WEEKLY REPORT

ARC

03/07/24

Maritime Security | Underwater Services | Operations Support | Agency Services

London | Lomé | Cotonou | Lagos | Port Harcourt

# ARC Weekly Report - 27 June - 3 July 2024

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About Africa Risk Compliance

Headquartered in Exeter and London, UK and with branch offices in Lomé, Togo, Cotonou, Benin and Lagos and Port Harcourt, Nigeria, Africa Risk Compliance Limited (ARC) was established to bring together a team of Africa and maritime security experts to address challenges faced by those operating in Africa. With roots in the security sector, our key service offering is the management and arrangement of security in the complex jurisdictions of the nations around the Gulf of Guinea.

In 2021, ARC expanded its service offering to provide a management service to arrange embarked armed guards in the Indian Ocean, and since 2021, risk management services to counter the threat of drug smuggling on merchant vessels, and journey management and on-shore vehicle services in Nigeria.

Visit Us:

Maritime Security - Black Sea
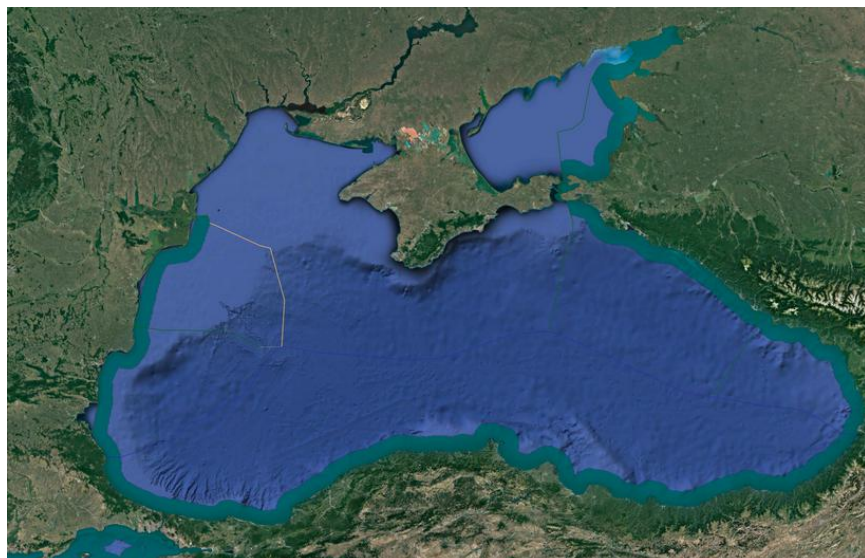
Current Threat Levels

Black Sea
Drones: MEDIUM
Missiles: MEDIUM
Mines: HIGH
Electronic Interference: HIGH

Sea of Azov
Drones: MEDIUM
Missiles: MEDIUM
Mines: HIGH
Electronic Interference: HIGH

Black Sea Security Incidents

Security Incidents

Since start of 2024	2
Since start of 2023	26
Since February 2022	28

Casualties and Detentions

Injuries	2
Deaths	26
Crew detained	36

Incidents Involving Sea Mines

Since start of 2024	0
Since start of 2023	16
Since February 2022	21

Location of Sea Mine Incidents

|	
Ukraine	7
Romania	6
Bulgaria	3
Turkey	3
Georgia	1

Analysis

Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, we have recorded 28 maritime security incidents in the Black Sea involving merchant vessels. These incidents include missile attacks, drone attacks, and vessel detentions. While some of the merchant vessels that have been hit by missiles or damaged during port attacks were victims of collateral damage, many vessels have directly been targeted by Russian armed forces since the start of the war. We have recorded five incidents where the Russian military has intercepted and detained merchant vessels they suspect of involvement with Ukraine.

The Black Sea continues to be a high-risk area for all vessels. The region is highly unpredictable, and the security situation can change at any time. Crew should operate at MARSEC Level 3 when transiting through the area, and ensure they are prepared to respond to any potential threats or emergencies. The threat in ports in Ukraine and Russia is also elevated as port cities – particularly those in Ukraine – are popular targets. Vessels calling at Ukraine's ports are especially vulnerable because following Russia's withdrawal from the Black Sea Grain Initiative in July 2023, the military claimed that any vessel leaving a Ukrainian port is a legitimate target.

Over the course of the conflict, Russian forces have planted hundreds of sea mines in Ukrainian waters that have since drifted, presenting a risk to merchant vessels across the Black Sea and civilians on the coasts. We have recorded 21 incidents involving sea mines since the start of the war, with most incidents occurring outside Ukraine. Vessels in the Black Sea should remain vigilant, avoiding floating objects, maintaining lookouts, and monitoring local navigation warnings.

Maritime Security - HRA, Indian Ocean
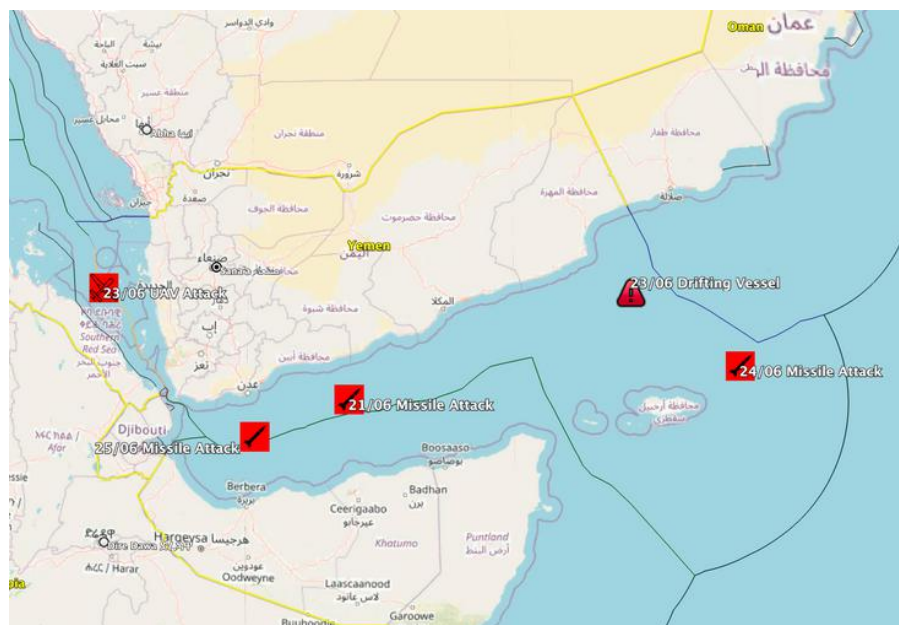
Current Threat Levels

Piracy
Red Sea: LOW
IRTC: MEDIUM
Arabian Sea: HIGH

Conflict
Persian Gulf: HIGH
Gulf of Oman: HIGH
Gulf of Aden: HIGH
Red Sea: HIGH

Reports 27 June - 3 July 2024

- **25 June 2024. Missile Attack. 52nm S of Aden, Yemen.** The Master of a bulk carrier reported a missile hitting the water approximately 500m off the port side. The crew was reported safe, and the vessel proceeded to the next port of call. The vessel has no confirmed direct association with the Houthi target profile, but some sources have listed the vessel controller as a US-based company.

