



Office of
Deputy Commissioner
of Maritime Affairs

THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

LIBERIA MARITIME AUTHORITY

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06 August 2024

MARINE SECURITY BULLETIN – 21/2024

Dear Shipowners, Operators and Masters

Subject: Unmanned Surface Vehicle (USV) Attack in the Southern Red Sea

On 15 July 2024, a Liberian flagged Tanker was attacked while transiting the Red Sea sailing toward Straits of Bab El Mandab. At approximately 1400 local time a small group of skiffs and fishing boats were observed by the bridge team. Later it was noticed that two skiffs separated from the group and moved closer to the vessel. At around 2 NM from the bow, one of the two skiffs stopped while the other continued towards the vessel where it was identified as an unmanned surface vehicle (USV) moving at approximately 10 knots. The Master altered course, but the unmanned vehicle adjusted to continue closing on the vessel. The Master raised the alarm and authorized armed guards to defend against any attack, who then opened fire on the USV as it approached.

At approximately 1500 local time, at position Lat 15 27.9 N, long 041 23.42 E, an explosion occurred at the port side of the vessel. The Master immediately informed all concerned parties and altered course to proceed north to safer waters. The vessel suffered substantial damage and is awaiting a full damage survey report from the classification society. The crew are all reported safe, and no pollution was reported.

Security Level

Liberian flagged vessels transiting the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden and Arabian Sea are to increase their security level to security level 3 and implement all protective measures in their Ship Security Plan. In addition, Liberian flagged vessels should avoid calling ports in Yemen. The decision to transit remains at the discretion of the Company, considering the number of recent targeted attacks on commercial ships.

Recommendations

The Liberian Registry encourages all vessels transiting the Red Sea to report to the UKMTO and register with the Maritime Security Centre for the Horn of Africa (MSCHOA) in accordance with industry BMP (Best Management Practices) and take advice from the collation forces operating in the area. Best Management Practices 5 (BMP5) will continue to provide the necessary guidance for shipping to ensure threat and risk assessments are developed for every voyage to mitigate the

risks presented by remaining security threats in the region. The shipping industry will continue to monitor and advise on maritime security threats to assist the safe transit of vessels and the seafarers.

When operating within territorial seas or calling ports within the previously defined HRA as shown on UKHO Chart **Q6099**, Masters shall set the vessel security level to the level set by the port State authority but may implement security measures in excess of the security level set by the port authorities based on their assessment of the conditions in the port. When operating outside territorial seas or ports within the previously defined HRA shown on UKHO chart **Q6099**, all Liberian flagged vessels shall operate at security level II. All security level changes should be reported directly to the Flag Administration by the Master via email security@liscr.com.

The Liberian Administration strongly recommends that Vessels Owners, Characters, Operators and Ships Masters continue to carry out pre-voyage threat and risk assessments to consider the latest maritime security information from organizations supporting the Voluntary Reporting Area. In addition, Liberian flagged vessels may consider using a Private Maritime Security Company (PMSC) to provide additional armed or unarmed security personnel while transiting the high-risk area. For more information on PMSC, please go to: [Authorized Private Maritime Security Companies](#).

Contact Information

In an emergency, vessels transiting the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden and Arabian Sea, should contact NAVCENT Battle Watch Phone: +973-1785-3879; Naval Cooperation and Guidance for Shipping (NCAGS) Primary Watch Floor Phone: +973-1785-0033, Contingency Mobile Phone: +973-3940-4523, Email: m-ba-cusnc-ncags@us.navy.mil.

Contact MSCHOA prior to transiting the Western Indian Ocean, the Somali Basin, Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman and the Red Sea.

The contact details of MSCHOA are:

Maritime Security Centre – Horn of Africa (MSCHOA)

Email postmaster@mschoa.org

Telephone +44 1923 958545 +44 1923 958700

Fax +44 1923 958520 Website www.mschoa.org

When transiting the Western Indian Ocean, the Somali Basin, Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman and Red Sea.

Register their vessels with UKMTO

Email: watchkeepers@ukmto.org and ukmto@eim.ae

Phone: +44 - 2392-222060, +971-50-552-3215

Fax +44 1923 958520

Please keep LISCR's Security Department informed of any security incidents at:

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