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Weekly Security & Risk Report

27th April 2022



MAST Intelligence

UK Domestic

International Incidents

Industry and SIA Updates

LAND



SEA

West Africa

Indian Ocean
Yemen, Somalia

European Waters



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Issue 329

Issue 329 of the series reviews, analyses and threat assesses the conflict-affected coastal states of Somalia and Yemen and associated waters, as well as ongoing issues facing the maritime industry in West Africa. The Mediterranean migrant crisis, security issues facing the UK and incidents affecting maritime security are also reported and analysed.

The Security and Risk Report Series focuses on

- Operational risks in areas of instability which could affect the safety of commercial and private vessels and personnel ashore and at sea.
- In country reporting on key countries where civil conflicts are directly impacting on maritime operations; and
- Reporting and analysis of incidents of terrorism, piracy and other related criminal activity.

MAST has a global reach and presence, delivering first hand, accurate and exclusive intelligence. MAST is entrenched and committed in continuing to support and promote the awareness of the very real risks that seafarers and other stakeholders face.

This Intelligence Report Series is a brief snapshot of MAST's Intelligence capabilities. MAST Intelligence specialises in providing clients with a suite of products and services, including; political and economic risk analysis, detailed port and vessel security briefs, vessel passage plans, threat and risk mitigation and travel risk management.

Working closely in conjunction with a host of experts, MAST Intelligence offers a market leading service pertaining to all maritime affairs.

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Gulf of Guinea

Vanguard reported on April 22nd that despite its insurers agreeing to a \$2 million bond, Nigeria has not released the MV Karteria from detention. The ship was seized during a drug arrest in 2021, but its insurers agreed on a bond with Nigeria in January this year. Despite this, the ship has yet to be released by Nigeria.

Incidents: Nothing significant to report.

Nigerian Navy seizes N3bn worth of illegal oil products

As part of ongoing mission, Operation Dakatar Da Barawo, the Nigerian Navy announced its latest seizures, Punch said on April 25th. Between April 13th and 23rd, the Navy reportedly seized more than six million litres of illegally refined oil products, with a significant amount found in the Sara creek region. One site discovered by the Navy included three large pits containing an estimated 500,000 litres of illegally refined oil products, the Punch reported. As well as using patrols in local creeks and waterways, the Navy has been conducting aerial surveillance of certain areas, hoping to locate illegal refinery sites.

Nigeria's Crude Oil Production Rigs Drop By 37.5%

Details released by OPEC on April 22nd shows that Nigeria's oil rigs have seen a drop in production of around 37.5 per cent in March 2022. OPEC said that in 2019, Nigeria had around 16 rigs at work, but this has now dropped to just 10 operational rigs. In 2021, OPEC noted that Nigeria had dropped to just five operational oil rigs before it picked up to 10 in the third quarter of that year. Current production is falling, OPEC said.

ISMI holds regional cooperation training on maritime safety, security in the Gulf of Guinea

The Interregional Maritime Security Institute (ISMI) began its programme on regional cooperation in maritime safety and security on April 25th, Modern Ghana reported. The three-day training programme on the structures created as part of the Yaoundé architecture is being financed by France and Cote d'Ivoire and saw 15 of those involved in the Yaoundé architecture take part in an effort not only to boost cooperation among member nations but to highlight current threats.

USS Hershel 'Woody' Williams Completes Gulf of Guinea Maritime Security Patrol

From March to April, Hershel "Woody" Williams completed maritime security operations with African partners from Sierra Leone, Cabo Verde and Senegal as well as members of the U.S. Navy, Coast Guard and Marine Corps, the US Navy said in a press release. The ship is now back in Rota, Spain, following a successful tour of the Gulf of Guinea, where it assisted in the seizure of over 6,000kg of illegal narcotics as well as participating in anti-piracy duties.

