



Title: US-Israel Conflict with Iran

Date: 12 March 2026

Risk Level: **CRITICAL**

SUMMARY

On 28 February 2026, the US and Israel launched coordinated attacks against Iran. The move comes following an inconclusive result of indirect talks between the US and Iran on Thursday. In response, Iran has targeted Israel in a series of kinetic attacks. Other countries in the region including Qatar, Kuwait, the UAE, Bahrain, and Oman have also been targeted in Iranian strikes.

This ongoing US-Israel conflict is a massive escalation in longstanding regional tensions, and there are no signs of a resolution in the short to medium term. The maritime security situation is highly volatile, and vessels continue to face a variety of threats. **All vessels are advised to avoid transit in the Arabian Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz, the Gulf of Oman, and the Northern Arabian Sea. Spillover events are also expected in the Red Sea, the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, and the Gulf of Aden, and these areas should also be avoided.**

SITUATIONAL OVERVIEW

Kinetic Activity

ARC has now recorded 24 incidents involving vessels and kinetic weapons in the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Gulf. Vessels have been hit directly by drones and missiles and hit by fallen debris from intercepted weapons, resulting in casualties and damage. After a three-day pause in vessel incidents between 7-10 March 2026, there has been a significant increase in reports. In the last 24 hours there have been six reports of vessels hit by kinetic weapons, with most incidents appearing to involve direct targeting of vessels in the region. The IRGC has openly claimed responsibility for at least four attacks against vessels since the conflict started, stating that the vessels were targeted due to links to the US. However, many of the attacks have involved vessels that do not have any direct connection to the US or Israel. This suggests that all vessels are vulnerable to attack regardless of affiliation.

Iran has continued to target logistic and energy infrastructure in the region, and these facilities will remain key targets throughout this conflict. Ports in the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman are particularly exposed to attack. Oman's ports of Salalah and Duqm in the Northern Arabian Sea are also highly vulnerable to additional attacks due to their strategic significance. ,

The following port-related developments have been reported since our last advisory:

- Oman's Port of Salalah has suspended operations following an attack at the port on 11 March 2026. Several oil tanks were heavily damaged by drone strikes. Shortly after the attack, Port authorities warned all berthed vessels to prepare for evacuation.
- Iraq suspended oil port operations following an attack on two tankers off of Umm Qasr on 11 March 2026.
- Operations at Bahraini ports have resumed but on a restricted basis. Ports in Bahrain are currently unable to facilitate crew changes as the country's airspace is still closed.
- Qatar's Al Shaheen and Halul Island terminals have suspended operations until further notice.



- Officials in Qatar have advised that vessels laden with raw materials that intend to call at Hamad Port should instead call at the ports of Sohar or Duqm in Oman, or the ports of Fujairah or Khor Fakkan in the UAE.

Recommendation: *Kinetic activity is expected to continue in the region in the short to medium term. The threat of incidents involving kinetic weapons – including direct hits and collateral damage – is high in the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, both at ports and in territorial waters. The threat is particularly high in the waters of countries that host US military bases, including the UAE, Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Qatar. This applies to all vessels regardless of affiliation.*

The Strait of Hormuz

Since Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) announced the closure of the Strait of Hormuz last week, Iranian forces have directly targeted vessels that have attempted to transit through the waterway. One attack targeting a tug despatched to provide assistance to another vessel that had been attacked days prior was hit by two missiles, causing the deaths of all crew members on board. Iranian officials have still not issued a formal and legal declaration that the Strait is closed, but given the IRGC's explicit threats against vessels and the attacks that have taken place in the area over the last week, the Strait is not safe for vessel traffic during this conflict. Transit through the Strait comes with considerable risk to vessels and crew.

Sea Mines: On 11 March 2026, major media outlets reported that Iran intends to deploy naval mines in the Strait of Hormuz. This development further increases the threat level in the Strait, as naval mines will inevitably cause substantial damage to vessels and increase the potential for casualties. It is currently unclear whether Iran has already planted mines in the Strait, but the threat should be treated as credible. Shipping companies should operate under the assumption that mines are already in the Strait.

Vessel Congestion: AIS data continues to show that vessel traffic through the Strait of Hormuz has slowed to less than 10 vessels per day over the last week. As transit through the Strait has been deemed unsafe, hundreds of vessels continue to be stranded in the Arabian Gulf and in the Gulf of Oman. This has caused congestion near ports and anchorages in the area, particularly near the entrances to the Strait. There continues to be a risk of collisions due to the congestion.