- **27 June 2024. UAV Attack. 83nm SW of Hodeidah, Yemen.** A bulk carrier reported an explosion close to the vessel that caused minor damage. The vessel was reportedly targeted by multiple USVs. The crew was reported safe, and the vessel proceeded to the next port of call. It is believed that the vessel was targeted due to other vessels in the company structure calling at Israeli ports.

- **28 June 2024. Missile Attack. 150nm NW of Hodeidah, Yemen.** A tanker was targeted by five missiles whilst sailing through the Red Sea. Three missiles were fired approximately five minutes apart, with each landing in the water within 200m of the vessel. The vessel reversed course to exit the threat area and was subsequently targeted by two more missiles. The vessel was not hit, reported no damage, and all crew on board were safe. The Houthis stated that the vessel is US-linked, but tracking data states the tanker is owned by a Greek company.

- **29 June 2024. False Communications. 75nm SW of Aden, Yemen.** A general cargo vessel was underway with AIS on when it received a VHF transmission from "Yemeni authorities" asking the Master to email the vessel's details. The message stated that the vessel would be the next target if this information wasn't provided. The vessel complied and then continued out of the threat area. It was determined the vessel has no links to the Houthi target profile.

- **30 June 2024. Suspicious Approach. 13nm SW of Mokha, Yemen.** A bulk carrier was approached by 12 craft. The suspicious craft included fast boats and smaller kayak-type boats with some observed as uncrewed. The closest point of approach was 1.5nm. Reports indicate that the 12 craft remained near the vessel for approximately one hour before leaving the area. The vessel and crew were reported safe, and the vessel proceeded to its next port of call. It has been reported that some of the small boats may have been USVs.

Maritime Security - HRA, Indian Ocean

Analysis

Somalia-Based Piracy

The threat of Somalia-based piracy in the region has recently increased from low to medium following a years-long pause in activity. Since 22 November 2023 there have been more than 30 Somali piracy incidents reported, including the hijacking of three bulk carriers and several fishing vessels. The incidents demonstrate that armed groups in Somalia are still willing and capable of pirate attacks.

While many of the captured fishing vessels have since been released, reports indicate that several are still under pirate control and are likely being used as motherships for future attacks. There are at least three pirate groups in the Indian Ocean, with at least one active off the northern coast of Somalia and the other two maintaining a presence in the southern Somalia Basin. Pirate camps are believed to be located between the towns of Haafun and Garacad, with a hotspot of activity in and around the town of Eyl. In mid-April 2024, it was announced that pirates released the MV ABDULLAH and its 23-member crew following the payment of a $5 million ransom. The Bangladeshi-owned vessel had been hijacked a month prior off the coast of Somalia. The payment of a ransom to pirates is likely to inspire additional attacks.

Due to the severity and frequency of attacks in recent weeks, there is a high risk of piracy for all merchant vessels transiting through the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea. This risk applies deep offshore, as attacks have been reported as far as 600nm off Somalia's coast. It is important to note that though most of the reported incidents have occurred within the Indian Ocean High-Risk Area (HRA), pirate groups have a demonstrated ability to carry out attacks as far as 1,000nm away from the coast of Somalia.

Iran and Wider Conflict Threats

Since 2021, Iran has seized or attempted to seize more than 20 merchant vessels. Such incidents are often followed by claims in Iranian media that the merchant vessel had committed a crime such as hitting an Iranian vessel or for fuel smuggling. When seizing vessels, Iranian forces are known to open fire and show serious disregard for the safety of crew and the environment. Iranian forces have also used airborne weapons against vessels, which is an evolution from the mines and waterborne IEDs (WBIEDs) previously used. These are still considered a threat as well.

Iran's seizure of an Israel-linked vessel on 13 April 2024 occurred amid heightened tensions in the region due to the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict and followed the suspected Israeli strike targeting the Iranian Consulate in Syria on 1 April 2024. The incident, along with the Revolutionary Guard's recent threats to close the Strait of Hormuz, suggests Iran may continue to use the maritime space within the context of its conflict with Israel. Consequently, there is a risk to Israel-linked vessels transiting through or calling at ports in the Gulf of Oman, the Strait of Hormuz, and the Persian Gulf.

Heightened Threat in the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, and Bab el-Mandeb Strait

Background

On 14 November 2023, in response to the current war between Israel and Hamas, Yemen's Houthi leader Abdul Malik al-Houthi, issued a warning that his forces could make further attacks on Israel and target Israeli-linked ships in the Red Sea and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait. Since the announcement we have reported on more than 100 related security incidents targeting merchant vessels in the area, including suspicious approaches, calls to alter course, the hijacking of an Israel-linked commercial vessel in the Red Sea, and dozens of kinetic attacks targeting commercial vessels in the area. Since the attacks began, at least three seafarers have been killed and several others have been injured.

In response to the attacks, several shipping lines announced plans to reroute through South Africa's Cape of Good Hope or pause shipments through the Red Sea until further notice to protect crew and cargo. A number of security platforms have also chosen to increase the cost of their services significantly over the course of this conflict due to the expanded High-Risk Area, associated rise in insurance costs, and the reduced vessel traffic through the Red Sea.

Due to the nature of the incidents and threats that have occurred in the past 30 days, *the Red Sea, the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, the Gulf of Aden, and the northern Arabian Sea are "high risk" and the threat is considered high to all vessels.* Crew should take precautions prior to entering the area so that they are ready to respond appropriately to any threat and emergency and should operate at MARSEC Level 3 whilst transiting through the area. The threat in ports in the Red Sea is also elevated because they are located in the affected area and in range of Houthi missiles.