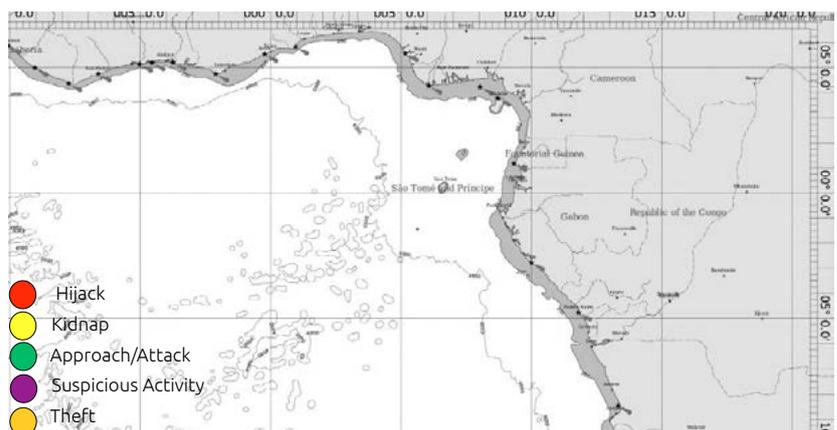
For further information, please [click here](#).

Gulf of Guinea Piracy & Maritime Crime Figures

2022
Incidents reported: 15 (MDAT-GoG/Others)

2021
Incidents reported: 56 (MDAT-GoG/Others)
Crew kidnapped: 46 (IMB, MDAT)
Vessels hijacked: 1 (MDAT-GoG)

2020
Incidents reported: 132 (MDAT-GoG)
43 Crew Kidnapped: 130 (IMB)
Vessels Hijacked: 3 (IMB)



Indian Ocean Region

The Times of India reported on April 25th that the country's top naval commanders will meet this week to review India's maritime security arrangements and readiness. The four-day conference began on Monday 25th and was chaired by Admiral R Hari Kumar.

Incidents: Nothing significant to report.

Pakistani boat seized off Gujarat coast

The Hindustan Times reported on April 26th that India's Coast Guard interdicted a heroin smuggling vessel 14nm off Jakhau. When approached by the Coast Guard, the vessel tried to escape and the crew began throwing bags into the water. Following a brief pursuit, warning shots were fired and the vessel stopped. Nine crew were arrested and 56kg of heroin, worth over £3 million, was recovered.

IRGC Navy Captures Fuel Smugglers

Iran's state news outlet, Tasnim News, reported on April 24th that the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy forces confiscated three hauls of contraband fuel in Iran's southeastern waters, arresting the smugglers. The commander of the IRGC Navy's Imam Ali Base in Chabahar said his forces have seized three hauls of smuggled fuel that amounted to 150,000 litres. Captain Mohammad Nozari said the vessels were planned to smuggle the fuel into a neighbouring country, noting that all people involved in the criminal act, including Iranian and foreign nationals, have been arrested in the operation.

New EU NAVFOR ATALANTA counter-narcotics operation in the Western Indian Ocean

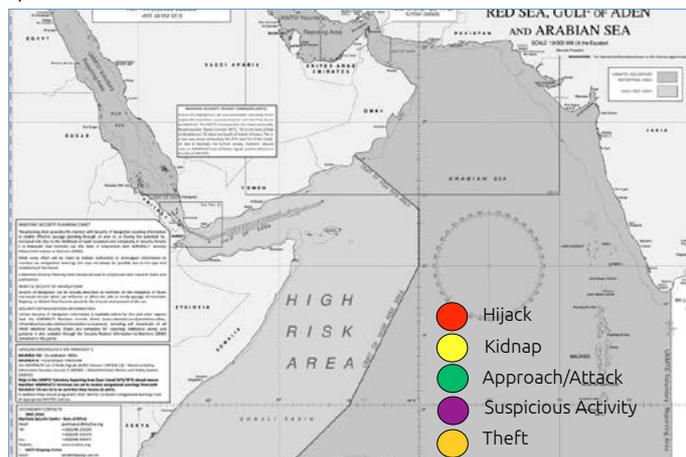
Between 14th and 18th April, French surveillance

frigate Floréal, under Atalanta's command, successfully carried four consecutive drugs seizures in the international waters while engaged in counter-piracy patrol. As a result, she seized close to 1.400kgs of heroin, 1.200kg of methamphetamines and 25kg of hashish, worth 50 to 60 million euros in wholesale value and more than 200 million euros (236 million USD) in the street value in Europe (according to the data of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime – UNODC).

IRGC Navy Extending Overseas Capabilities: Commander

Tasnim News reported on April 24th that in an interview with Tasnim, Rear Admiral Ali Reza Tangsiri said the IRGC Navy has embarked on the production of oceangoing vessels in order to protect Iran's interests amid international communications and relations. A failure to protect the Islamic Republic's interests across the world will make them prone to piracy and organized banditry, he warned. The commander said the IRGC Navy has furnished the 'Shahid Rudaki' warship to keep it fit for presence in international waters.

