

"SARNIA NEWS" CIRCULAR

(Ref: 312/17/GP)

TO ALL SHIPOWNER CLIENTS

30TH March 2017

Re: *IMPORTANT NOTICE*** - Somalia-based Pirates Targeting vessels off Somalia, Indian Ocean, Gulf of Oman & Gulf of Aden**

Please find below a new **ALERT** from Gray Page, a specialist maritime consulting group, providing important information regarding Somalia-based pirates targeting vessels operating off Somalia, Indian Ocean, Gulf of Oman and Gulf of Aden, which is highly relevant for all ship owners' whose trading warranty within their insurance terms includes these areas. We would strongly recommend that Kidnap & Ransom insurance is arranged if trading to the 'high' risk areas.

We would suggest this information is distributed to the relevant personnel, as well as being sent to the Master(s)/Chief Officers(s) of your vessel(s) if relevant.

Best regards

Loss Prevention Team

From: noreply=graypage.com@www.graypage.com

[<mailto:noreply=graypage.com@www.graypage.com>] **On Behalf Of** Gray Page: Global Alerts

Sent: 29 March 2017 13:46

To: Sarnia

Subject: A new alert from Gray Page

Risk: Somalia-based pirates targeting vessels operating in littoral waters of Somalia, the Indian Ocean and Gulf of Oman

Background

The hijacking of the product tanker ARIS 13 has been a reminder that Somalia-based piracy remains a potent threat.

The vessel was seized off the coast of northern Somalia on 13 March, 2017. Authorities in Somalia's semiautonomous Puntland region intervened and the hijacking was swiftly brought to an end. The crew were unhurt, the vessel released and, according to reports, no ransom was paid.

The incident has nevertheless prompted a series of warnings that regional instability, both political and economic, could see a resurgence in pirate attacks.

Ship hijacks and attacks by Somalia-based pirates were a regular occurrence between 2005 and 2012.

During its peak, piracy off the Horn of Africa resulted in around 1,000 seafarers being taken hostage.

But prior to the seizing of the ARIS 13 there hadn't been a successful pirate attack in the region since May 2012.

That was due to factors including the deployment of international naval forces, the use of armed guards on ships, and the detention – in various countries – of thousands of convicted pirates.

Assessment and Analysis

In November 2016 NATO felt able to suspend Operation Ocean Shield, its counter-piracy deployment off Somalia. The European Union Naval Force – Operation Atalanta – will remain deployed until at least the end of 2018. In addition a US-led naval task force (Combined Task Force 150) continues to patrol the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman and parts of the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean.

Speaking days after the ARIS 13 hijack, Kitack Lim, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Secretary General, said that while there had been a decline in piracy off Somalia, the reality was that piracy had “not been eradicated” and that the underlying conditions giving rise to piracy had not changed.

“Merchant shipping should continue to take protective measures against possible piracy attacks in the Gulf of Aden and the western Indian Ocean,” he said.

In particular vessels entering the region should register with the Maritime Security Centre – Horn of Africa (MSCHOA), report to the UK Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) office in Dubai, which acts as the primary point of contact for merchant vessels and liaison with military forces in the region, and follow the Internationally Recommended Transit Corridor (IRTC).

The International Maritime Bureau, writing before the ARIS 13 hijack, issued a similar warning. It said that attempted assaults in 2016 indicated a “capacity and intent to attack merchant shipping”.

Nevertheless a return to the frequency of attacks seen before 2012 seems unlikely.

Somali piracy was organised rather than opportunistic and a wide-scale resurgence would mean a major retooling of the criminal organisations that provided the essential infrastructure such as bank accounts, negotiators and financiers.

At the same time the internationally-backed government that was installed in 2012 has begun restoring a degree of stability across the war-torn country and in Puntland, the area where many pirates established their bases, the authorities were able to persuade the ARIS 13 hijackers to release the vessel and crew.

It is also worth noting that the men who seized the ARIS 13 later claimed that that the hijack was meant to be a protest at what they see as the illegal fishing by international vessels in Somali waters rather than an attempt to hold the vessel and crew for ransom.

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