Target Profile

Following retaliatory airstrikes by US and UK forces, the Houthis announced they would expand their targets to include US and UK-linked vessels. This threat further expanded in May 2024 after the Houthis stated they would target all vessels within their reach with links to Israel, regardless of nationality or destination. On 13 June 2024, the Joint Military Information Centre (JMIC) issued a note stating that the Houthis's threat profile has evolved to include vessels that are part of a company structure with vessels that are calling at Israeli ports. This includes companies with a fleet that is group owned, operated, or chartered that may have called at an Israeli port in the past. It is now recommended that companies do a full fleet and port call assessment to determine the threat for specific vessels and to determine whether they meet the criteria to be targeted.

Since these attacks began, several of the vessels that have been targeted have not fit the profile as established by the Houthis, with many likely targeted based on outdated or incorrect publicly available information. The wider target profile coupled with the instances of mistaken identity significantly increases the risk for all vessels transiting through the region.

Location and Nature of Attacks

To date, most of the incidents reported have occurred north of the Bab el-Mandeb Strait between the ports of Hodeidah and Mokha and in the eastern Gulf of Aden. Since the Houthis expanded their target area in April 2024, two attacks have been confirmed to have occurred in the Arabian Sea. The Houthis have claimed to have targeted several other vessels in the Indian Ocean and have also stated that they have attacked vessels in the Mediterranean Sea, but there is no evidence to suggest these attacks took place.

Maritime Security - HRA, Indian Ocean

The Houthis have largely used anti-ship ballistic missiles, anti-ship cruise missiles, and UAVs to carry out attacks, however on 12 June 2024 the group successfully attacked a merchant vessel with the use of an Uncrewed Surface Vehicle (USV). ***This incident confirmed that vessels are at risk of attack from the air and the sea.***

The pattern of action from the Houthis towards targeted vessels seems to be:

1. Contact a vessel by VHF ordering it to change course and sail towards a nearby port (likely Hodeidah), whilst claiming to be the "Yemeni Navy".
2. If the vessel disobeys or ignores the order, in previous incidents Houthis have then launched either a drone or a missile against the vessel.
3. Such incidents are then followed by a large amount of local social media activity, resulting in an "official" statement from the Houthi spokesman confirming the incident and vessel name.

There have also been several reports alleging that Iranian naval vessels have been stationed in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden to support the Houthis with intelligence and target acquisition. It has been noted that the Behshad, a vessel identified as part of the Iranian Navy, maintained a presence at the western end of the Gulf of Aden from 11 January to early April 2024. These allegations have not been confirmed, but the uptick in incidents during this time and the locations in which they have occurred suggest a possible link.

Use of Embarked Armed Guards

As this threat pertains to a wider geopolitical conflict and not piracy, embarked armed guards may not be able to counter all attacks by Houthi forces. If the vessel has embarked armed guards, they will be able to counter attempts to stop the vessel by a small craft. However, when facing overwhelming force by an aggressor such as multiple naval-style vessels, helicopters, missiles, UAVs, or USVs, the embarked team should stand down for the following reasons:

- An embarked security team will not have the capacity to ward off attacks from kinetic weapons such as missiles, UAVs, and USVs.
- Any action by an armed team onboard may be met with an overwhelming force, which would greatly endanger the safety of the crew.
- Attempts to engage with a boarding force may be seen as provocative and may result in poorer treatment of the armed guards and crew after the boarding force has taken control of the vessel.

International Naval Response

On December 19 2023, the US Defence Secretary announced the establishment of Operation Prosperity Guardian, a coalition of more than 20 countries with the aim to secure the southern Red Sea and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait for commercial vessels. Naval vessels are currently present in the area, but they are likely unable to defend against every attack or render assistance to all vessels targeted by the Houthis.

On the night of 11 January 2024, US and UK naval and air forces carried out missile strikes on Houthi positions in Yemen in response to the ongoing attacks on merchant shipping and, more recently, on naval vessels involved in Operation Prosperity Guardian in the Red Sea. US and UK forces have since carried out three additional rounds of strikes in Yemen targeting Houthi positions.

Maritime Security - HRA, Indian Ocean

On 19 February 2024, the EU launched Operation Aspides, a naval mission to protect commercial vessels in the Red Sea. France, Germany, Italy, Greece, and Belgium have confirmed participation in the protective mandate, which is designed to only act in response to a threat with minimum force. As part of the operation, naval vessels will accompany vessels and an airborne early warning system will be used to protect against attacks at sea.

On 16 March 2024, the Indian Navy carried out an operation against the pirates on the MV RUEN, a bulk carrier that was hijacked by Somalia-based pirates on 14 December 2023. INS Kolkata, with supporting ships and aircraft, forced the pirates onboard to surrender with no injury to crew, pirates or any members of the Indian military. During the operation, the pirates shot down an Indian Navy surveillance drone and fired at INS Kolkata. In response, INS Kolkata disabled the ship's steering system and navigational aids, forcing the vessel to stop. Following the operation, the vessel and crew were released with all safe and the vessel proceeded to India.

Yemeni Ports and HRA Floating Armoury Updates

Yemeni Ports status' as of 3 July 2024

Gulf of Aden Ports	Status	Red Sea Ports	Status
Ash Shihr	Temporarily closed	Mokha	Closed
Mukalla	Operational	Hodiedah	Operational
Nishtun	Operational	Saleef	Operational
Balhaf	Closed	Ras Isa (shore tanks)	Operational
Rudhum	Temporarily closed	Ras Isa (SPM)	Operational
Aden	Operational		