For further information, please [click here](#).



MAST Note: This chart will be replaced as soon as Admiralty UK releases the updated version.

European Waters

René Kofod-Olsen, chief executive of V.Group, has called on NATO to provide naval escorts for merchant ships in the Black Sea, the Financial Times reported on April 24th. NATO has said it is not considering an escort programme, noting that coastal countries such as Turkey, Romania and Bulgaria have regional assets.

Black Sea incidents

Analysts believe that they have now located the wreck of the Black Sea Fleet flagship, Moskva, using open source satellite data. HI Sutton reported on April 24th that oil slicks in the vicinity of 44.92002°, 31.49265° appear to belong to the ship. A salvage effort was believed to have been started, using a 110-year-old ship, the Kommuna, but these appear to have now been paused or abandoned. In related news, Sutton reports that despite the loss of the Moskva, Russian Navy ships are still sailing unescorted in some cases, particularly in the vicinity of Crimea. A formation of four missile corvettes was seen, as well as a possible sighting of two Russian submarines. Despite the ongoing invasion and application of sanctions against Russia, Splash 24/7 reports that 474 merchant ships are due to arrive in Russian ports in the next few weeks. Many Russian owners have reflagged their vessels to avoid sanction, although last week, the EU has now moved to ban Russian vessels from its ports.

On April 20th, Tradewinds reported that there are still at least 500 crew members and 84 merchant ships trapped at Ukrainian ports and unable to leave following the invasion. IMO Secretary General, Kitack Lim, admitted that the creation of a Blue Corridor, to allow the evacuation of merchant ships in the region, had not been successful. Despite agreement from Russia, the presence of so many shipwrecks and risk posed by floating naval mines meant that so far, the Blue Corridor, had failed to work. "With this in mind, our priority has been to support seafarers stranded in Ukraine," Lim said.

Many dead in Mediterranean after boats sink off Tunisia

Reuters reported on April 23rd that at least 12 people had died and 10 more were missing after four boats carrying migrants sank off the coast of Tunisia. Ali Aayari, a lieutenant colonel in the Tunisian Coast Guard, added that 98 migrants were rescued off the coast of Sfax.

Lebanon hunts for survivors after migrant boat capsizes

Rescue services in Lebanon were searching for survivors after they saved 45 people off the coast of Tripoli, a known embarkation point for people attempting to leave Lebanon, AFP reported on April 24th. It was thought that the vessel contained at least 60 people before it sank. The body of a child was among those recovered, AFP said.

Channel crossings: France stops hundreds of migrants

InfoMigrants reported on April 20th that French authorities had managed to prevent over 600 people from crossing the Channel. In a statement issued on Tuesday 19th, French police said that they had prevented more than 600 migrants from putting to sea, as well as detaining 11 suspected people smugglers and seizing a number of boats. The French rescue services picked up 72 people in distress at sea, they reported.

Government vows to jail asylum seekers for steering dinghies across English Channel

Despite being warned by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) that asylum seekers who steer vessels are not smugglers, the UK government has "vowed" to jail those caught doing just that, The Independent reported on April 21st. The UNHCR has warned that such prosecutions could be in violation of the Refugee Convention. A recent court judgement in the UK found that 12 asylum seekers who were imprisoned for steering small boats in 2019 and 2021 were wrongly convicted.

For further information, please [click here](#).

Somalia & Yemen

At least six people were killed on Friday 22nd when a suicide bomber reportedly detonated a device at a popular Mogadishu beachside restaurant, Africa News reported. Somalia's police chief and legislators were said to be at the venue when the incident occurred, but were unharmed in the attack.

Urgent action needed to avert risk of famine in Somalia

Acute food insecurity and malnutrition have dramatically worsened in Somalia since the beginning of 2022. The prolonged drought affecting about 80% of the country, increasing food prices, and severely underfunded humanitarian assistance is putting some areas across Somalia at risk of famine. According to the Somalia Updated IPC and Famine Risk Analysis published in April 2022, the situation is expected to worsen in the coming months – posing an immediate risk to the lives and livelihoods of the most vulnerable, including women and children, especially among internally displaced people, Relief Web reported on April 24th.

