RiskIntelligence

Security Threat Update:
Red Sea / Gulf of Aden
24 July 2024

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Security Threat Update: Red Sea / Gulf of Aden

This report provides an overview of recent incidents in the southern Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden as well as an assessments of threat levels for additional attacks against different types of merchant vessels.

Time of latest intelligence included in this report: 24 July 2024, 08:00 UTC.

Recent incidents (Red Sea / Gulf of Aden)

Below is a list of incidents directly affecting merchant ships in the Red Sea, the Bab el Mandeb and the Gulf of Aden which have been recorded on the Risk Intelligence System during the past 30 days. Information includes date, time and a short description of the respective incident. Comprehensive descriptions for these and older incidents can be found on the Risk Intelligence System.

25 June	17:00 UTC	Bulk carrier LILA LISBON targeted by missile
The Saint-Kitts & Nevis-flagged bulk carrier reported that a missile impacted near the ship. The crew and the ship were reported to be safe and the vessel continued its voyage

27 June	06:44 UTC	Bulk carrier SEAJOY struck by WBIED
The Malta-flagged bulk carrier reported being struck by a waterborne improvised explosive device while transiting northbound with AIS off. The crew and the ship were reported to be safe and proceeding to the next port of call.

28 June	06:52 UTC	Product tanker DELONIX targeted by missiles
The Liberia-flagged tanker reported seeing five missiles landing in close proximity. No damage was reported by the crew.

29 June	01:30 UTC	Container ship ROTTERDAM TRADER challenged by VHF
The Antigua & Barbuda-flagged container ship reported receiving a VHF transmission from "Yemeni Authorities" requiring the ship to "email her details or they will be the next target". The crew complied and then continued the voyage.

09 July	04:35 UTC	Container ship MAERSK SENTOSA reports incident
The US-flagged container ship reported an explosion in close proximity to the ship. The crew and the ship were reported to be safe and proceeded to the next port of call.

10 July	02:40 UTC	Crude oil tanker MOUNT FUJI reports explosion
The Liberia-flagged tanker reported an explosion in close proximity of the port side. The crew and the ship were reported as safe, the vessel proceeded to the next port of call.

11 July	20:06 UTC	Bulk carrier ROSTRUM STOIC targeted
The Liberia-flagged bulk carrier was attacked with several missiles twice in the space of around one hour while the ship was en route southbound in the southern Red Sea with AIS off. The ship was not struck as the missiles exploded in close proximity.

15 July	05:30 UTC	Product tanker BENTLEY I targeted
The Panama-flagged tanker was repeatedly attacked in the southern Red Sea. The first attack may have involved a drone boat which did not explode, missile explosions were subsequently reported twice in close proximity to the vessel which was not struck.

15 July	12:00 UTC	Crude oil tanker CHIOS LION struck
The Liberia-flagged tanker initially reported being struck by a drone boat while en route in the southern Red Sea. It was subsequently reported that the boat may have exploded after being targeted by armed guards on the ship.		

19 July	01:50 UTC	Container ship LOBIVIA struck
The Singapore-flagged container ship was reportedly struck by missiles after departing eastward from Berbera. The vessel returned to Berbera under its own engines. Crew members reported to be safe.		

20 July	03:00 UTC	Container ship PUMBA repeatedly struck
The Liberia-flagged container ship reported multiple attacks by missiles, drones and a naval drone. The vessel suffered a hole in the stern. The crew is reported to be safe and the ship proceeded to its next port of call.		

Current situation

US forces continued their targeting of military sites in Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen. Several interceptions of aerial drones and missiles by military forces were also reported. Meanwhile, Houthi forces continued their operations against merchant ships. This week saw a marked escalation as Israel, in retaliation to a successful Houthi-claimed drone strike in Tel Aviv, struck Hudaydah port, killing some and wounding dozens. The Houthis then repeatedly targeted the PUMBA, possibly in return for the Israeli operation. This episode is not expected to alter the military or political balance in the region, and Houthi capabilities to strike vessels are not assessed to have been diminished.

Military strikes against targets in Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen have been conducted since January. They have been carried out unilaterally by US forces and as joint strikes with the UK military, supported by Australia, Bahrain, Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands and New Zealand. They are conducted under Operation Poseidon Archer. For political reasons, offensive actions are separate from the US-led Operation Prosperity Guardian which is merely aimed at protecting commercial shipping.

