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Weekly Security & Risk Report

18th May 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 332

Issue 332 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

Nigerian Navy Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS), Vice Admiral Awwal Gambo, has called for the creation of a database to ensure the details of those convicted of piracy and other maritime crimes can be tracked should they move to other countries in the Gulf of Guinea following a conviction, All Africa said on May 11th.

Incidents:

1. Late report: On May 6th in position 05°50S–013°26E, a theft occurred on an MV at berth in Matadi port. Three intruders boarded the MV and fled on a small craft once spotted by the crew. Reported by MDAT-GoG.

Nigeria: Navy call for faster piracy trials

Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice Adm. Awwal Gambo, has called for Nigeria's judiciary to speed up the legal process of placing piracy and oil theft suspects on trial, Sun News said on May 14th. He said that while his personnel and other agencies had made inroads against the crimes, loopholes such as endless trial periods needed to be closed.

Navy Extends Anti-Piracy Operations To Neighbouring Countries

Vice Admiral Awwal Zubairu Gambo has suggested that the Nigerian Navy may extend its counter-piracy operations into the territory of other countries in the Gulf of Guinea. Pirates and criminals operating in the area often work several hundred miles offshore and shift to other countries' TTWs, The Tide reported on May 13th. However, he declined to state how this would be achieved without a wider regional agreement to allow the Nigerian Navy to operate within the zones of other countries.

Italians express continued support for Ghana's fight against maritime piracy

Daniela d'Orlandi, Italian ambassador to Ghana and Togo, has given assurances to Ghana that her country continues to support their fight against piracy and maritime crime in the Gulf of Guinea. Italy recently donated medical equipment to Ghana's Health Ministry at Tema port and she reported that the ITS Luigi Rizzo, is expected to continue counter-piracy patrols in the region until June this year, Ghana Web said on May 12th.

Oil theft: Navy arrests 117 suspects, six vessels

The Nigerian Navy is continuing its fight against illegal oil refineries. At the recent SECUREX West Africa conference, Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS), Vice Admiral Awwal Gambo, said that his personnel had arrest 117 people involved in the crime as part of Operation DAKATAR DA BARAWO. 51 illegal refining sites were deactivated, 563 metal storage tanks crushed and 341 dug out pits had been destroyed, 17,793,432 litres of crude oil, 5,490,670 litres of illegally refined AGO, and 129,000 litres of DPK, all valued at over N10.7 billion had been recovered, Ships and Ports reported on May 12th.

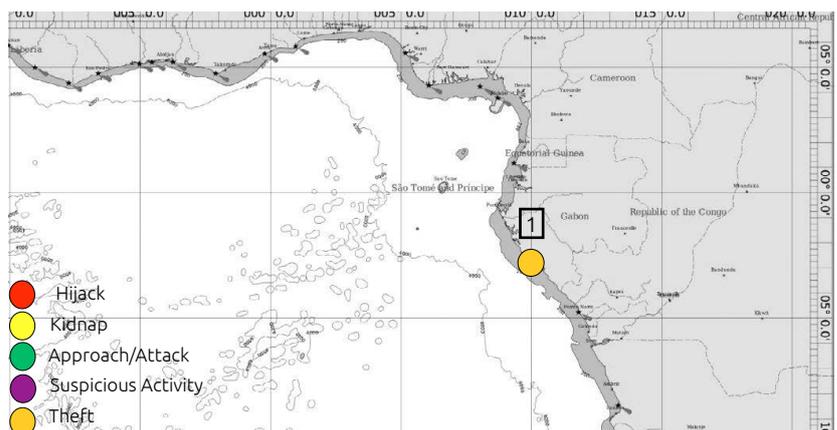
For further information, please click here.

Gulf of Guinea Piracy & Maritime Crime Figures

2022
Incidents reported: 17 (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

India will be helping Seychelles with the installation of a coast guard radar system and other defence matters, the Indian High Commissioner said on Friday 13th, Seychelles News Agency reported. Personnel will be trained in its operation, which will further boost Seychelles' maritime security.

Incidents: Nothing significant to report.

Iranian Navy Thwarts Pirate Attack in Gulf of Aden

Tasnim News reported on May 13th that the Iranian naval forces prevented pirates from hijacking one of the country's vessels in the Gulf of Aden. The Iranian Navy received a mayday call from an Iranian vessel in the Gulf of Aden on Friday morning. The ship had come under attack from unknown pirates. When the Iranian Navy's escort team was dispatched to the region, the pirates were forced to escape following an exchange of fire. The trade vessel is safe. The incident has not been officially reported by independent agencies, as is usually the case with Iranian state media reports.