HRA Floating Armoury Updates

Due to the increased risk associated with transit through the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, most platforms and PMSCs have requested that clients inform them of any Israeli links to their vessels.
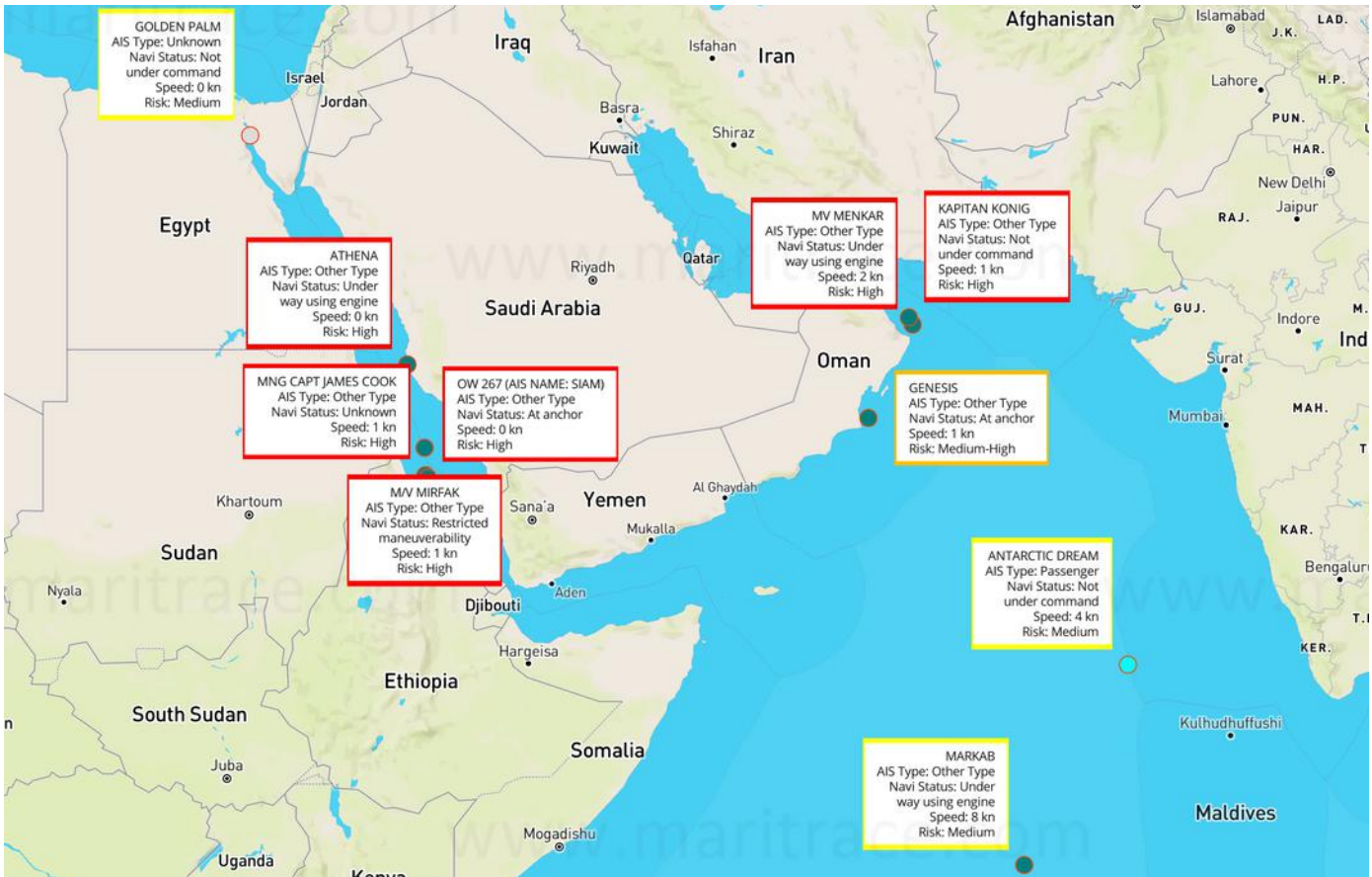
Drug Smuggling from Latin America

Number of Drug Smuggling Incidents from Ports in Latin America from 2023

Brazil
Santos	54
Paranagua	18
Rio de Janeiro	11
Rio Grande	4
Itaguaí	3
Imbituba	3
Natal	2
Itapoa	2
Vitoria	2
San Sebastiao	1
Navegantes	1
Unspecified	9

Colombia
Cartagena	11
Barranquilla	8
Santa Marta	7
Buenaventura	6
Puerto Bolivar	2
Cienaga	1
Unspecified	9

Guatemala
Puerto Quetzal	2

Panama
Colon	2
Almirante	1
Unspecified	6

Peru
Paita	9
Callao	5
Unspecified	9

Argentina
San Lorenzo	2
Zarate	1

Ecuador
Guayaquil	26
Puerto Bolivar	6
Quito	2
Machala	1
Unspecified	35

Mexico
Lazaro Cardenas	2
Veracruz	1
Unspecified	1

Costa Rica
Unspecified	7

Chile
Arica	3
San Antonio	1
Unspecified	1

Dominican Republic
Caucedo	4
Santo Domingo	2
Haina	1
Unspecified	7

Paraguay
Unspecified	1

Guyana
Georgetown	2

Trinidad and Tobago
Pointe Lisas	1
Unspecified	2

Haiti
Unspecified	2

Nicaragua
Corinto	1
Unspecified	3

Vessels implicated in drug smuggling

Legend: Containership, Bulk Carrier, Cruise Ship, Tanker, General Cargo, Tug, Ro-Ro, Reefer, Livestock, Fishing Vessel, Unknown

- Containership 65.6%
- Bulk Carrier 17.8%
- Unknown 6.6%
- General Cargo 2.7%
- Cruise Ship 1.2%
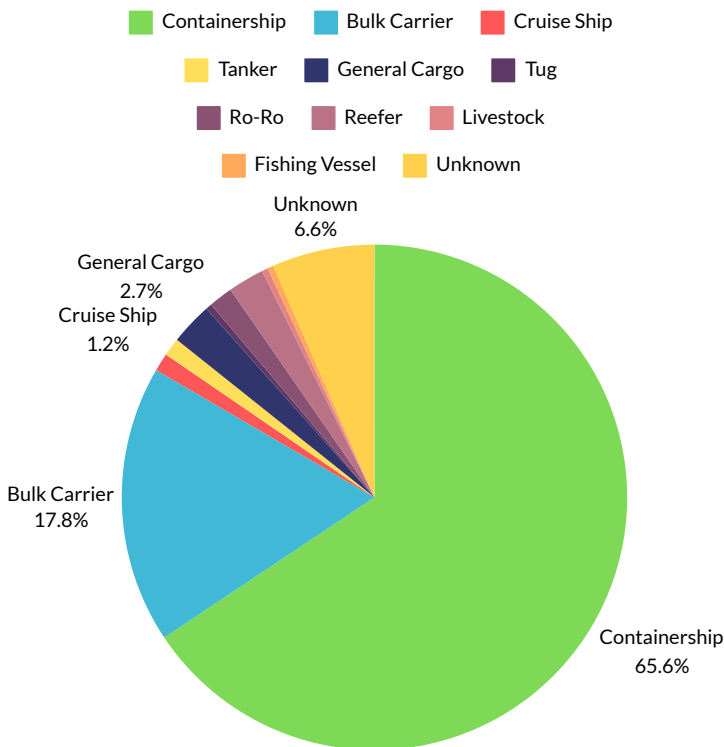
Areas of vessel used to hide drugs