Since the beginning of the Houthi campaign in November, the US and other governments have frequently stated that Houthi attacks against merchant ships have been 'indiscriminate'. This conclusion, however, has never been supported by available evidence. Houthi forces have publicly stated their targeting parameters and stuck to these announcements. Some attacks, however, were very likely carried out based on outdated information about individual ships.

On 19th July a Houthi drone struck a residential building in Tel-Aviv, killing one and wounding at least 4 others. The drone, which as per some reports appears to have approached from the sea, slipped through Israeli air defences. Israel has blamed the air defence failure on human error. In retaliation, Israel struck Hudaydah port on Saturday 20th July, leaving at least 3 dead and dozens wounded and inflicting significant damages to the port facilities which Israel claims was being used for military purposes.

Around the same time as the strikes, the Houthis repeatedly targeted the container ship PUMBA, alleging it was "American". The vessel was attacked with aerial and naval drones as well as missiles. PUMBA was struck but managed to proceed to next port of call without injuries among its crew. It is likely that the Houthis targeted the vessel in retaliation to the Israeli strike against Hudaydah port.

Statements about the episode were made by Israel and the Houthis, but this round of attacks is not expected to significantly alter the military balance in the region or the political calculus behind Israeli and Houthi behaviour. Both actors are willing to use and suffer violence in pursuit of their respective leaderships' goals. It is worth noting that the massive Israeli strike on Yemeni soil has mostly served to confirm to the Yemeni population that the Houthis are indeed engaging in strikes against Israel, and will lend credibility to future claims of strikes against targets in the mediterranean.

Vessel type	Threat type	Threat level
Vessels specifically linked to Israel through ownership, port calls, trade with and/or commercial relationship between Israeli companies and owners/operators	Kinetic attack (missile, aerial/waterborne drone), possibly seizure and detention	**Severe**
Vessels linked to the United States, United Kingdom and other countries involved in Operation Poseidon Archer	Kinetic attack (missile, aerial/waterborne drone), possibly seizure and detention	**Severe**
Vessels linked to other countries participating in or supporting Operation Prosperity Guardian or Operation Aspides	Kinetic attack (missile, aerial/waterborne drone), possibly seizure and detention	**Elevated**
Other merchant ships in transit through the Red Sea/Gulf of Aden	Kinetic attack due to misidentification, potential proximity to the above threats ('collateral damage')	**Elevated**

Overall, the threat level to vessels directly owned by Israeli companies has been severe since the beginning of the Houthi campaign. Such vessels therefore largely stopped transiting the Red Sea, leading the Houthis to expand their potential targets to vessels trading with Israel. As mentioned above, some attacks were very likely carried out based on outdated information in publicly available databases, underlining the threat level for collateral damage.

Military under Prosperity Guardian and Poseidon Archer led to an expansion of the Houthis' target pool to include merchant ships linked to both countries through ownership. This has resulted in a severe threat level for such vessels, highlighted by several attacks.

The Houthis then further broadened the scope of acceptable targets to any vessel owned by companies trading with Israel, regardless of whether the specific ship has called Israeli ports.

Houthi forces remain capable of conducting attacks. In addition, these are not limited to the southern Red Sea where Houthi forces control a large portion of coastline. Several ships have also been struck in the Gulf of Aden, although attacks by drone boats are very likely limited to the southern Red Sea.

While the Houthis' missile launch capabilities have been very likely degraded by military strikes since January, the actual impact of these strikes cannot be assessed. Moreover, reports about military actions are solely based on military sources and not independently verified.

Any meaningful and sustainable reduction of the threat posed by the Houthis would very likely require a longer-term mission. The current casualty-averse approach limits greater damage to Houthi weapons stockpiles. At the same time, a shift in tactics would likely have a greater civilian impact on the ground, potentially provoking another escalation in maritime attacks.

For merchant ships linked to countries solely supporting Operation Prosperity Guardian or Operation Aspides which both have a defensive focus, the threat level is assessed as lower compared to countries participating in offensive military actions against Houthi forces. For all other commercial vessels, the same threat level applies.

For vessels related to countries taking part in Operation Prosperity Guardian or Operation Aspides, this is largely due to the potential for kinetic attacks in lieu of other potential targets for Houthi forces. However, considering their careful selection of targets – which is in line with broader political ambitions – this is currently unlikely.

For vessels not related to countries taking part in Operation Prosperity Guardian or Operation Aspides, this is largely due to the potential for merchant ships being targeted due to misidentification. Proximity to kinetic attacks or proximity to interceptions of drones and missiles by military forces could also lead to collateral damage.

