



# WEEKLY REPORT



# ARC

## 05/02/25

Maritime Security | Underwater Services | Operations Support | Agency Services

London | Lomé | Cotonou | Lagos | Port Harcourt



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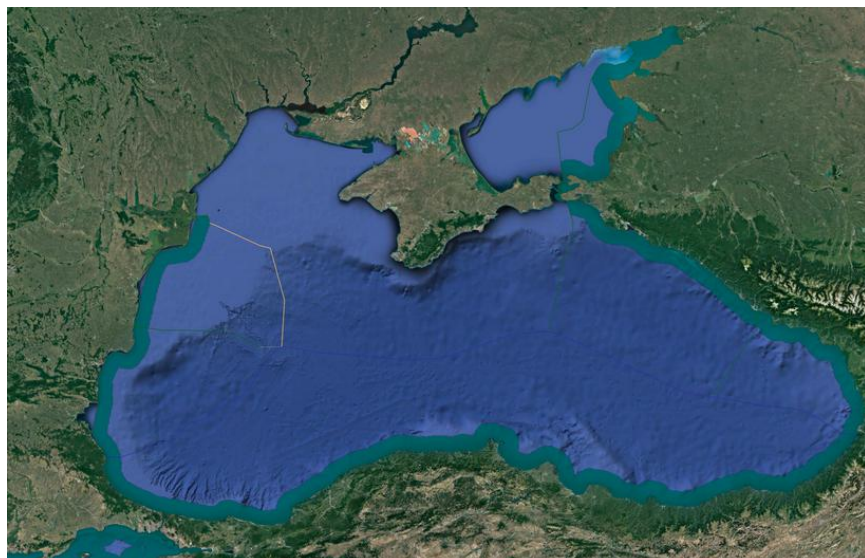
## About Africa Risk Compliance

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.

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## 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	9
Since start of 2023	16
Since February 2022	32

### Casualties and Detentions

Injuries	12
Deaths	41
Crew detained	50

### Incidents Involving Sea Mines

Since start of 2024	1
Since start of 2023	17
Since February 2022	22

### Location of Sea Mine Incidents

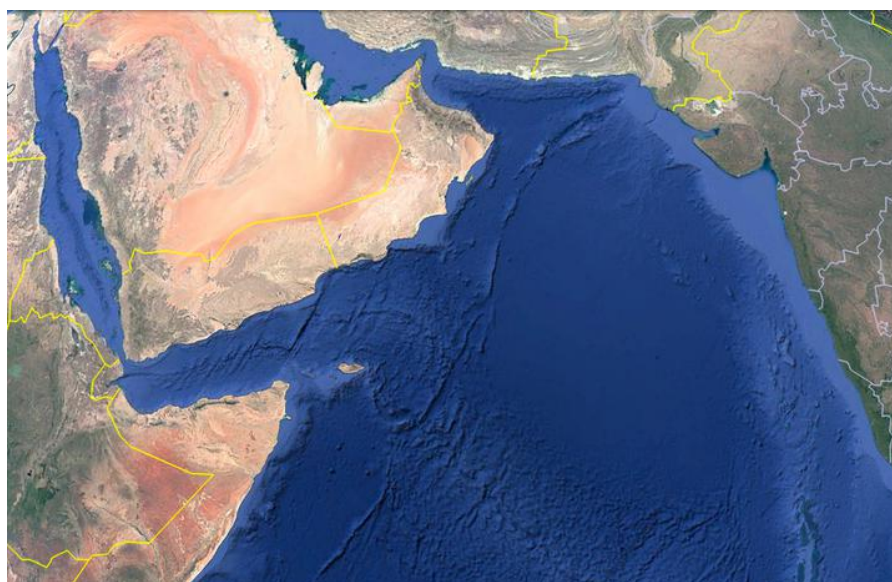
Ukraine	7
Romania	7
Bulgaria	3
Turkey	3
Georgia	1

## Analysis

Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, we have recorded more than 30 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 22 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.



## 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 30 January - 5 February 2025

Nothing to report.

## Analysis

### Somalia-Based Piracy

The threat of Somalia-based piracy in the region has recently increased following a years-long pause in activity, indicating that armed groups on the coast of Somalia are still willing and capable of pirate attacks. Since November 2023, there have been more than 40 Somali piracy incidents reported, including the hijacking of three bulk carriers and several fishing vessels. 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. Since the resurgence of pirate activity off the coast of Somalia, substantial ransom payments have been made to pirate groups for the release of two vessels and their crew. These ransom payments are likely to inspire additional attacks.