Legend: Inside Container, In Cargo, Sea Chest, Hull, Engine Room, Container Cooling System, Anchor Compartment, Crane, Ballast Tank, Cargo hold, Chain Locker, Other

- Inside Container 56%
- Sea Chest 15%
- In Cargo 7.7%
- Other 6.3%
- Hull 5.3%
- Container Cooling System 4.8%
- Engine Room 1%
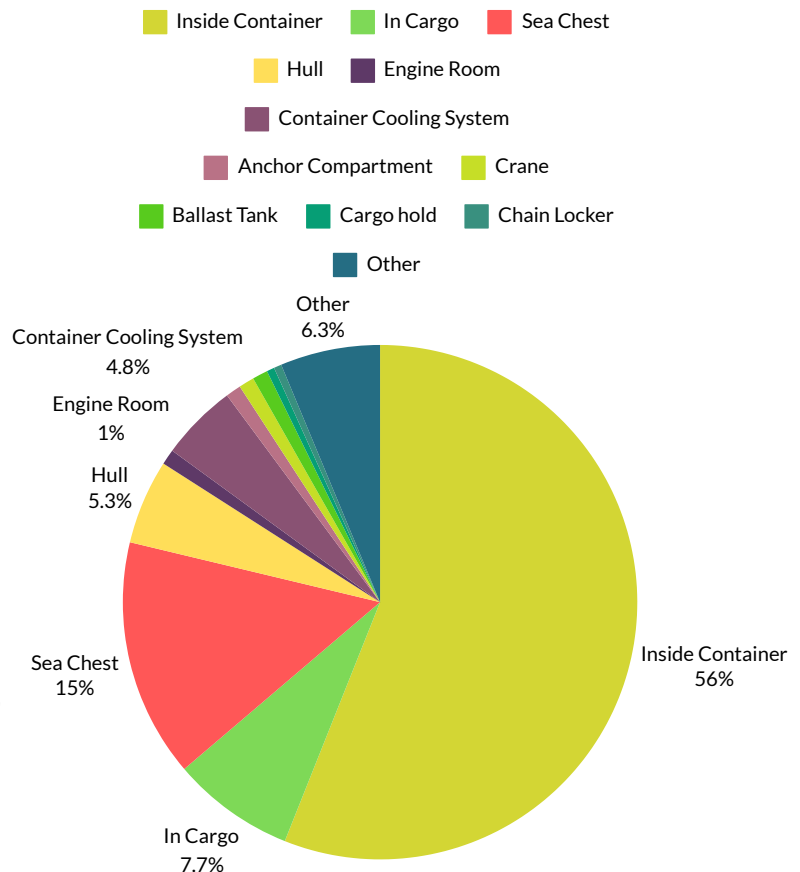
N.B. Figures are based on current information at time of publication of this report, and may change over time as further information on previous incidents is received. The figures represent the number of incidents of drug smuggling/trafficking on merchant vessels from ports in Latin America to ports globally.

Maritime Security - Lagos, Nigeria
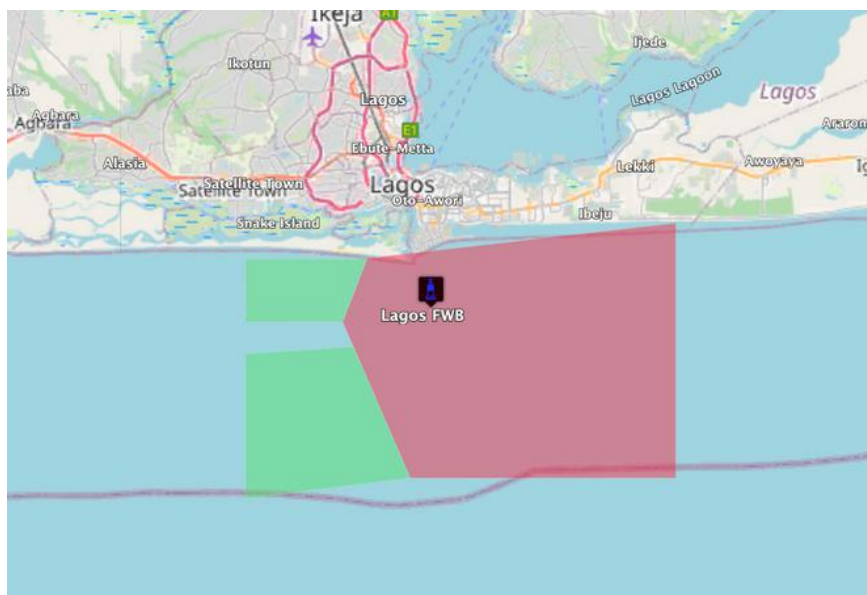
Current Threat Levels

