

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- > Two incidents were recorded globally during the reporting period
- > East Africa HRA and Indian Ocean: One incident was recorded during the reporting period
- > West Africa HRA: One incident was recorded during the reporting period
- > South and Southeast Asia: No incidents were recorded during the reporting period
- > Americas: No incidents were recorded during the reporting period

ADVISORIES

- > South and Southeast Asia: China Raises Security Level in Malacca Strait
- > Europe: UK Forces Seize Iranian Oil-Smuggling Vessel Off Gibraltar

RECORDED INCIDENTS



EAST AFRICA HRA AND INDIAN OCEAN

THREAT LEVEL: **SUBSTANTIAL**

REGIONAL SUMMARY

- > One incident was recorded during the reporting period
- > Continuous piracy threat off the Somali coast and extending to the Gulf of Aden and Gulf of Oman. Actors involved in the ongoing conflict in Yemen have targeted vessels transiting the Bab-el-Mandeb Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS); increased vigilance is advised during daylight hours
- > High pressure dominates the weather pattern over the region producing mostly clear skies. Tropical Cyclone 02A is influencing all areas; expect increased winds and seas until 17 June. Southwest monsoon conditions resume after and will continue until September. Expect increased localised wind flow through the Strait of Hormuz due to funnelling effects (Source: US ONI)

