

Gulf of Aden, Bab el Mandeb, Red Sea

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MARSEC/ISPS-level

The situation in the southern parts of the Red Sea is unpredictable. The Norwegian Maritime Authority urges a high level of vigilance in the southern part of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. Recent incidents have demonstrated that the Houthi insurgents have the aim and capability to conduct attacks against maritime targets, and this remains the most serious threat against merchant shipping in the area.

There is a clear pattern of incidents demonstrating that Houthi insurgents have information and capability to hit vessels that have a connection to Israel. If the required security assessment reveals any connection to Israel, it is strongly recommended to not pass through the Red Sea, as the vessel might be a target.

To reflect the risk of collateral damage and direct attacks on civilian ships the maritime security level is:

- **The southern Red Sea is MARSEC/ISPS level 3**
- **Gulf of Aden is MARSEC/ISPS level 2**

Advice on mitigation measures:

- Conduct security assessments before entering the area. This to ensure that SSA and SSP is relevant for the actual threats in the area.
- Prepare ship and crew, through planning and exercises.
- Stay vigilant and maintain a high degree of situational awareness, both underway and at port.
- Report to UKMTO and MSCHOA in accordance with guidelines.
- CSO and SSO are advised to closely follow the development of the situation in the area by using reliable sources.

- Threat assessments for the region are also provided by EUNAVFOR and can be found on the MSCHOA website.
- Utilize BMP5 in preparations and operations.

Security Situation

Red Sea and the Yemen conflict

The ongoing war in Yemen and recent developments in the region negatively impact the maritime security situation in the in the southern Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden.

The conflict in Yemen is also related to the Israel and Hamas conflict, and based on the Houthi's statements and operational pattern it is assumed that the threat to shipping in Bab el Mandeb and southern parts of the Red Sea is aimed at vessels that can be affiliated with Israel or is planning to call Israeli ports. This is regardless of flag.

It is worth noting that there may be a risk of wrong intelligence or wrong target selection, which in the worst case could hit random vessels.

There is also a general sea mine threat south of Hodeidah along the coast of Yemen in the southern part of the Red Sea that may affect merchant vessels.

Somali piracy

Somali piracy was for years a major security issue threatening global trade and shipping. The occurrence of piracy off the coast of Somalia has declined steeply in recent years and the threat from Somali pirates is considered low and has been so for a long time, although the risk of being attacked cannot be ruled out.

Across the Arabian Sea, illegal smuggling of drugs, weapons, and other illegal goods is also a concern that affects the maritime security situation. Various incidents in the Gulf of Aden suggest that such criminal activity is something that needs to be taken seriously.

Other information

NMA will also make a reference to the Act of 21 June 2013 No. 102 relating to employment protection, etc. for employees on board ships (Ship Labour Act) Section 9-5 Right to leave service which entitle a person working on board to leave service on board if there is war or war-like conditions in waters in which the ship shall sail or in a port for which the ship is bound.



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