Theft, Robbery & Stowaway
STS and NPA Anchorage: HIGH
Port Area: HIGH

Piracy & Kidnap for Ransom
STS and NPA Anchorage:
MEDIUM
Port Area: LOW

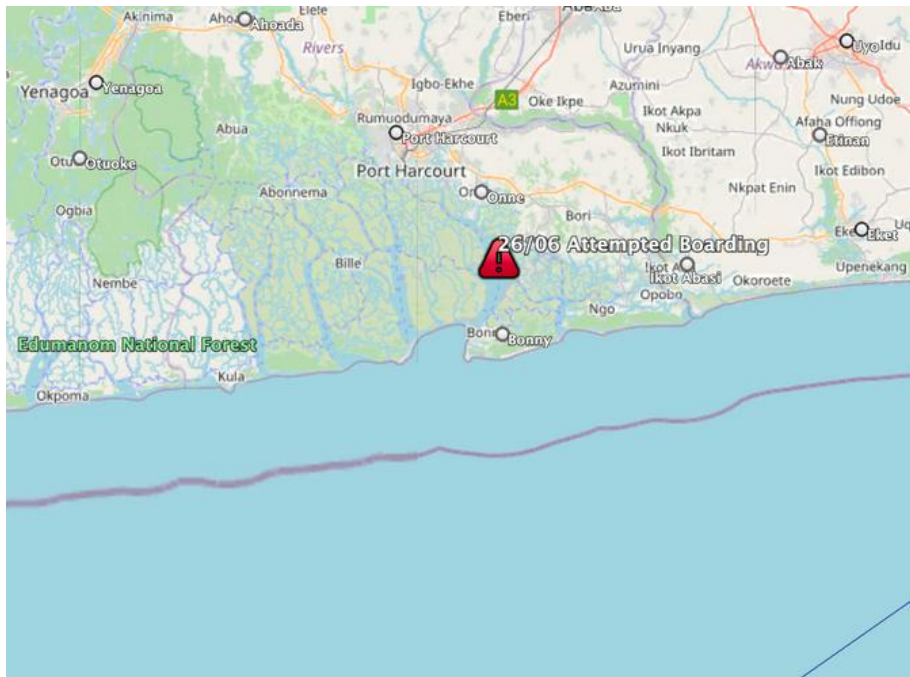## Reports 27 June - 3 July 2024

Nothing to report.

Analysis

Lagos has consistently seen a high number of stowaway incidents on vessels in anchorage and at berth. All vessels should carry out stowaway searches prior to departure and watch out for small boats around the rear of the vessel.

There remains a high risk of armed robbery and theft at all Lagos anchorages and across the port area. If spotted by crew and alarm raised, thieves and robbers will usually flee without altercation or threat to crew. Terminals inside the port have poor security infrastructure, so vessels at berth are easy targets for thieves, robbers and stowaways. It is recommended that vessels maintain a vigilant watch, especially at night and dawn and dusk, when visibility is poor. Ships should also stow and lock away any tools, ropes and valuables on deck.

Last Incident

- **13 June 2024. Kidnap for Ransom. Lagos Waterways, Nigeria.** A passenger vessel was attacked whilst transiting between Apapa and Victoria Island on Lagos waterways. Local reports state that armed suspects attacked the vessel near Falomo Bridge. Four expats, including the managing director of Fouani Company and three employees of Fouani Nigeria Ltd, were confirmed to have been abducted. Police have not determined whether this was a random or targeted attack. The kidnappers contacted the family members of the victims and the Fouani Company to demand a ransom of $1.5m. On the morning of 18 June, it was reported that Lagos police rescued the victims. It is not clear whether the ransom was paid to secure their release.

Maritime Security - Offshore and Niger Delta, Nigeria

Current Threat Levels

Delta Creeks and Rivers: HIGH
Bonny River: HIGH
Escravos/Forcados: HIGH
Calabar River: HIGH
Offshore Brass: HIGH
Offshore Bonny: HIGH
Deep Offshore Bonny: HIGH
Deep Offshore Lagos: HIGH

Reports 27 June - 3 July 2024

- **26 June 2024. Attempted Boarding. Bonny River, Nigeria.** Local reports stated that police apprehended a group of sea pirates whilst they were attempting to hijack a passenger vessel. The pirates were allegedly part of a syndicate that have been active in Bonny River for some time. No casualties were reported from the attack.
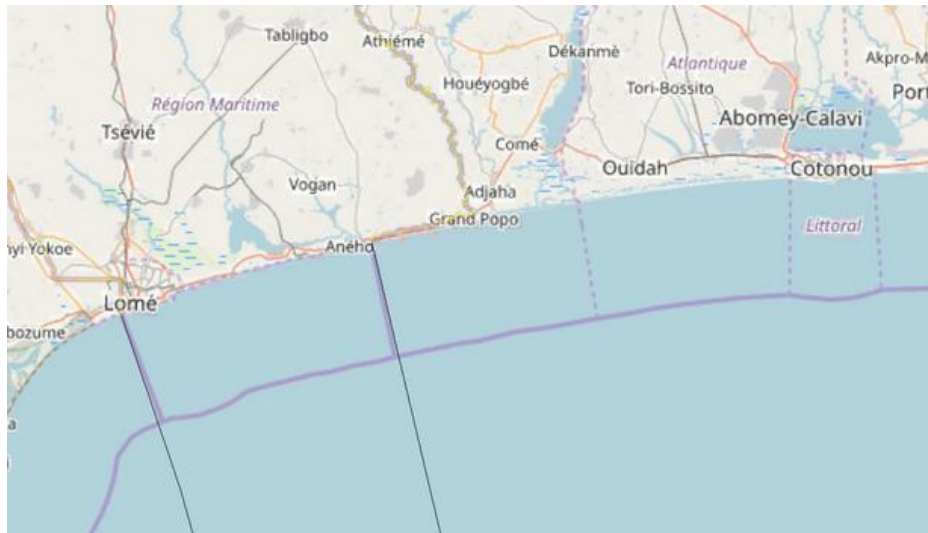
Analysis

The threat level across the Nigeria EEZ is still considered high.

Pirate attacks have demonstrated that the pirates have an excellent understanding of the geographical limits of security escorts and local Naval forces, and they have the ability to board vessels sailing at good speed using light-weight aluminium ladders. There remains a a significant threat to all vessels up to 250nm from the coast of Nigeria. Merchant vessels avoiding Nigerian waters should still remain extremely vigilant as pirates have shown themselves capable of operating at significant distances from the shore, including outside of Nigerian waters.

Last Incident

- **6 May 2024. Kidnap. Bonny River, Nigeria.** A passenger boat with 20 people on board was attacked by suspected pirates whilst transiting between Bonny and Onne. The suspects reportedly robbed all the passengers and kidnapped seven on board.

Maritime Security - Benin & Togo

Current Threat Levels

Theft, Robbery & Stowaway
Lomé: MEDIUM
Cotonou: MEDIUM

Piracy & Kidnap for Ransom
Lomé: MEDIUM
Offshore Togo: HIGH
Cotonou: MEDIUM
Offshore Benin: HIGH

Reports 27 June - 3 July 2024

Nothing to report.

Analysis

There remains a high threat in the waters offshore Benin and Togo, where vessels often drift awaiting berthing instructions, or carry our STS bunker operations. The area deep offshore Benin should be considered one of the most dangerous areas in the Gulf of Guinea, as there are minimal options for security services or effective response in the event of an incident offshore. Vessels should move further south and west to avoid this area, or move straight into anchorages where there is a greater Navy presence and maritime security services available.