U.S. Coast Guard Ship in Middle East Interdicts \$17 Million in Drugs

A U.S. Coast Guard fast response cutter seized illicit narcotics from a fishing vessel while conducting patrols in the Gulf of Oman, May 15th. USCGC Glen Harris (WPC 1144) seized 182 kilograms of heroin, 182 kilograms of methamphetamine, 27 kilograms of amphetamine pills, and 568 kilograms of hashish with a total estimated U.S. street value of \$17 million. Glen Harris was operating as part of Combined Task Force (CTF) 150, one of four task forces within the Combined Maritime Forces. On May

12th, USCGC Emlen Tunnell (WPC 1145) interdicted a separate fishing vessel in the Gulf of Oman and seized methamphetamine and hashish worth \$10,000, the CMF said.

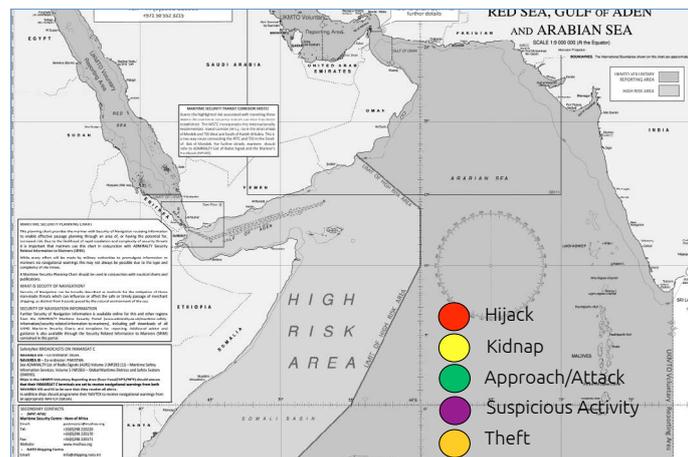
UK Frigate Seizes Illegal Heroin Shipment in Gulf of Oman

A frigate from the United Kingdom Royal Navy seized illicit narcotics from a fishing vessel while conducting patrols in international waters in the Gulf of Oman, May 5th, the CMF reported on May 13th. HMS Montrose (F 236) was operating as part of Combined Task Force (CTF) 150, one of four task forces under Combined Maritime Forces. The international naval force has increased regional patrols to locate and disrupt unlawful maritime activity. The seizure included 95 kilograms of heroin with an estimated U.S. street value of \$4 million.

South African Navy officers welcomed at Indian maritime information centre

Defence Web reported on May 12th that two Liaison Officers from the South African Navy have begun work at the Indian Navy Information Fusion Centre. The officers will be trained in the centre's operations and maritime domain awareness in the region.

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



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

European Waters

The Evening Standard reported on May 15th that more than 8,000 people have so far arrived in the UK after crossing the English Channel in small boats. The news comes as Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced that the first batch of asylum seekers could be sent to Rwanda in the next few weeks.

Black Sea incidents

Despite reports by some media outlets and some Ukrainian politicians last week that Ukraine had successfully attacked the Russian logistical support ship, Vsevolod Bobrov near Snake Island, the ship has now apparently returned to Sevastopol port, and appears undamaged according to a report by Maritime Executive on May 15th. The incident is similar to that involving the Admiral Makarov cruiser, which was reportedly hit by Ukrainian missiles and later photographed apparently undamaged at Sevastopol.

The Kyiv Post reported on May 12th that calls are increasing for the UN to somehow create a maritime corridor which would allow Ukraine to continue exports of grain and other items from its southern ports, as the global food crisis begins to affect more nations. During his recent visit to Kyiv, Canadian Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, noted that: "It doesn't serve anyone if [Russian President] Vladimir Putin's war is not just killing Ukrainians but is starving people around the world," adding "we're just looking to solve a very direct problem."

The EU, meanwhile, has been speeding up efforts to shift Ukrainian grain exports by land routes. On May 12th, Maritime Executive reported that it is creating 'Solidarity Lanes' for Ukrainian grain to leave the country. "20 million tonnes of grains have to leave Ukraine in less than three months using the EU infrastructure. This is a [gigantic] challenge, so it is essential to coordinate and optimize the logistic chains, put in place new routes, and avoid, as much as possible, the bottlenecks," said EC transport commissioner Adina Valean in a statement.

Channel migrants: More than 600 people cross in small boats

More than 600 migrants reached the UK by boat over the weekend, the Ministry of Defence has said. On Sunday 15th 436 people crossed the English Channel, with another 167 on Saturday, BBC News reported on May 16th.

Nine migrants threatened with death if families don't pay ransom

Business Standard reported on May 14th that a group of Bangladeshi migrants is being held by the people smugglers who promised to take them from Libya to Italy. Unless ransoms are paid, their captors are threatening to kill them and dump their bodies at sea, Business Standard said. It is thought that the captors are Bangladeshi people smugglers.