Between mid-June and the end of August 2024, there was no pirate activity reported in the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea. This was likely due to the monsoon season and rough weather conditions that made it harder for pirate groups to carry out attacks. However, pirate activity picked up again in August after weather conditions improved in the region. On 1 September 2024, three suspected pirates were arrested in Bereeda, Puntland following an operation by security forces. Four other suspects evaded arrest. These incidents were followed by a report by naval sources stating that a pirate group had set sail for the Indian Ocean from Ceel Huur in Somalia's Galmudug state on 22 October 2024. Since this report, three bulk carriers have reported suspicious approaches and three fishing vessels have reportedly been attacked by pirate groups.

Naval sources have stated that there are several pirate camps along the eastern coast of Somalia between the towns of Xaafun and Garacad. The town of Eyl has historically been a piracy hotspot and it is believed that much of the current pirate activity stems from this location. There may also be pirate camps on Somalia's northern coast between the towns of Bosaso and Qandala, making attacks in the Gulf of Aden a possibility.



Due to the severity and the number of attacks that have taken place in recent months, as well as the opportunistic nature of these attacks and recent reported activity, ***the risk of piracy remains high for all merchant vessels transiting through the Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea, and the Gulf of Aden.*** 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 or close to 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.***

On 19 January 2025, the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) started a series of large-scale military exercises involving multiple branches of the armed forces. The exercises, carried out under the name Great Prophet XVIII, are taking place across Iran and in the waters of the Persian Gulf. During the military exercises, commercial vessels may notice an increased security presence and may experience VHF hailing whilst sailing in the Strait of Hormuz or near Iran's territorial waters. Vessels transiting through the Persian Gulf are advised to exercise caution and use the Northern Persian Gulf to the Strait of Hormuz Transit Corridor so that Coalition Naval Forces can assist quickly in the event of an emergency.

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

### Background

On 14 November 2023, in response to the ongoing 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 Israel-linked ships in the Red Sea and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait. Since the announcement we have reported on more than 140 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 also chose 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.



International navies have been active in attempting to combat the Houthi threat in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden since early in this crisis. On 19 December 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. On 19 February 2024, the EU launched a similar mission under the name Operation Aspides to protect vessels in the region. The Navies of 10 EU countries have participated in the protective mandate, which is designed to accompany commercial vessels in the region, provide situational awareness, and only act in response to a threat with minimum force. Naval vessels are still present in the area and have intercepted numerous kinetic weapons fired by the Houthis. However, they are likely unable to defend against every attack or assist all targeted vessels.

## Target Profile

Following retaliatory airstrikes by US and UK forces on 11 January 2024, 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' 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. In November 2024, the Houthis stated that they would not consider any changes in ownership or flags of ships linked to Israel, and that vessels with any previous affiliations to Israel would still be targeted.

Since these attacks began, 25% of the vessels targeted by the Houthis have had no clear links to the target profile, and nearly 13% may have been targeted based on outdated or incorrect publicly available information. The wider target profile coupled with the instances of mistaken identity significantly increased 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 Yemeni ports of Hodeidah and Mokha and in the eastern Gulf of Aden. After the Houthis expanded their target area in April 2024, two attacks were confirmed to have occurred in the Arabian Sea. The Houthis have also claimed to have targeted several 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.

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). Several USV sightings and attacks were reported in the Red Sea after this incident. An attack by a rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) launched by a small craft was also reported on 8 August 2024.

Many of the attacks in the Red Sea were preceded by a VHF call by an entity claiming to be the "Yemeni Navy" ordering the targeted vessel to change course or sail to a nearby port (likely Hodeidah). In many of these cases, the Houthis have launched kinetic weapons at the targeted vessel if the order has been disobeyed or ignored. After targeting vessels, the Houthi spokesman typically makes "official" statements on social media confirming the incident and the vessel name. These statements usually indicate that the attack was successful regardless of whether the Houthis hit the targeted vessel.



## Israel-Hamas Ceasefire and Current Threat to Vessels

After 15 months of conflict, Israel and Hamas agreed to a ceasefire deal that came into force on 19 January 2025. The ceasefire will take place in phases, with the first phase scheduled to last 42 days and negotiations for Phase 2 expected in the fifth week of implementation.

