKMTO in accordance with BMP5. This will enable a more rapid response to incident and allow CMF and EU NAVFOR Somalia to monitor activity, enabling the most effective allocation of resources.

In particular, special attention is required for sailing boats to check the special instructions posted at www.mschoa.org and BMP5 when planning their route.

¹ <http://www.imo.org/en/ourwork/security/piracyarmedrobbery/documents/MSC.1-CIRC.1601.pdf>

15. **Publication.**

- a. Produced by CMF and EU NAVFOR.
- b. Published by MSCHOA.

16. **Feedback.**

Enquiries about the content of this bulletin should be directed to CMF and EU NAVFOR.

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