Eritrean migrant found dead in Calais

InfoMigrants reported on May 12th that a man aged between 20-25 had been found dead inside a trailer at a parking area in the port city of Calais. He is thought to have been of Eritrean origin and is believed to have taken his own life. An investigation into his death has been opened by the prosecutor in Boulogne-sur-Mer.

UK asylum seekers hide to avoid being sent to Rwanda

The East African reported on May 11th that asylum seekers in the UK are going into hiding to avoid the threat of deportation to Rwanda. Aid agencies including the British Red Cross and Refugee Council have warned that the threat of deportation has meant that some asylum seekers have simply fled from hotels where they were staying, while others have resorted to self-harm. The agencies have reportedly accused the UK government of a breach in their duty of care towards asylum seekers.

Tunisia: Three bodies found, 248 migrants rescued

InfoMigrants reported on May 12th that the Tunisian Coast Guard had rescued 248 migrants at sea in a number of separate incidents on Wednesday 11th. Three bodies were recovered during the operations off the coast of El Awabed, Sfax region. Reuters reported that the rescue operation had involved 10 separate groups.

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

Somalia & Yemen

Somalia's former leader Hassan Sheikh Mohamud has been elected president after a final vote that was only open to the country's MPs, BBC News reported on May 16th. He defeated the current president, Mohamed Abudallahi Farmajo, who has been in office since 2017.

Somalia: President Biden reverses Trump's withdrawal of US troops

US officials say President Biden has approved the redeployment of US troops in Somalia, reversing a decision by his predecessor Donald Trump. The deployment was requested by the Pentagon to support the fight against militant group Al Shabaab. This time, fewer than 500 US troops will be deployed, which has been described as "a repositioning of forces already in theatre who have travelled in and out of Somalia on an episodic basis" by US National Security spokeswoman Adrienne Watson, BBC News said on May 17th.

UK Armed Forces Minister visits East Africa to coordinate security support for Somalia

The Armed Forces Minister has visited key defence partners in East Africa to discuss joint efforts to promote regional stability and build security in Somalia. James Heapey visited Somalia, where the UK is working with allies from across East Africa to help the Somali state take over responsibility for security from international forces. The UK provides pre-deployment training for African Union (AU) troops from partner nations as they prepare to deploy to support Somali forces in protecting civilians from Al Shabaab and other terrorist groups under the AU Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), the UK government said on May 12th.

Heavy Fighting Flares in Galmudug State Capital

All Africa reported on May 13th that heavy fighting had been taking place in Dhusamareb, the capital of Galmudug state between Ahlu Sunna militia forces and government troops. Several people were reported killed during the gun battle, but there are no details on the current situation in the town.

ATMIS forces abandon base in Middle Shabelle

Critical Threats report that Burundian ATMIS

forces have abandoned a base near Gululei, Middle Shabelle, in an attempt to prevent Al Shabaab from overrunning another military camp. They have redeployed to reinforce other bases in the area, while Al Shabaab has reportedly occupied their old base.

First commercial flight in six years leaves Yemen's Sanaa amid fragile truce

On Monday 16th, the first commercial flight for six years took off from Sanaa, the airport in the Houthi-controlled capital of the country, France 24 said. The Yemen Airways flight took 151 passengers to the Jordan capital of Amman. The flight was part of the UN's peace deal between the Houthis and Saudi coalition forces.

Yemen: \$33 million pledged to address decaying FSO Safer

The UN's fund-raising effort to repair the FSO Safer off the coast of Yemen raised \$33 million, they said on May 11th. "We are grateful to the donors that committed funding today at very short notice and look forward to receiving further commitments from those that have not yet pledged. When we have the funding, the work can begin," said David Gressly, the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Yemen.

Houthis meet with al Qaeda

The Khabar Agency reported on May 12th that several key local Houthi leaders had met with a local al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) commander to discuss prisoner exchanges in the al Bayda governorate. Houthi forces reportedly agreed to release a number of AQAP terrorists in exchange for AQAP assistance in attacking Yemeni government forces in the south.

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

UK Security News

The Guardian reported on May 16th that there are growing concerns over the rising threat posed to the UK by right wing extremists. Since 2017, counter-terrorism forces have foiled 32 plots: 18 were Islamist related, and 12 were from the extreme right wing, the paper noted.

Man in court after explosives scare in street

A man has appeared in court over a bomb alert which saw around 25 people told to leave their homes, BBC News reported on May 15th. Suspected explosives were found when officers went to a property on Finsbury Road in Arnold, Nottinghamshire, at about 23:50 BST on Wednesday. After further searches of the address, police said they were satisfied there was no link to terrorism. Paul Staples, 45, has been charged with possessing an explosive substance and has been remanded in custody.