In response to the ceasefire, the Houthis in Yemen stated that they would monitor the developments around the implementation and would resume attacks in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden if the ceasefire is breached. The group later stated that they would lift “sanctions” on vessels without links to Israel, thereby insinuating that vessels with no affiliation to Israel can pass through the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea without being targeted. However, the militant group specified that Israeli-affiliated vessels would continue to be targeted until the ceasefire has been fully implemented. Other comments from Houthi officials indicated that the group would resume attacks on UK and US-linked vessels if the coalition continued to carry out airstrikes against Houthi targets. These announcements are in slight contrast to the Houthis’ original comments, as the group has long stated that they would stop targeting vessels once hostilities in Gaza ended.

Despite the ceasefire and the updated target profile from the Houthis, it is assessed that the group will continue to target vessels in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden in 2025. The threat to all vessels – but particularly those affiliated with Israel, the US, and the UK – remains unchanged, and it is unlikely that this threat will change to allow for safe passage through the region in the short to medium term.

The reasons for this are the following:

- Though the Houthis say they will only be targeting Israel-linked vessels for now, the group has already had a track record of using outdated or incorrect information to justify attacks against vessels. This means that vessels with indirect links to Israel – or no links at all – could still be targeted. Vessels in a company structure with other vessels that have called at Israeli ports may also still be vulnerable.
- The ceasefire between Israel and Hamas is very fragile, and it will take several months to fully implement if successful. With the delicate state of the current situation and a number of negotiations still scheduled to take place as the phases of the deal are implemented, there is still the possibility of disagreements and errors in implementation. It is highly probable that some of the terms of the deal will not be followed in a way that is deemed favourable to either party in the conflict. Any discrepancy or perceived violation of the terms of the deal could lead to the resumption of hostilities, which could then prompt the Houthis to start targeting vessels again according to their previous target profile.
- From a geopolitical perspective, the Houthis have gained significant control in the region by carrying out these attacks against vessels. They are therefore unlikely to give up this position of power by stopping the attacks entirely at this time.

***The Red Sea, the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, the Gulf of Aden, and the northern Arabian Sea therefore continue to be “high risk” and the threat is considered high to all vessels.*** Crew should take precautions prior to entering the area and should operate at MARSEC Level 3 so that they are ready to respond appropriately to any threat and emergency. 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. It is recommended that companies do a full fleet and port call assessment to determine the threat for specific vessels and whether they meet the criteria to be targeted. ***Given that the Houthis have used missiles, UAVs, USVs, and RPGs to attack vessels, it must be noted that vessels are at risk of attack from the air and the sea.***



## 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 and may be able to disable a USV on its approach. However, when facing overwhelming force by an aggressor such as multiple naval-style vessels, helicopters, missiles, or UAVs, 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 and UAVs.
- Any action by an armed team on board 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.