Finally, it is vital to consider that this remains a dynamic situation. It is strongly recommended to closely monitor the situation. Updates regarding incidents as well as constantly updated assessments of current threat levels are available through the Risk Intelligence System.

Background

Starting with the seizure of the GALAXY LEADER on 19 November, Risk Intelligence has identified more than 70 targeted attacks by Houthi forces against individual vessels in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. This is slightly lower than the number of attacks stated by military sources which are not providing an overview to highlight which incidents were actually classified as 'attacks on commercial vessels'.

Interceptions of drones and missiles are likely counted as additional attacks by military forces, yet there is no further evidence available. Drones and missiles may have been used to target warships or merely as a "show of force" in at least some of the interceptions.

Looking at all attacks in detail, no strong preference for attacks against ships in the southern part of the Red Sea or the western part of the Gulf of Aden can be identified. While there have been more attacks in the Red Sea, it should be noted that attacks in the Gulf of Aden only began in January and that further attacks in that area are possible at any time.
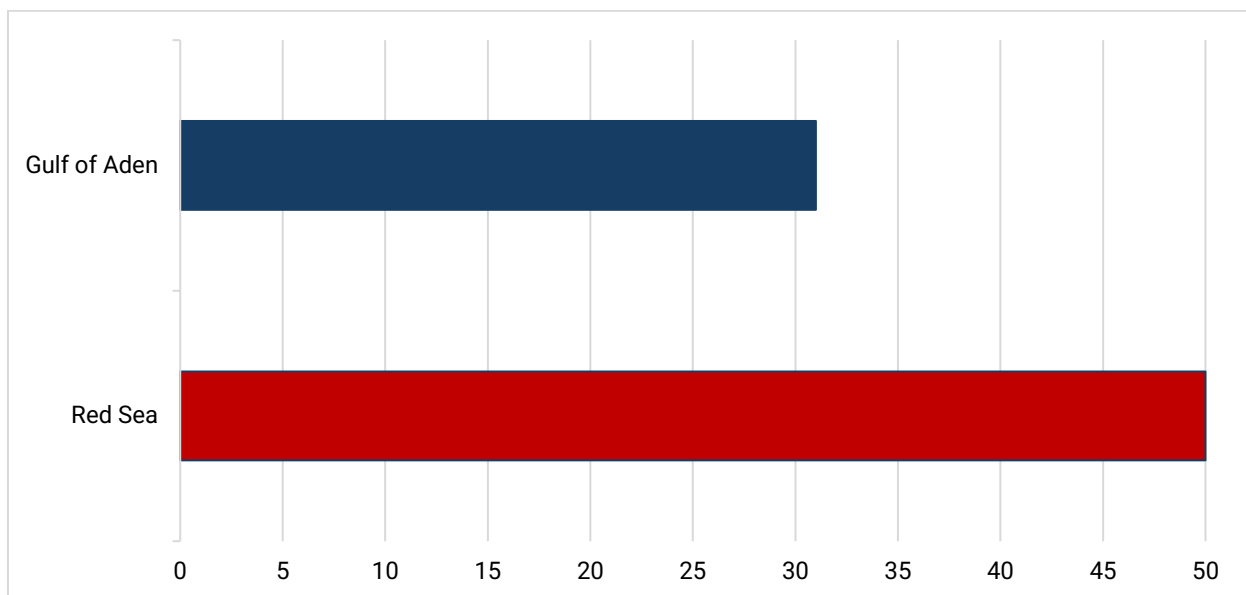
Figure 1: Number of attacks against merchant ships passing through the Red Sea/Bab el Mandeb/Gulf of Aden area since November 2023 (Source: Risk Intelligence)