Jury fails to reach verdict on Wearside student accused of terror plot

A jury has failed to reach a verdict on a college student accused of plotting to blow up a police station. Luke Skelton, who was said to have racist, sexist, homophobic, anti-Semitic and Islamophobic views, was accused of preparing to commit acts of terrorism in the year to October 2021. After seven hours of deliberation, a jury at Teesside Crown Court failed to reach a verdict on the single charge. Mr Skelton, 18, from Oxclose, Washington, could now face a retrial, according to BBC News on May 14th.

Counter Terrorism Policing launches campaign encouraging live music fans to #BeSafeBeSound

Counter Terrorism Policing reported on May 12th that they would be working with UK music venues and festivals to ensure security at events this year, continuing their #BeSafeBeSound campaign which began in 2019. While they stress that there are no increased threats being reported, they want to ensure that people are free to enjoy these events while remaining safe. It was not reported whether they would be offering any specialist training to venue security staff.

Three men arrested in Oglagh na hEireann investigation released

The Belfast Telegraph reported on May 11th that the

Police Service Northern Ireland had released three men who had been arrested during an investigation into the dissident republican Oglagh na hEireann group. They had been arrested by the Terror Investigation Unit and work continues into criminality linked with the group, the paper said.

London News

Woman, 21, stabbed to death in west London alleyway

A man has been arrested on suspicion of murder after a 21-year-old woman was stabbed to death in a west London alleyway. The woman was found with several stab wounds and died at the scene, in an area off Church Gardens, South Ealing, just after midnight. The Met Police arrested a 20-year-old man and he remains in custody, BBC News reported on May 17th.

TfL abandons permanent terrorism defence barriers on bridges

Southwark News reported on May 12th that Transport for London (TfL) has given up on plans to install anti-terrorism barriers on bridges in the capital city, despite recommendations from a coroner that they put in place to prevent vehicles being used to attack pedestrians. TfL say that the cost of upgrading the bridges is an estimated £30 million. Temporary barriers are in place on eight London bridges, following a terror attack in 2017. Coroner Mark Lucraft said in 2019 that, "Funding disputes between public bodies would not be a satisfactory reason for delay in the planning and installation work."

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

Global Security News

Turkey's president has restated his opposition to Finland and Sweden joining Nato - just hours after they said they would seek membership. Recep Tayyip Erdogan said the two Nordic nations should not bother sending delegations to convince Turkey, a key Nato member, of their bids, the BBC reported on May 17th.

Ukraine: Latest updates

BBC News reported on May 17th that Ukrainian forces had been evacuated from the Azovstal steelworks in Mariupol and taken to Olenivka, a Russian-controlled town. It is believed that they will be exchanged for Russian prisoners of war but there has been no official confirmation from either side. The UK Ministry of Defence (MoD) issued its intelligence update on the war on May 17th, noting that Russia is likely to continue to rely on artillery strikes to regain momentum in the Donbas region. It estimates that around 3,500 buildings have been destroyed or damaged during Russia's abandoned effort to reach Kyiv, with 80 per cent of the damage done to residential buildings. This illustrates Russia's inability to procure and use precision munitions and also its willingness to randomly target civilians. On May 16th, NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, said that Russia's efforts to secure the Donbas region had stalled at a meeting of NATO foreign ministers, and that Ukraine could win the conflict. The MoD estimates that Russia has lost around a third of its ground forces since they invaded Ukraine in February.

In related news, Shell has suspended sales at hundreds of petrol stations in Russia, after announcing it would withdraw from the country. "All fuel supplies have been suspended at stations covered by the deal with Lukoil, while shops and cafes remain open for now," Interfax quoted a Shell representative as saying.

BBC News reported that Ukraine's air force says a sea-based Russian cruise missile has hit infrastructure targets outside the western city of Lviv overnight on May 17th. It says Ukraine's air defence shot down another three missiles. The regional governor said railway facilities had been hit.

NATO begins its military exercises in Baltics

One of the biggest-ever NATO exercises in the Baltics is now under way. Named "Hedgehog", the drills involve 10 countries, including Finland and

Sweden, which are expected to formally apply to join the alliance within days. The exercises in Estonia, which will last until 3rd June, were arranged before Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Sweden on Monday 16th confirmed its intention to apply for NATO membership, joining Finland, which declared its position last week, BBC News said.

Sri Lanka down to last day of petrol, new prime minister says

As the country recovers from days of civil unrest and rioting, Sri Lanka's new prime minister says the country is down to its last day of petrol as it faces its worst economic crisis in more than 70 years, the BBC said. In a televised address, Ranil Wickremesinghe said the nation urgently needs \$75m (£60.8m) of foreign currency in the next few days to pay for essential imports. He said the central bank will have to print money to pay government wages.

Industry and SIA News

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