# Yemeni Ports and HRA Floating Armoury Updates



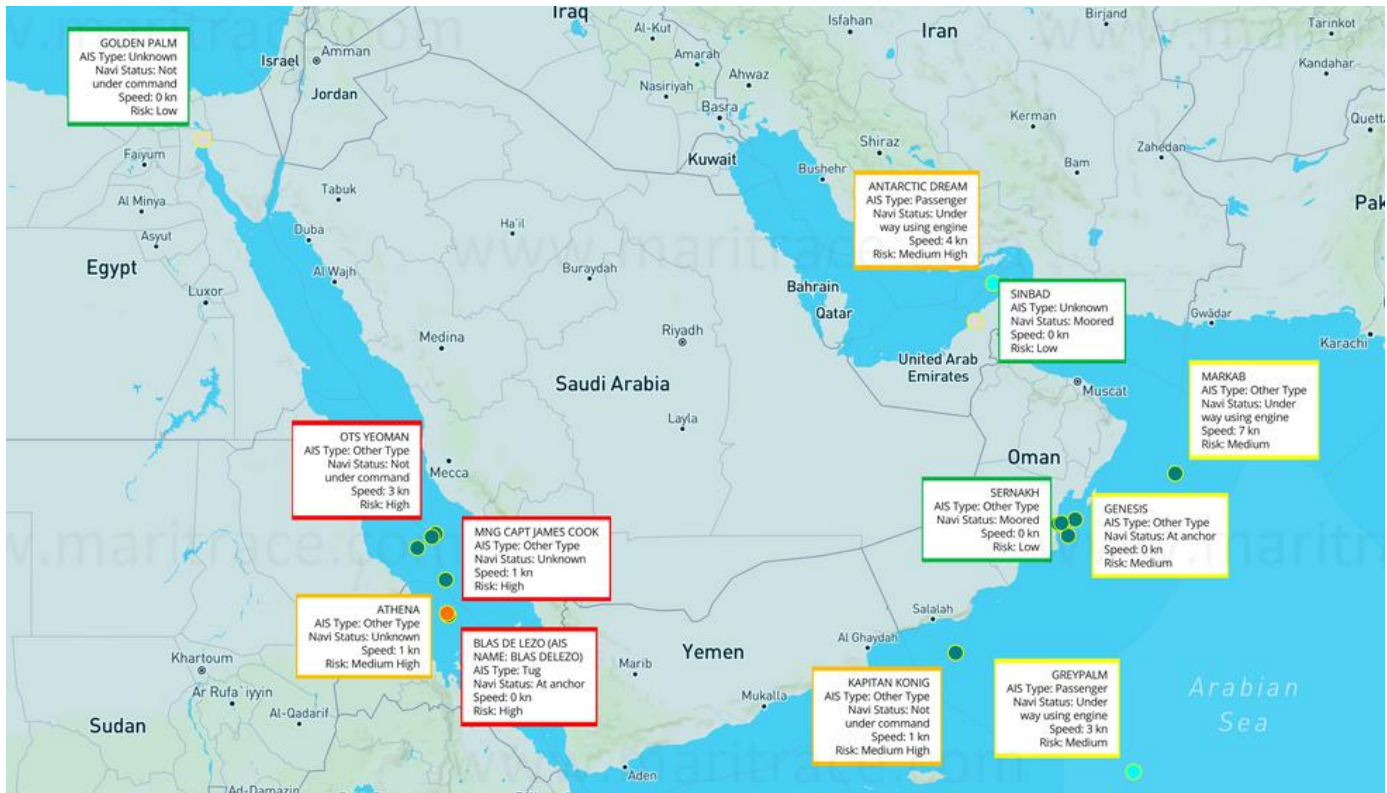
## Yemeni Ports status' as of 4 February 2025

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



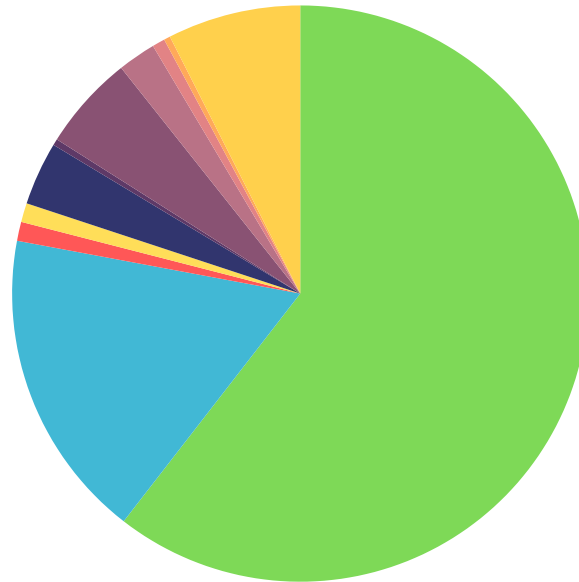
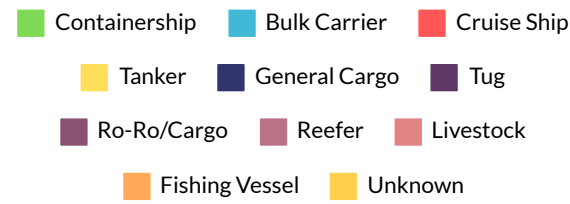
## Drug Smuggling Incidents from Ports in Latin America from 2023