Houthi attacks against maritime traffic have caused a major decrease in ship transits through the Bab el Mandeb. It is unlikely, however, that traffic will see a significant further decrease after the current traffic level has remained virtually unchanged since late January, shown in Figure 2.
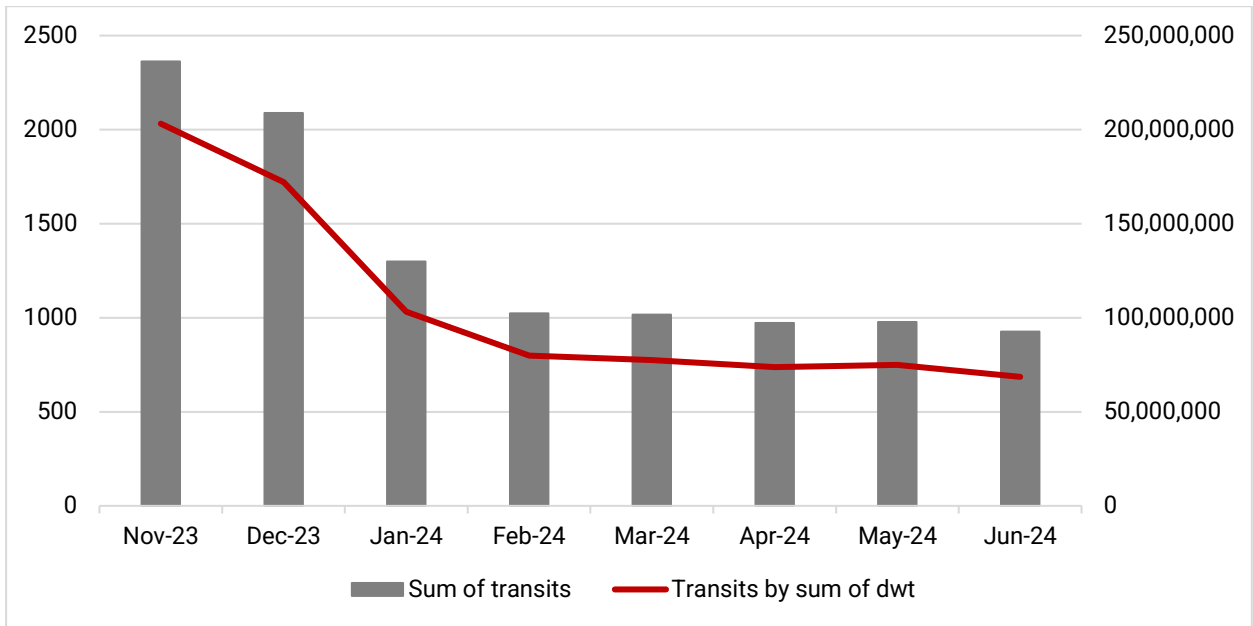
Figure 2: Monthly Bab el Mandeb transits by merchant ships per month (left) and by monthly sum of deadweight tonnage (right) (Source: Lloyd's List Intelligence/Seasearcher)

Since January, the number of Bab el Mandeb transits has consistently been between 50% and 60% lower than during the same timeframe in 2023. The gap has remained largely constant. Less than 10% of ships passing the Bab el Mandeb are transiting the area without broadcasting AIS (see Figure 3). It should be noted that various navies recommend switching off AIS in the area, even though there is no evidence to suggest that this lowers the chances of vessels being targeted and struck.
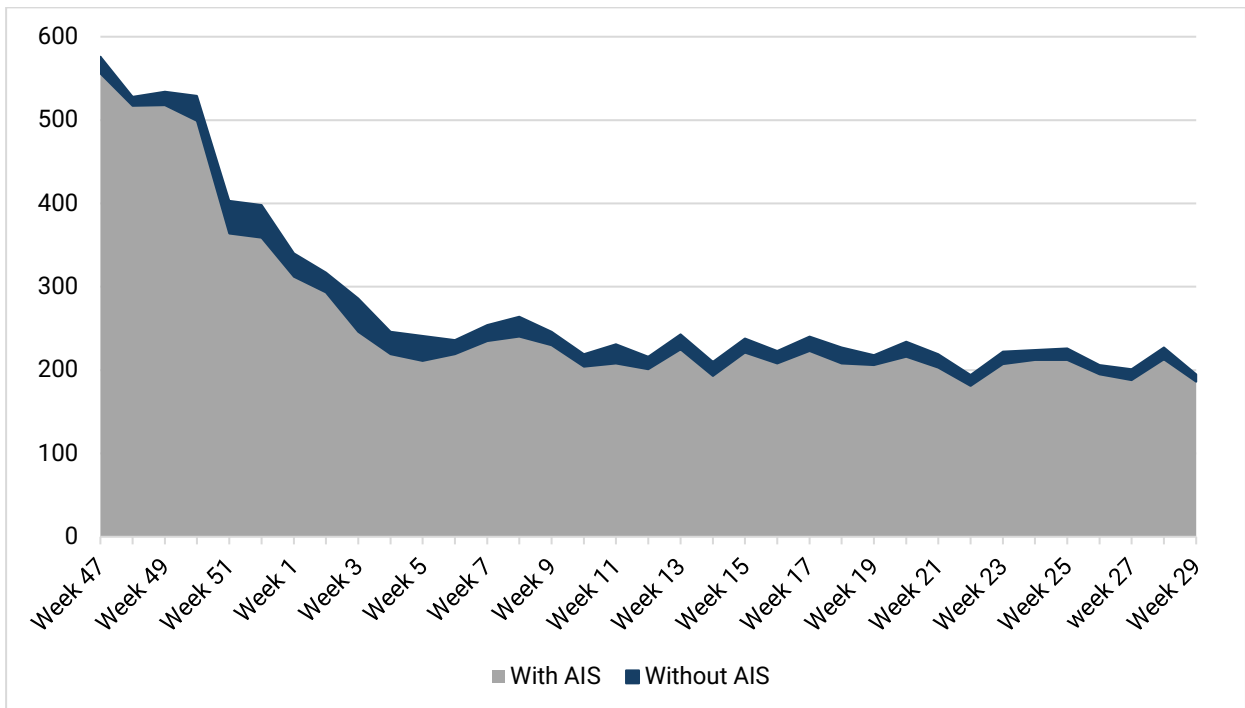