RECORDED INCIDENTS

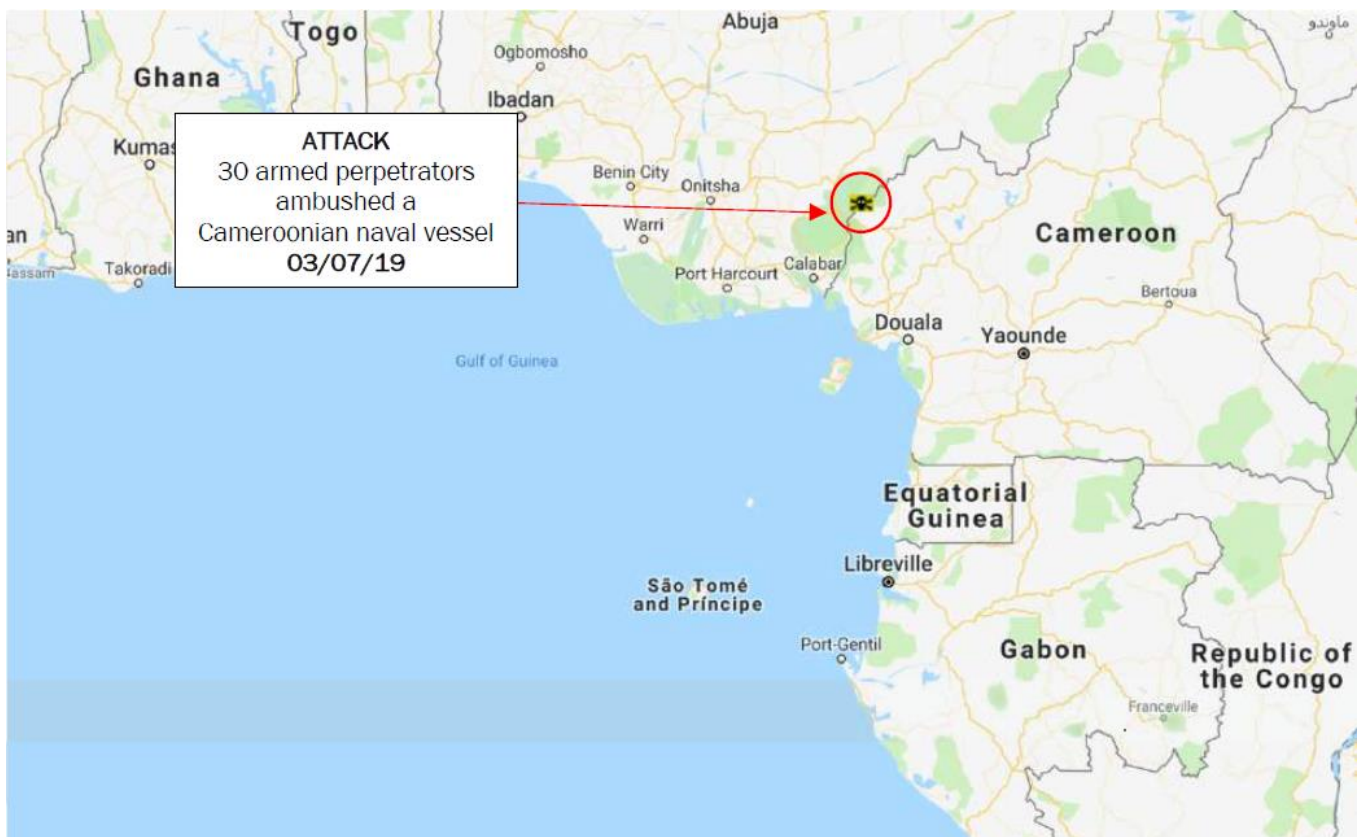


1. **01/07/19. 0840UTC. SUSPICIOUS APPROACH. UKMTO. 12:52:20N - 043:15:37E. 8.6NM SW of Dhubab, Bab-el-Mandeb Strait.** A vessel was approached by three skiffs with approximately five unidentified individuals in each. The skiffs came to within 0.1NM of the vessel. The suspicious vessels departed the area when onboard AST showed their weapons. Crewmembers and vessel reported safe.

REGIONAL SUMMARY

- > One incident was recorded during the reporting period
- > Continuous threat off Nigeria, Benin, Togo and Ghana in addition to the coastlines of Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, the Republic of the Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo
- > High pressure continues to dominate the weather in the region. Isolated thunderstorms and rain showers can be routinely expected along the Gulf of Guinea coast (Source: US ONI)

RECORDED INCIDENTS



1. **03/07/19. 1700 UTC. ATTACK. NYA. 05:56:04N - 009:04:21E. Manyu River, Manyu division, Cameroon.** Approximately 30 armed men, suspected to be Anglophone separatists, ambushed and attacked a Cameroonian naval vessel with 13 naval personnel on board. At least three naval personnel escaped the ambush and two more were rescued by security vessels which arrived later. The remaining eight personnel were reported missing; however, all personnel were later found alive in the river. Search and rescue teams later located the separatists' base of operations and launched a clearance operation in the area. Time approximate.

Due to delayed reporting, the following incidents were not included in the last week's report:

- 1. 30/06/19. 2322 UTC. PAG. NYA. 06:20:30N - 001:19:05E. Lome Anchorage, Togo.** A group of six armed pirates approached an anchored vessel. The duty officer raised the alarm, the crew activated the fire hoses and mustered. The master notified the Togolese Navy who deployed a patrol vessel to the anchorage area.
- 2. 30/06/19. 0500 UTC. CRIMINAL BOARDING. NYA. 06:20:01N - 003:20:46E. Lagos Anchorage, Nigeria.** Three perpetrators boarded a commercial tanker. A crewmember on duty noticed the perpetrators' vessel alongside the tanker, from the bridge, and raised the alarm. A security vessel in the area was alerted and came to investigate. Two ropes were reported stolen and no suspects were found. Crew was reported safe. The area when onboard AST showed their weapons. Crewmembers and vessel reported safe

CASTOR VALI

SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

THREAT LEVEL: **MODERATE**

REGIONAL SUMMARY

- > Two incidents were recorded during the reporting period
- > Criminal boardings remain the primary threat. However, the threat from Extended Duration Cargo Theft (EDCT) is present across the Malacca Strait and South China Sea
- > Expect strong gusts in and around scattered thunderstorms throughout the Malacca Strait and the Andaman Sea due to funnelling effects and daytime heating. The west Pacific Ocean's Tropical Cyclone Season runs from April to October. Expect numerous Tropical Cyclones to impact the region during this timeframe that could change the forecast (Source: US ONI)

RECORDED INCIDENTS

NSTR

Due to delayed reporting, the following incidents were not included in the last week's report:

1. **30/06/19. 0930 UTC. CRIMINAL BOARDING. IMO. 06:05:45S - 106:52:47E. Tanjung Priok Port, Jakarta, Indonesia.** Thieves boarded an anchored cargo vessel during cargo handling operations. The vessel's petty officer noticed a broken store padlock on routine rounds and notified the duty officer. The alarm was raised and the crew mustered. It was reported that vessel properties were stolen. The incident was reported to port authorities who later came on board to investigate.

SPECIAL ADVISORIES

SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA: CHINA RAISES SECURITY LEVEL IN MALACCA STRAIT

On 2 July at 2200 LT the Chinese government raised the security rating on Chinese-flagged vessels transiting the Strait of Malacca to Security Level 3. This is the highest state of alertness according to the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code. The Chinese Ministry of Transport failed to specify a reason for the decision in their statement; however, an internal memorandum from a Chinese state-owned shipping company stated that the decision was driven by an unnamed Indonesian group's alleged plans to attack Chinese vessels transiting the trait.