Last Incident

- **3 April 2022. Illegal Boarding. 275nm S of Lomé, International Waters.** A bulk carrier sailing deep offshore in international waters was boarded by pirates armed with firearms. The crew moved to citadel after raising the alarm. The Italian Navy vessel Rizzo Luigi Rizzo (P595) arrived on scene and a Navy boarding team boarded the bulk carrier. It was confirmed that all 19 crew members reached the citadel safely. The pirates damaged navigation equipment on the bridge, but with the support from the Italian Navy the steering and propulsion systems were repaired. The vessel sailed under escort with the Italian Navy vessel towards Nigerian waters and then continued its sail to Lagos escorted by a Nigerian security vessel.

Maritime Security - Western Gulf of Guinea

Current Threat Levels

Senegal: LOW
Guinea: MEDIUM
Sierra Leone: MEDIUM
Liberia: LOW
Cote d'Ivoire: MEDIUM
Ghana: MEDIUM

Reports 27 June - 3 July 2024

Nothing to report.

Analysis

The threat of piracy is higher in the eastern half of Ghana waters. There is a high risk of theft, robbery and stowaways at all ports in West Africa. Guinea in particular has a history of violent robbery incidents. Ghana's Takoradi port has a consistent record of security incidents at anchorage, with robbers and thieves targeting vessels for opportunistic theft of valuable items. Most flee once an alarm has been raised and they are aware they have been spotted by the crew. All incidents should be reported to local authorities.

There have historically been a number of security incidents against local fishing vessels in this area. Local reporting and type of attacks suggest either fishing disputes or the involvement of drug smuggling gangs, with some vessels involved in these attacks previously being detained for drug smuggling.

Last Incident

- **12 June 2024. Suspicious Approach. 60nm off Takoradi, Ghana.** A tanker reported a suspicious approach by a small brown boat with 7 people on board. The closest point of approach was 0.5nm, and the vessel and crew were not harmed. This incident is not assessed to be a security concern, but it will be re-examined if other similar incidents are reported in the area.

Maritime Security - Cameroon to Gabon
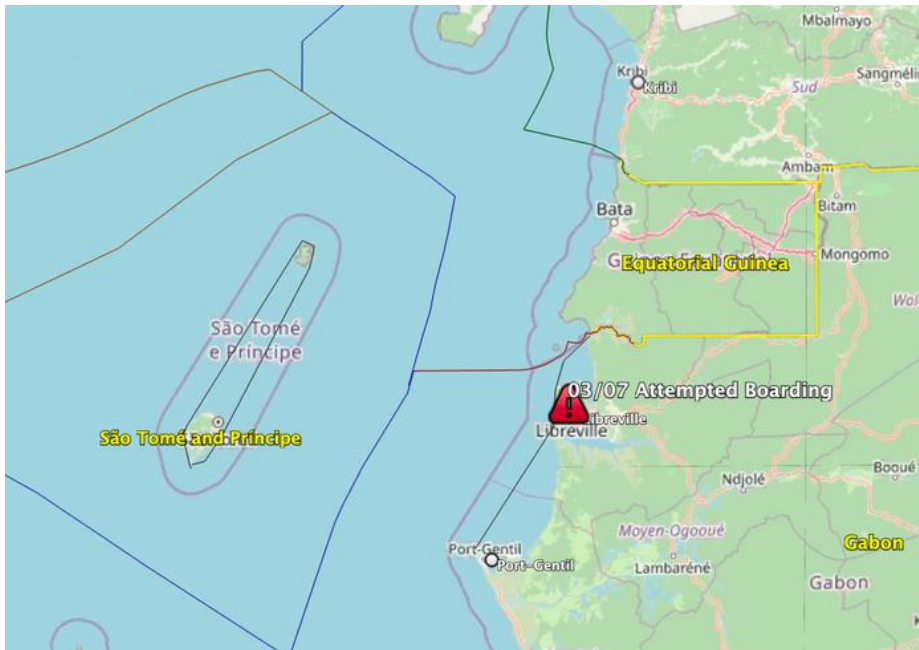
Current Threat Levels

Theft, Robbery & Stowaway
Cameroon: MEDIUM
Eq Guinea: LOW
Sao Tome & Principe: LOW
Gabon: MEDIUM

Piracy & Kidnap for Ransom
Cameroon: HIGH
Eq Guinea: HIGH
Sao Tome & Principe: HIGH
Gabon: HIGH

Reports 27 June - 3 July 2024

- **3 July 2024. Attempted Boarding. Owendo Anchorage, Gabon.** Two vessels in the area reported receiving distress calls from a tanker stating that three armed suspects on board a small boat had attempted to board the vessel. Local reports say the crew retreated to the citadel and all external doors were locked. The boarding attempt failed the suspects reportedly fled empty-handed after authorities arrived on the scene. The crew were reported safe.
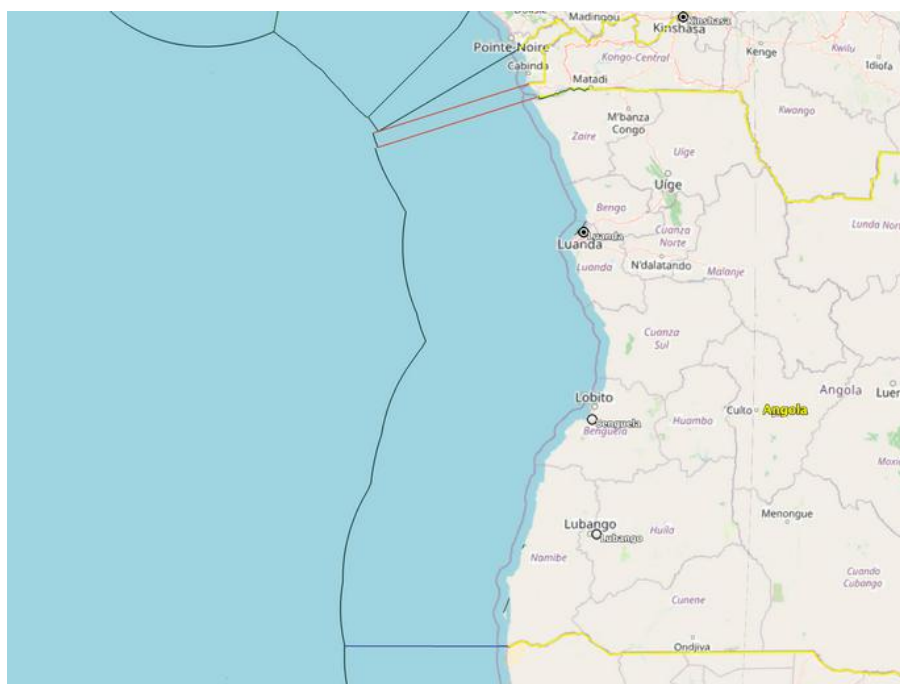
Analysis

The threat at anchorages in countries aside from Nigeria should be considered high, as pirates target alternative locations. A pirate group based in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria is suspected to have carried out attacks in this region. Vessels should remain extremely vigilant when transiting through this area.