Figure 3: Number of Bab el Mandeb transits by merchant ships per week with and without AIS (Source: Lloyd's List Intelligence/Seasearcher)

The current threats in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden have also led to a noticeable increase in incidents that are perceived as suspicious by seafarers, including outside the immediate area. Reporting such incidents is strongly encouraged. At the same time, all reports must be thoroughly assessed to identify particular areas of concern.

The background to the current situation is the civil war in Yemen. Since 2015, the Houthis in the northern part of the country have fought against the Saudi and UAE-backed government in southern Yemen. Iran has supported the Houthis during the conflict. Houthi forces have previously targeted Saudi and UAE vessels in the Red Sea with anti-ship missiles and drones (aerial and waterborne). They have also attacked Saudi ports and naval vessels in the Red Sea as well as oil industry targets in southern Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE.

The Saudis and the Houthis are involved in difficult negotiations about a peace agreement that would very likely involve financial and economic concessions to the Houthis. Neither side wants to jeopardise a potential deal. Saudi Arabia has refrained from criticising the Houthis which is a noticeable difference from Saudi rhetoric in the past. Moreover, attacks against commercial shipping have not interrupted the negotiations although it is impossible to assess when a final agreement will be signed. Houthi forces are very likely to continue to engage in attacks on maritime traffic as long as they deem their attacks unlikely to scupper the ongoing talks.

Guidance on commercial operations

Ship transits

Several shipping industry organisations have published the "Interim Industry Transit Advice, Southern Red Sea and Gulf of Aden – 5 February 2024". Among other information, the document includes considerations about routing and vessel hardening. Combined Maritime Forces have also issued a guidance document on 23 December 2023.

Both documents are available via www.maritimeglobalsecurity.org.

Vessel registration and incident reporting

It is strongly recommended for all merchant ships transiting the Western Indian Ocean, the Somali Basin, the Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman and the Red Sea to register with UKMTO and the Maritime Security Centre - Horn of Africa (MSCHOA). Any incidents or suspicious activities should also be reported to UKMTO and MSCHOA.

Contact details UKMTO

Email: watchkeepers@ukmto.org
Phone: +44 2393 222060
Website: www.ukmto.org

Contact details MSCHOA

Email: postmaster@mschoa.org
Phone: +33 298 220 220 or +33 298 220 170
Website: www.mschoa.org

If a vessel is under attack, **US naval forces in Bahrain** are able to coordinate assistance.

Phone: +973 1785 3879
Email: m-ba-navcent-ncags@us.navy.mil

Combined Maritime Forces also recommend ignoring VHF calls by "Yemeni navy" with instructions to alter course to Hudaydah or other locations in Yemen. When merchant ships are contacted, masters are advised to continue the voyage and call for a coalition warship on VHF Channel 16, stating current location, situation and intentions.

In addition, vessel operators are advised to contact the respective flag state for additional guidance or requirements regarding incident reporting procedures.

Mitigation measures

Risk Intelligence strongly recommends merchant ship operators to assess whether the respective vessel has been owned or managed by Israel-affiliated companies in the past. Such information may not have been updated in publicly available databases and could lead to misidentification of current commercial links with Israel.

