

MEMBER ALERT

MARITIME SECURITY: INDUSTRY UPDATE - GUIDANCE FOR VESSELS OPERATING IN THE ARABIAN GULF, GULF OF OMAN, GULF OF ADEN AND THE RED SEA

Following the recent incident in the Arabian Gulf where a limpet mine was attached to the hull of a tanker involved in ship-to-ship transfer operation, the Association wishes to highlight a guidance on maritime security developed by a joint industry group. It is recommended that vessel operators should review BMP5 and consider sending the following guidance to vessels operating in the Arabian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, Gulf of Aden, and Red Sea.

Risk Mitigation Measures

If alerted to suspicious activity whilst the vessel is at anchor, vessel operators should also consider:

- Undertake a new ship- and voyage-specific threat risk assessment before entering any region where there has been an incident, or the threat has changed.
- After the risk assessment, review the Ship's Security Plan.
- Review section 2 of BMP5, which outlines non-piracy threats.
- Maintain a full and vigilant bridge watch; Note: at night, slow small boats with no wake are difficult to spot on radar.
- Maintain a strict communications watch and establish communication with all vessels coming close. Do not allow small boats to approach or to come alongside. Use a searchlight for identification at night.
- Ensure strict boarding controls are in place.
- Only lower accommodation gangways or ladders when necessary.
- Rig outboard lighting where possible provided they do not interfere with keeping a safe lookout, particularly over the stern and rig/use searchlights if available.
- Report any suspicious activity or objects immediately to both the port and UKMTO +442392222060.
- Monitor relevant VHF and other communication channels.
- Check all fire-fighting equipment is available for immediate use. Make sure the emergency fire pump is available if any maintenance is being undertaken.
- Keep the Automatic Information System (AIS) on. There is no need to complete the field stating the last or next port of call.
- Undertake a visual search from the deck, all around the vessel to check for anything attached to the hull of the vessel. Particular attention should be paid to the hull at the waterline
- Conduct regular rounds and search the upper deck.
- If a vessel detects anything unusual attached to the hull, then the Master should contact the UKMTO and Flag State immediately. All crew should be evacuated from the immediate area and mustered in a safe place. **No attempt should be made to remove it.**
- Vessel should follow the advice of the military authorities.

If alerted to suspicious activity whilst the vessel is at anchor, vessel operators should also consider:

- Rotate the propeller continuously or at short, irregular intervals.
- Operate bow and stern thrusters at zero (0) thrust at irregular intervals.
- Turn the rudder frequently.
- Switch the echo sounder to transmit counter/combat swimmer/diver threat.

Reference Documents:

INDUSTRY UPDATE FOLLOWING INCIDENT IN THE PERSIAN GULF

BMP 5