<b>Argentina</b>		<b>Ecuador</b>		<b>Panama</b>	
San Lorenzo	2	Guayaquil	32	Colon	2
Zarate	1	Puerto Bolivar	4	Almirante	1
<b>Brazil</b>		Quito	2	Unspecified	9
Santos	71	Machala	1	<b>Paraguay</b>	
Paranagua	25	Unspecified	68	Asuncion	1
Rio de Janeiro	12	<b>Dominican Republic</b>		Unspecified	2
Rio Grande	4	Caucedo	5	<b>Peru</b>	
Itapoa	4	Santo Domingo	2	Paita	9
Itaguaí	4	Haina	1	Callao	6
Imbituba	3	Unspecified	12	Unspecified	20
Natal	2	<b>Guatemala</b>		<b>Trinidad and Tobago</b>	
Vitoria	2	Puerto Quetzal	2	Pointe Lisas	1
Navegantes	1	Unspecified	2	Unspecified	2
Unspecified	28	<b>Guyana</b>		<b>Uruguay</b>	
<b>Chile</b>		Georgetown	2	Montevideo	4
Arica	3	<b>Haiti</b>		Unspecified	2
San Antonio	1	Unspecified	1	<b>Mexico</b>	
Unspecified	7	<b>Mexico</b>		Lazaro Cardenas	2
<b>Colombia</b>		Veracruz	1	Unspecified	6
Cartagena	12	<b>Nicaragua</b>		<b>Nicaragua</b>	
Buenaventura	11	Corinto	1	<b>Costa Rica</b>	
Santa Marta	9	Unspecified	3	Limon	4
Barranquilla	8	<b>Costa Rica</b>		Unspecified	14
Puerto Bolivar	2	<b>Costa Rica</b>			
Cienaga	1				
Unspecified	19				

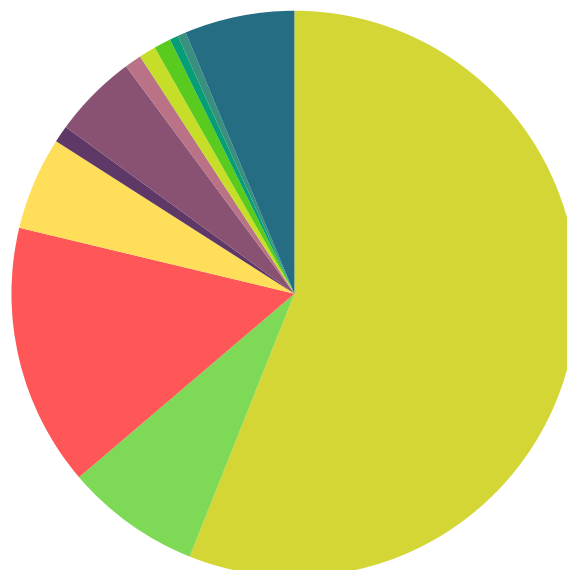
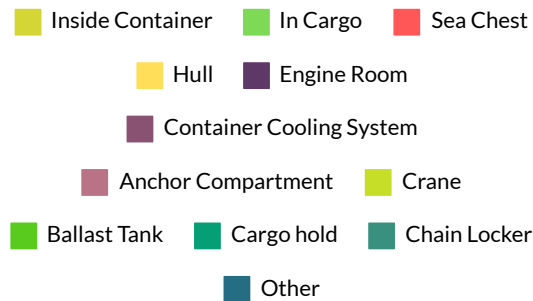
N.B. Figures are based on current information at time of publication of this report, and may change over time as further information on previous incidents is received. The figures represent the number of incidents of drug smuggling/trafficking on merchant vessels from ports in Latin America to ports globally.



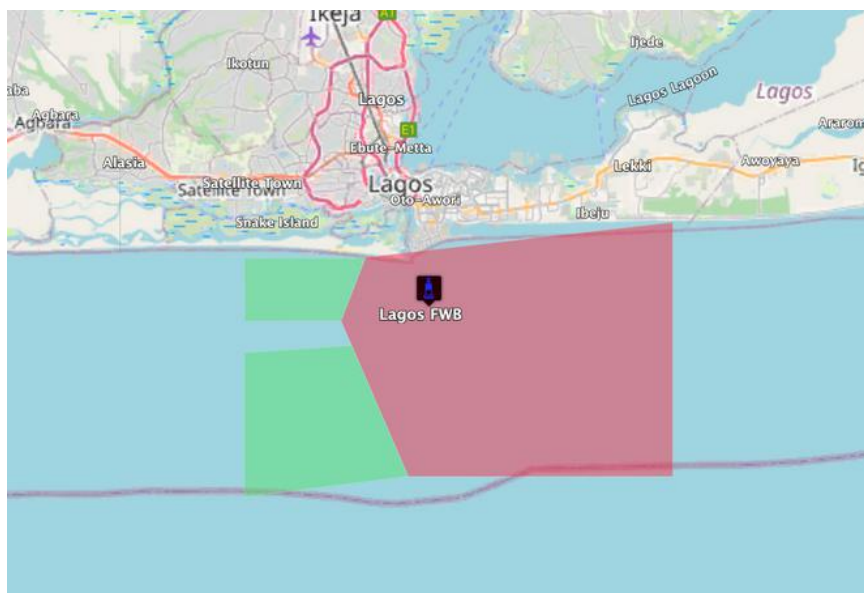
## Vessels implicated in drug smuggling



## Areas of vessel used to hide drugs



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.