Somali Government, US Company Dispute Legality of Oil Deal

The Somali government and a US company are locked in a dispute over the validity of an oil exploration agreement reached in February in Istanbul. Abdirashid Mohamed Ahmed, Somalia's minister of petroleum and mineral resources, and Richard Anderson, chief executive officer of Coastline Exploration Ltd., signed the agreement. But in separate statements, Somali President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed, known as Farmaajo, and Prime Minister Mohamed Hussein Roble rejected the deal, declaring it "null and void," Voice of America wrote on April 19th. The government's position is that the agreement is in contravention of a presidential decree dated August 7, 2021, and a Council of Ministers directive on December 6, 2018. Anderson disagrees with the letter and disputes the government's interpretation of the legality of the agreement.

Foreign Minister Escapes Assassination Bid

All Africa reported on April 21st that Abdisaid Muse Ali, Somalia's Foreign Affairs Minister, had escaped an assassination attempt in Galkayo town in Mudug region. The suggestion is that soldiers from Puntland

raided his residence and killed one of his bodyguards during the assault. Shabelle Media reported that an older family member who was wounded during the incident, has been a fierce critic of Puntland's President Said Deni.

Oman secures release of 14 foreigners held in Yemen: Ministry

Al Jazeera reported on April 24th that negotiators from Oman have successfully freed 14 foreign nationals who were being held by Houthis in Yemen. Among those released is a British man and his wife and child. Luke Symons, of Cardiff, was 25 when he was seized in 2017 by the Houthis. He was seized as a suspected spy, a claim his family have called "ridiculous". UK Foreign Secretary Liz Truss thanked "our Omani and Saudi partners for their support in securing his release," BBC News reported.

Unidentified gunmen sabotage oil pipeline

Xinhua reported on April 25th that unknown gunmen had blown up a major oil pipeline in Yemen's Shabwa province, causing a large explosion on Sunday night. The attack was on the main line that connects Uqla oil field with the Al-Nashima export port.

al Qaeda commander killed in operation in SE Yemen

While the two-month truce between Houthi and Saudi coalition forces appears to be broadly holding, the same is not true for terror group, al Qaeda. Xinhua reported on April 23rd that a senior commander of the terror group was killed in a gun battle with local Yemeni security forces in Hadramout. A tip-off led security forces to an al Qaeda base in the area, and the commander died in the ensuing battle, Xinhua said. Yemeni officials claim that the raid has severely damaged al Qaeda's ability to operate in the region.

For further information, please [click here](#).

UK Security News

ITV News reported on April 26th that businesses in Jersey were given training by counter terrorism experts on Tuesday. Specialist police officers met with hospitality staff and banks to discuss what suspicious activity they should look for and how best to report it.

American spy left UK military files online

An American intelligence officer reportedly uploaded classified, unencrypted files to a file sharing site so that he could work on them from home, the Daily Mail reported on April 26th. The officer is believed to have forgotten about the files after uploading them to Trello in 2020 and leaving its access public. The Mail reported that details of the RAF's Typhoon jets, along with unredacted names were within the files.

Spiking victims brushed off for being drunk, say MPs

Spiking victims are too often brushed off as having had "one too many" which means the crime is under-reported, an investigation by MPs has found. A belief that police in England and Wales "won't do anything" adds to victims' reluctance to come forward, says a Home Affairs Committee report. Spiking is defined as having drugs or alcohol put in a drink without consent, or being secretly injected. Anecdotal evidence suggests the practice is "widespread and dangerous", BBC News reported on April 26th.

Man stabbed and 10 other people hurt in town centre horror

The Birmingham Mail reported on April 23rd that a 33-year-old man had been arrested after one man was stabbed and 10 others injured in a series of incidents in Bedworth, Coventry on Saturday. "Officers were called to reports that a number of people had been assaulted - a man in his 20s is believed to have been stabbed and remains in hospital in a stable condition, while a further 10 victims have been identified as having sustained minor injuries," Warwickshire police said.

Man jailed for encouraging violent terrorism – Sussex

Counter terrorism police reported on April 21st that Abu Bakr Deghayes of Brighton was found guilty of encouraging terrorism following a speech he made at a Brighton mosque. Worshippers reported him, after he stated that committing Jihad was an

obligation. He was jailed for four years, with another year on licence. Detective Chief Superintendent Oliver Wright, Head of Counter Terrorism Policing South East (CTPSE), said: "Deghayes used a toxic rhetoric that could radicalise others, but his destructive views were rejected by the community he was preaching to."