There remains a high risk of piracy attack and kidnap in the waters of countries outside of Nigeria, especially Cameroon, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Equatorial Guinea. In recent attacks, pirates have demonstrated their reach outside of the EEZ and out of the reach of Naval forces and commercial security services. Vessels should avoid "no-mans-land" areas, such as the waters south of Bioko Island, where security is very thin.

Last Incident

- **29 May 2024. Kidnap for Ransom. 40nm SW of Malabo, Equatorial Guinea.** A cargo vessel was boarded by nine armed sea pirates south west of Bioko Island. Five suspects reportedly remained on the boat, and the other four boarded the vessel. The suspects robbed the vessel, destroyed some equipment, and kidnapped the Master and an engineer. The vessel was transiting from Douala, Cameroon to Koko, Nigeria at the time of the incident, and returned to Douala after the attack without alerting port authorities of her presence in the area.

Maritime Security - Congo to Angola

Current Threat Levels

Theft, Robbery & Stowaway
Rep of Congo: MEDIUM
DR of Congo: MEDIUM
Angola: HIGH

Piracy & Kidnap for Ransom
Rep of Congo: MEDIUM
DR of Congo: MEDIUM
Angola: MEDIUM

Reports 27 June - 3 July 2024

Nothing to report.

Analysis

The threat across the region should be considered high as Niger Delta-based pirates have demonstrated the capability to operate at significant distances offshore. Small product and bunker tankers should be extra vigilant in this area, as they provide relatively low freeboard, cargo that is attractive for the black market, and crew to kidnap. These vessels also often spend a significant amount of time in the region, possibly allowing pirate group networks to collect intelligence in preparation for future attacks.

Thefts and robberies remain a consistent threat at anchorages in the region, especially Luanda, Soyo, and Matadi.

Last Incident

- **20 June 2024. Theft (Successful). Luanda Anchorage, Angola.** A vessel reported a robbery after ISPS duty crew noticed footprints near the hose pipe area during security rounds. A number of items from the ship's stores were reported missing. This is the sixth security incident to take place at Luanda Anchorage so far in 2024.

Maritime Security - Recent History and Trends

Gulf of Guinea Port Security Statistics

Number of incidents in last 6 months

Luanda	6
Lagos	3
Soyo	1
Monrovia	1
Banana	1
Conakry	1
Takoradi	1

Terminals and Anchorages with highest number of incidents in last 6 months

Luanda Anchorage	6
Soyo Anchorage	1
Apapa, Lagos	1
Tin Can Port, Lagos	1
GDNL Berth 19, Lagos Port	1
Monrovia Port	1
Banana Port	1
Conakry Port	1
Takoradi Anchorage	1
Owendo Anchorage	1

Stowaway Statistics - Number of Incidents (based on IMO and local reports)

	Last 3 months	Last 6 months	Last 12 months
Lagos	2	6	20
Port Harcourt	0	1	1
Lomé	0	0	1
Cotonou	0	0	1
Dakar	0	1	3
Matadi	1	1	1
San Pedro	0	0	1
Banjul	0	1	1
Tema	1	1	1
Freetown	1	1	1

Gulf of Guinea Piracy Statistics

Security Incidents

This month (last 30 days)	6
Since start of 2024	25
Since start of 2023	67

Crew & Passengers Kidnapped

This month (last 30 days)	4
Since start of 2024	22
Since start of 2023	66

Incidents involving security forces and merchant vessels since start of 2021

Embarked Navy Guards	22	Success Rate of Protecting Vessel	94%
Armed Escort Vessel	8	Success Rate of Protecting Vessel	100%

Attack success rate since 2020 (no crew kidnapped and vessel not hijacked)

Year	Total No. of Attacks	Vessel Escaped	Attack failure rate
2020	80	54	67.5%
2021	32	19	59.38%
2022	19	8	42.11%
2023	20	6	30%
2024	4	0	0%

N.B. Figures show total number of piracy attacks (not armed robbery/theft), total number of incidents where vessel escaped (no crew kidnapped or vessel hijacked) and the resulting failure rate of pirates' attacks. 2023 figures show rates as of publication date of this report.

Niger Delta Militancy, Community Conflict and Industrial Action

Militant Activity

Statements & Threats

Nothing to report.

Attacks

Nothing to report.

Community Conflict

There is a high level of cult- and gang-related violence in Rivers, Bayelsa and Delta states. This includes kidnapping, violence between rival gangs and vigilante actions by cults and community groups. Local military and law enforcement actions do not always improve the situation.

Industrial Action

Nothing to report.

Current Militant Threat Level: MEDIUM
Current Community Threat Level: MEDIUM
Current Strike/Industrial Action Threat Level: HIGH

West Africa Shipping News

A drastic drop in vessel calls into Nigeria's ports has had serious implications for operations in the maritime sector, according to reports this week. The difficulties in the sector come as businesses continue to suffer the effects of the foreign exchange crisis and inflation currently affecting Nigeria's economy. Reports state that there has been a drop of 4.5% in the number of vessel calls into Nigerian ports, from 3,957 in 2022 to 3,778 in 2023. Container traffic has also declined by 6.8% to 1.56mn 20TEUs, from 1.68mn TEUs in 2023. Acknowledging the drop, the Comptroller-General of the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) stated that most of the country's terminals were empty on account of the drop in import trade and encouraged Nigerians to engage in more exports to boost the naira. Speaking on the effects of the economy on Nigeria's trade, a former Vice President of the Association of Nigerian Licensed Agents (ANLA) also commented that the fluctuating exchange rate, which has already caused issues for importers and clearing agents, will only lead to more drops in cargo volume. It is estimated that if the high exchange rate is not addressed urgently, over 40,000 jobs across port formations in the country will be at risk. This includes direct and indirect staff, comprising employees of terminal operators, shipping companies, dockworkers, truckers, and clearing and forwarding agents, among others. (Source: Vanguard)

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