## 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 30 January - 5 February 2025

Nothing to report.

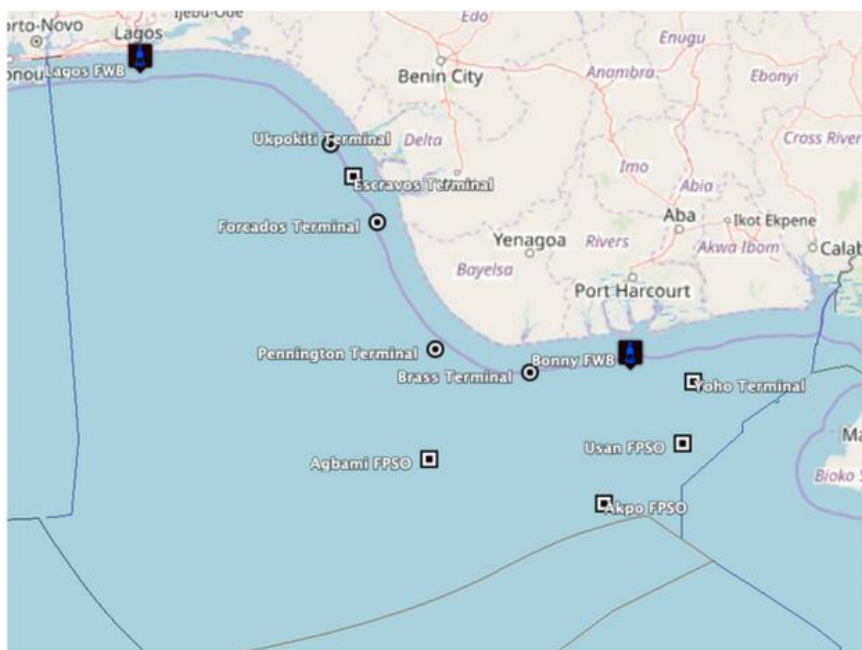
## Analysis

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

- **2 January 2025. Theft (Unsuccessful). Bovas Oil Terminal, Lagos, Nigeria.** A tanker was boarded by four suspects whilst at anchor at Lagos Port. The suspects escaped empty-handed once they were spotted by duty crew. The crew and vessel were reported safe, and the incident was reported to port authorities.



## 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 30 January - 5 February 2025

Nothing to report.

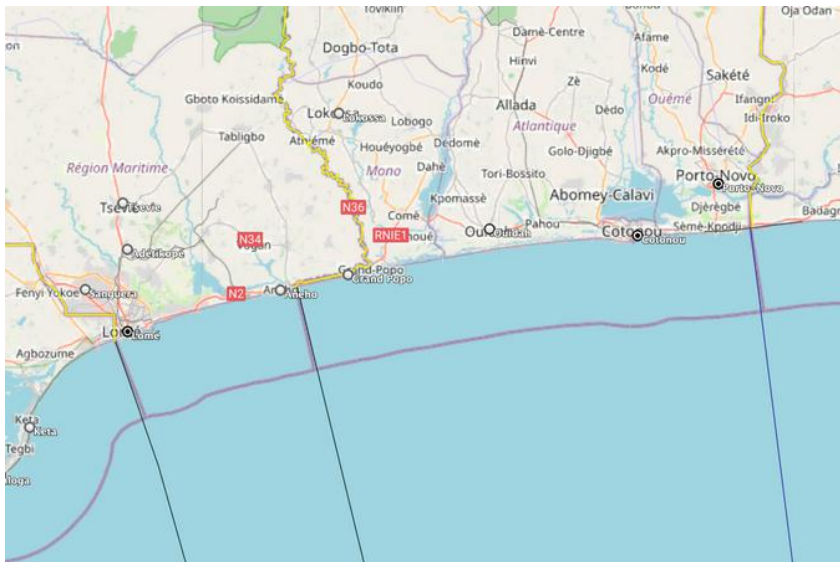
## Analysis

The threat level across the Nigeria EEZ is still considered high. The threat is particularly high in the Bonny River area, as several kidnapping incidents have been reported over the past few months. Though a majority of these incidents have targeted passenger vessels, the incidents point to an increase in insecurity that could affect merchant vessels.