Recommendation: *It is recommended that vessels do not attempt to transit through the Strait of Hormuz as the risk of attack is high. This applies to all vessels, but particularly vessels affiliated with the US and/or Israel or carrying cargo from either of these countries. Due to the risk of collision brought on by vessel crowding, vessels that are currently located on either side of the Strait are advised to exercise caution whilst navigating in the area.*

Electronic Interference

Vessels continue to experience problems with electronic navigation equipment due to electronic interference in the Arabian Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz, and the Gulf of Oman. More than 600 reports of interference are reported each day, and the issue has expanded across the region to affect vessels across the Arabian Gulf and into the Northern Arabian Sea. The issue is expected to worsen in the region as the conflict continues.

Electronic interference has been a long-standing problem in the region as a result of elevated tensions, but it has worsened due to this latest escalation. Merchant vessels are not usually the direct target of electronic interference but are typically indirectly affected by efforts to compromise military equipment.



Challenges with navigational equipment pose a serious threat to vessels, elevating the risk of unintended diversions and collisions. This is of particular concern near ports in the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, where congestion is an ongoing problem. Electronic interference is likely to worsen in the Red Sea as well, given the Houthis' intention to resume attacks against vessels.

Recommendation: *Vessels in the Arabian Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz, the Gulf of Oman, and the Red Sea are advised to monitor all electronic navigational aids for interference. Non-electronic methods of position fixing should be used to confirm positioning, and extra watches are advised*

War Risk Insurance

Last week the Joint War Committee announced an expansion of the Listed Areas to include the Arabian Gulf, the Gulf of Oman, and a larger portion of the Northern Arabian Sea. War risk cover is still available for vessels in the region, but the cost has increased significantly. Rates vary depending on factors such as the vessel type, cargo, and the vessel's route of sail. According to the US government, war-risk insurance support programs may be made available with the goal of reinstating shipping traffic through the region.

Houthi Attacks in the Red Sea (No Update)

In response to the attacks against Iran, the Houthis in Yemen have announced that they will immediately resume attacks targeting maritime traffic in the Red Sea. Since the announcement the Red Sea is still quiet, with no reports of any kinetic activity in the area. However, the threat level is still considered high in the region.

The Houthis have not specified a target profile for attacks as they have in previous campaigns against shipping, but it is highly likely that vessels with US and Israeli links will be targeted. Still, the threat of attack applies to all vessels in the Red Sea, the Bab el-Mandeb, and the Gulf of Aden given the Houthis' track record of attacking vessels based on incorrect or outdated information.

Recommendation: *Transits through the Red Sea, the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, and the Gulf of Aden should be avoided. This applies to all vessels, but particularly vessels affiliated with the US and/or Israel or carrying cargo from either of these countries.*

INCIDENTS

The following incidents were reported in the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman since our last report:

- **6 March 2026. Missile Attack. 6nm N of Khasab, Oman.** A tug was hit by two missiles in the Strait of Hormuz. All 8 or 9 crew members on board were reportedly killed. The tug was sent to assist a containership that had been hit by two missiles days prior.
- **7 March 2026. UAV Attack. 10nm N of Jubail, Saudi Arabia.** A drilling platform was hit by one UAV. Damage was reported and the crew was evacuated, but there were no casualties.
- **10 March 2026. Kinetic Attack. 36nm N of Abu Dhabi, UAE.** A bulk carrier reported a loud bang and a splash in close proximity of the vessel. No damage or casualties were reported.
- **11 March 2026. Kinetic Attack. 25nm NW of Ras Al Khaimah, UAE.** The Master of a containership reported that the vessel was hit at the stern by an unconfirmed projectile object at night. The impact caused damage, but the crew were unharmed and there has been no environmental impact. The vessel sailed to safe anchorage after the incident.



- **11 March 2026. Kinetic Attack. 11nm N of Oman.** A cargo vessel was hit by an unconfirmed projectile object whilst transiting through the Strait of Hormuz. The impact caused a fire on board, which was later extinguished. Reports state the engine room sustained damage and three crew members are trapped inside. The rest of the crew have evacuated.
- **11 March 2026. Kinetic Attack. 50nm NW of Dubai, UAE.** The Master of a bulk carrier reported that the vessel had been hit by an unconfirmed projectile object. The crew have been reported safe.
- **11 March 2026. Kinetic Attack. 52nm SE of Umm Qasr, Iraq.** A tanker was hit by an unidentified projectile object whilst engaged in ship-to-ship transfer with another vessel in Umm Qasr anchorage. The incident caused a large fire on board. The CSO of the second tanker involved in the STS transfer confirmed that the vessel was also struck and a fire broke out on board. A total of 38 crew members evacuated both vessels, and reports state one crew member was killed. Iran has reportedly claimed responsibility for the attack, and reports state the vessels were attacked by uncrewed surface vehicles (USV). Iraq suspended oil port operations shortly after the incident.
- **12 March 2026. Kinetic Attack. 35nm N of Jebel Ali, UAE.** A containership was hit by an unconfirmed projectile object. The impact caused a small fire on board. The extent of damage is currently unknown as the damage assessment was impaired by darkness. The crew are reported safe.

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