London News

Four killed in south-east London home

A "kind, loving" grandmother was among four people who were stabbed to death in a house in south-east London. Officers forced their way into a home in Delaford Road, Bermondsey, at about 01:40 BST following a call from neighbours about a disturbance. Dolet Hill and a man, both aged in their mid-60s, plus two other women, in their 30s and 40s respectively, were all pronounced dead at the scene. A man in his 20s has been arrested on suspicion of murder and is in custody, BBC News reported on April 25th.

Armed police called to Surrey school after 'safety alert'

The Evening Standard reported on April 25th that armed police attended Esher C of E High School following reports of a 'concern for safety'. Some pupils and staff were in lockdown inside the school, while police investigated an incident outside. It is not known whether the school had any security staff on site, but parents were reportedly sent a text by the school to alert them to the situation.

For further information, [please click here.](#)

Global Security News

A member of the Russian private-security firm Wagner was captured earlier this month in central Mali, al-Qaeda's Sahel branch Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) says, the BBC reported on April 25th. The group did not provide any video evidence of its claim and the BBC cannot independently verify it.

Ukraine: Latest updates

BBC News reported on April 26th that Germany is poised to send anti-aircraft guns to Ukraine. German forces have used the Gepard twin-cannon system since the 1970s. UK Armed Forces Minister, James Heapey, has said that it is entirely legitimate for Ukraine to target Russian supply lines to disrupt them. He added that it is also "perfectly legitimate for the Russians to be striking targets in western Ukraine to disrupt Ukrainian supply lines. That is very much a part of war". On Monday 25th, Russia began attacking railway infrastructure in Ukraine. At least five people were killed and 18 wounded in Russian strikes in the Vinnytsia region, according to Ukrainian officials. Russia's Foreign Minister, Sergei Lavrov, has again said that peace talks are not going well according to reports on April 25th, blaming Ukraine for the lack of progress. Lavrov also complained about Western involvement in the conflict, raising the spectre of a larger, global conflict. The BBC also reported that Antonio Guterres, Secretary General of the United Nations, was due to meet with Russia's Vladimir Putin in Moscow. Despite Russian forces now moving to control the east and south of the country, missile strikes continue elsewhere. CNN reported on April 26th that missiles had struck the central city of Zaporizhzhia, destroying buildings and killing at least one civilian. Kharkiv has also been repeatedly targeted, CNN said. Russian ambitions appear to include Moldova's Transnistria breakaway republic, according to media reports. There have been several incidents reported in recent days, with the latest being the destruction of two radio towers. CNN reported that a Russian general had said that establishing full control of southern Ukraine would allow their forces greater access to Transnistria.

Kim Jong-un vows to step up nuclear weapons programme

North Korean leader, Kim Jong-un, has reportedly vowed to ramp up the country's nuclear arsenal, according to a BBC News report on April 26th.

"We will continue to take steps to strengthen and develop our nation's nuclear capabilities at the fastest pace," he said, adding that their nuclear forces "must be ready" to be exercised anytime, according to a report by the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

Rape, gang-rape, and beheadings among human right violations documented in Leer, South Sudan

The UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) strongly condemns the widespread sexual violence, killings including beheadings, burning alive of civilians, and attacks on humanitarians in Leer County, the UN said in an April 25th press release. These are among the human rights violations documented during a surge in violence carried out by armed youth from Koch and Mayendit counties. Between 17th February and 7th April, 72 civilians were killed, at least 11 injured, and 64 cases of sexual violence recorded, according to UNMISS human rights teams who have conducted 10 verification missions.

Industry and SIA News

Security Industry Cybersecurity Certification (SICC) Review Course

Two-Day Virtual Course: Thursday, May 26 - 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. MDT, Friday, May 27 - 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. MDT

Build your test-day confidence and prepare to obtain the Security Industry Cybersecurity Certification (SICC) with the new SICC Review Course! This course is designed to help prepare you for the certification exam using proven instructional design techniques and interactive learning tools. During the course, our experienced instructors will guide you through an in-depth review of the key knowledge domains and subdomains of the SICC exam, discuss exam preparation strategies and provide direct feedback on any questions. [Click here for details.](#)

For further information, please click here.



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