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 significant threat to all vessels up to 250nm from the coast of Nigeria. Merchant vessels avoiding Nigerian waters should remain extremely vigilant as pirates have shown themselves capable of operating at significant distances from the shore, including outside of Nigerian waters.

## Last Incident

- **15 September 2024. Kidnap for Ransom. Bonny River, Rivers State, Nigeria.** Local reports state that the Nigerian Navy intercepted an attack on a passenger vessel on the Port Harcourt to Bonny sea route. Few details are available on the attack, but the Navy reportedly rescued 20 passengers from being kidnapped during the incident. According to the commander of the Nigerian Navy Forward Operation Base, pirates in the Bonny River area may be working with passenger boat operators to carry out attacks.



## 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 30 January - 5 February 2025

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 out 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

- **6 December 2024. Kidnap for Ransom. 9nm SE of Cotonou, Benin.** A fishing vessel was reportedly boarded by five pirates armed with AK-47s in Benin territorial waters. Reports indicate that the pirates boarded from a wooden boat, kidnapped the Master, and held the crew members on board for three hours. The pirates also stole items belonging to the crew. The Benin Navy reportedly dispatched a military vehicle to assist after receiving word of the incident. The vessel is currently docked at Cotonou port and authorities are investigating the kidnapping. The incident is believed to be linked to disputes in local fishing industries.



## Current Threat Levels

Senegal: **LOW**

Guinea: **MEDIUM**

Sierra Leone: **MEDIUM**

Liberia: **LOW**

Côte d'Ivoire: **MEDIUM**

Ghana: **MEDIUM**

## Reports 30 January - 5 February 2025

Nothing to report.

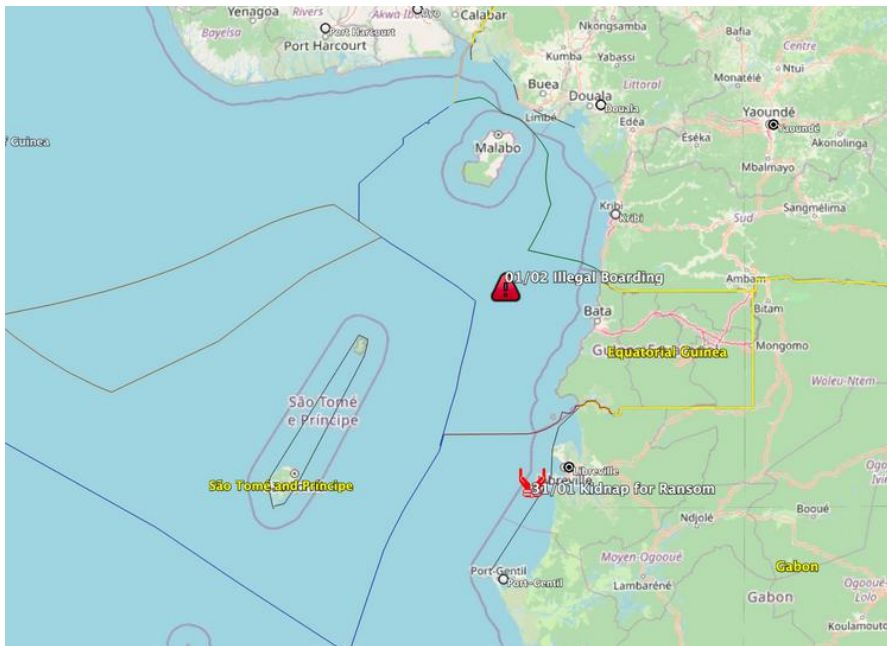
## Analysis

The threat of piracy is higher in the eastern half of Ghana waters. There is an elevated 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

- **13 January 2025. Theft (Successful). Abidjan Anchorage, Côte d'Ivoire.** An OSV was boarded by one suspect armed with a knife whilst anchored at Abidjan inner anchorage. The suspect came on board via a canoe, stole a phone, and then escaped immediately. The crew was reported safe.