NYA Analysis: *The decision to raise the security level on Chinese vessels is unlikely to have been explicitly driven by the presence of any Indonesian pirate or terror group. According to NYA MarTrackTM statistics, piracy incidents recorded within the Strait of Malacca between January and June 2019 marked a 25% decrease on the previous year, falling from 16 incidents to 12. Furthermore, the overwhelming majority of recorded incidents (11 of the total 12 recorded between January and June 2019) consisted of non-violent criminal boardings targeting vessel stores or goods, with the sole exception being a criminal boarding which escalated into a violent hijacking after the perpetrators were detected. Maritime criminal groups operating within the region are highly unlikely to attack shipping vessels. However, the Strait of Malacca is a strategic chokepoint to Chinese oil trade and is reportedly used to transport illicit shipments of Iranian oil. As a result, the heightening of security measures is likely a pre-emptive effort to mitigate the consequences of escalating tensions between the US and Iran in oil shipping routes in the Southeast Asia region.*

EUROPE: UK FORCES SEIZE IRANIAN OIL-SMUGGLING VESSEL OFF GIBRALTAR

On 4 July at 0200 LT UK Naval Forces and Gibraltar police detained a Panama-flagged VLCC 1.8NM east of Gibraltar. The vessel was suspected to have been carrying Iranian crude oil on behalf of Tehran to be sold to the Baniyas Refinery in Syria, which would have been in violation of EU sanctions. At the time of writing Gibraltar police were in the process of carrying out an investigation on board the vessel, and its 28 crewmembers were being treated as witnesses to a crime.

NYA Analysis: *The incident bears many similarities to other cases of Iranian fuel smuggling recorded over the past six months. Vessels carrying illegal goods from Iran have often deliberately switched off AIS tracking when proximate to the Iranian coastline to mask the origin of their cargo when loading, in addition to using forged documents listing the fuel as originating from neighbouring Iraq – both traits exhibited in this case. However, the incident represents something of an outlier due to its trajectory: the vessel transited around the African coastline before entering the Mediterranean via Gibraltar prior to being intercepted by UK forces. In previous cases, smuggling efforts have typically used smaller vessels transiting the Suez Canal, or exporting the oil to buyers in China. Given the high financial cost of losing the vessel, whose cargo is valued at over USD200 million, as well as the significant diplomatic issues associated with the vessel's seizure, it is unlikely that further attempts to smuggle Iranian oil will follow the same modus operandi. Future smuggling operations will likely continue to use smaller vessels, with the majority of oil being dispatched to China.*

ANNEX A – THREAT TERMINOLOGY

The report's findings are predictive and estimative. To communicate these findings clearly and in order to accurately compare threat levels, the report uses a variation of terminology used by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO).

TERMINOLOGY	DESCRIPTION
Critical	The likelihood of an incident is certain
Severe	The likelihood of an incident is almost certain
Substantial	The likelihood of an incident is probable
Moderate	The chances of an incident are about even
Low	The likelihood of an incident is improbable

Piracy: NYA uses a modified version of the definition of piracy adopted by BMP5. For the purposes of this report, the term 'piracy' includes all violent and non-violent acts against vessels, her crew and cargo occurring either in internal waterways, territorial waters or deep offshore. Based on this definition, NYA classifies piracy incidents into six categories:

- > **Hijacking** – Crew lost control of the vessel and / or pirates kidnapped at least one crewmember and / or passenger(s)
- > **Boarding** – Pirates successfully board a vessel with the intent to hijack it but their attempt to take control of the vessel or kidnap crewmember(s) and / or passenger(s) failed
- > **Attack** – Vessel was attacked with gunfire or RPG fire, no boarding was successfully completed
- > **Pirate Action Group (PAG)** – Sighting or reporting of firearms and boarding equipment on board a suspicious vessel or sighting of a confirmed pirate mother ship
- > **Criminal boarding** – Vessel boarded with criminal intent, theft does not have to occur
- > **Suspicious approach** – Suspicious activity reported (i.e. a vessel was approached by unidentified skiff(s) with one or more persons on board)

LIMITATIONS

Our opinion and advice are given on the basis of the information given to us in our instructions and the surrounding circumstances known to us to exist at the time when those instructions are given. We do not accept responsibility for verifying the information or investigating beyond its limits. Subsequent changes to relevant information or to the surrounding circumstances may affect the reliability of our opinion and advice but we do not accept responsibility for that effect. We do not accept responsibility for the outcome of action taken or not taken as a result of our opinion and advice unless the possibility of that action being taken or not taken is set out in specific terms in our instructions.

CONTACT US:

UK Global Head Office:

Castor Vali Ltd
Davidson House
Forbury Square
Reading, RG1 3EU
United Kingdom

Switchboard: +44 (0) 118 900 1406

Operations Centre (24 hrs): +44 (0) 118 900 1417

info@castorvali.com

ops@castorvali.com