## 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 30 January - 5 February 2025

- 31 January 2025. Kidnap for Ransom. 15nm SW of Libreville, Gabon.** A fishing trawler operating offshore Libreville was boarded by armed sea pirates. Reports say the suspects physically assaulted the crew, stole their phones, and destroyed communication equipment on board. The Master, the chief engineer, and a crew member were kidnapped. A Gabonese naval vessel was dispatched to the location, and the trawler was taken to Port Gentil. Gabonese authorities are investigating the incident.
- 1 February 2025. Illegal Boarding. 40nm W of Bata, Equatorial Guinea.** Naval authorities reported that a cargo vessel was boarded by three suspects. The crew mustered in the citadel and made a distress call via VHF. The alert reportedly discouraged the pirates from continuing the attack and they disembarked shortly after. A boat was seen on the radar following the vessel from about 1nm away for 45 minutes before leaving the area. All on board were reported safe.

## Analysis

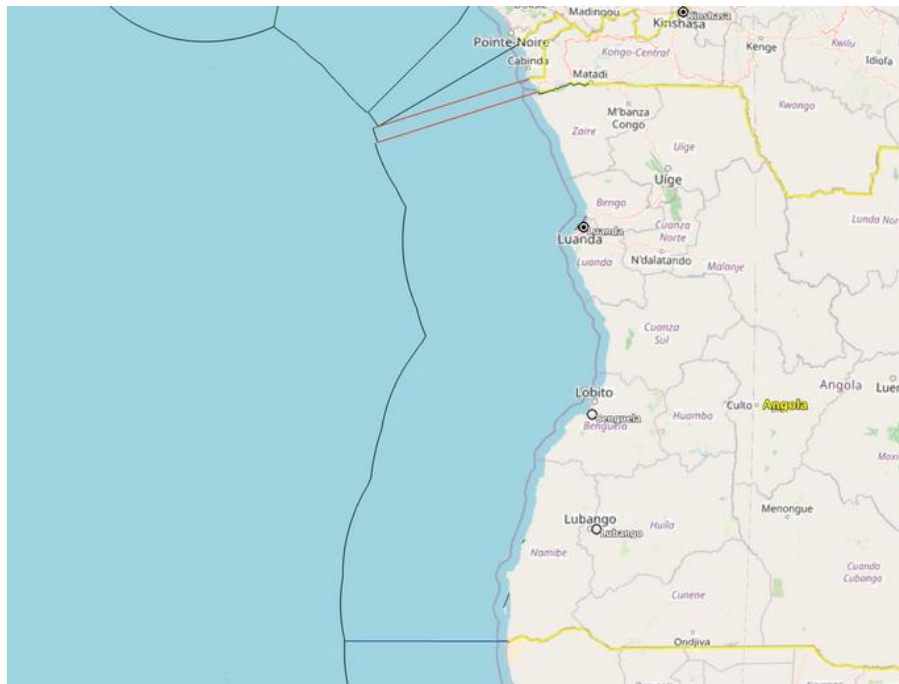
The threat at anchorages in countries aside from Nigeria should be considered high, as pirates target alternative locations. A pirate group based in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria is suspected to have carried out attacks in this region. Vessels should remain extremely vigilant when transiting through this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

- 21 December 2024. Illegal Boarding. 92nm W of Bata, Equatorial Guinea.** An offshore support vessel was boarded in north-eastern São Tomé and Príncipe waters. At least six armed suspects boarded the vessel despite vessel's efforts to increase speed and evade attack. All crew gathered in the citadel. The pirates remained onboard for 4-5hrs but later departed the vessel and all crew remain safe. The pirates robbed the vessel before leaving and destroyed navigation equipment. The vessel sailed to the nearest port for support.





## 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 30 January - 5 February 2025

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

Takoradi	2
Abidjan	2
Lagos	2
Luanda	1

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

Takoradi Anchorage	2
Abidjan Anchorage	2
Tincan Port, Lagos	1
Bovas Oil Terminal, Lagos	1
Luanda Anchorage	1

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

	Last 3 months	Last 6 months	Last 12 months
Lagos	7	8	14
Dakar	3	5	6
Tema	1	1	2
Abidjan	0	2	2
Lomé	1	1	1
Freetown	0	0	2
Matadi	0	0	1
Port Harcourt	0	0	1
Banjul	0	0	1

## Guinea Piracy Statistics

### Security Incidents

This month (last 30 days)	4
Since start of 2025	5
Since start of 2024	45

### Crew & Passengers Kidnapped

This month (last 30 days)	3
Since start of 2025	3
Since start of 2024	45

## 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
2021	32	19	59.38%
2022	19	8	42.11%
2023	20	6	30%
2024	12	3	25%
2025	2	1	50%

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. 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



Nothing to report.



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