Prior to voyages through the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, ship operators should conduct a thorough ship and voyage-specific threat and risk assessment in line with shipping industry best practices. In addition, the following measures should be considered:

- Constant monitoring of the security situation, enabling vessels to avoid locations with recent or ongoing incidents.
- Introduction/update of contingency plans on the company level to address the possibility of seafarers being injured, killed or kidnapped during a security incident. The plan should include contingency and emergency plans; appropriate drills should be completed.
- Crew briefings and scenario drills based on a valid and relevant anti-attack plan to ensure that incidents are reported and alarm is raised without delay when required. Drills should include scenarios with major damage and casualties.
- Enhancement of firefighting, evacuation and damage control procedures, taking into account the possibility of significant damage as a result of direct targeting or collateral damage.
- Enhancement of medical equipment to deal with multiple casualties.
- Emergency contacts placed readily available on the bridge.
- Bridge team briefing regarding hailing/harassment via VHF, prepared responses and immediate contact with naval forces in the respective area. (Local authorities' calls on VHF may be an act of spoofing or even targeting, underlined by several incidents in recent days which involved self-proclaimed 'Yemeni authorities' or the 'Yemeni navy' ordering merchant ships to alter course.)
- Preparation of citadel with emergency provisions and functioning satellite phone.
- Depending on individual circumstances, embarkation of armed guards may be useful to mitigate specific risks, specifically in relation to the threat of boardings from small boats (e.g. Houthi forces, Somali piracy). However, the threat of direct targeting by missiles, aerial or naval drones used by Houthi forces in Yemen (southern Red Sea / Gulf of Aden) cannot be mitigated by embarkation of armed guards.

In general, existing BMP5 recommendations have been developed to deter piracy. While the guidance included in BMP5 is relevant to deter illegal boardings, it offers virtually no mitigation against current threats such as attacks by missiles, drones or – potentially – waterborne IEDs ('drone boats').

Ship operators should also consider to issue specific voyage guidance for transits through the Red Sea and/or the Gulf of Aden. This guidance should consider specific scenarios (e.g. aerial or waterborne threats, hailing on VHF) and include actions by the crew to minimise the impact of any security incident.

Red Sea – threat assessment (summary)

Following the incidents in the southern Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden related primarily to Houthi forces, there is now a significant threat to merchant ships linked to Israel through a variety of commercial relationships. Although threats will vary on a case-by-case basis, the overall threat level for these vessels is now assessed as severe for vessels linked to Israel through ownership and severe for vessels linked through other commercial relationships, including port calls by other ships owned by the same company. Threats against merchant vessels linked to the US and UK and other countries involved in direct military strikes against Houthi forces are severe. This reflects the escalation in violence since January, which has progressively expanded the scope of vessels considered as "legitimate targets" by the Houthis. The threat level for other ships is assessed as elevated. It is likely that the US and UK strikes are impacting the Houthis' missile launch capabilities, though the extent of that impact is impossible to assess.

The increased threat level is a result of the Israel/Gaza conflict and subsequent Houthi actions. Naval vessels have intercepted a number of drones and missiles intended for Israeli targets, or against the naval ships themselves. The Houthis have also threatened to strike vessels in the Mediterranean and in the Indian Ocean, even if they are transiting around the Cape of Good Hope. It is very unlikely, however, that Houthi forces are able to conduct such strikes autonomously.

The situation is evolving as the list of possible targets has expanded over time. Links to Israel may now be port calls by the respective vessel, owners/operators conducting trade with Israel in general or owners/operators being in commercial relationships with Israeli companies. While the threat level to vessels which are directly owned by Israeli companies is assessed as even higher, it should be noted that virtually no such vessels are currently transiting the Red Sea. What the Houthis consider to constitute a link strong enough to warrant a strike is variable and an internal decision.

It is also important to highlight the increased threat of collateral damage, particularly in the southern Red Sea with still dense maritime traffic. It is very likely that Houthi forces have missed their intended targets on several occasions, increasing the potential for unintended strikes against other merchant ships. Moreover, this is a highly dynamic and evolving threat which must be monitored closely in light of ongoing incidents.

Maritime security in the southern Red Sea is also affected by the conflict in Yemen as some fighting between the Houthis and the rival government supported by the Saudi-led coalition continues. The maritime dimension to this conflict is limited. Ceasefire talks in 2022 saw a substantial fall in cross-border attacks in Saudi Arabia, as well as an improved threat environment during transits through the Bab el Mandeb. Attacks have not taken place in 2023 and so far in 2024, likely due to progress in negotiations between the Houthis and the Saudi-led coalition.

Both sides are unlikely to jeopardise a potential deal. The threat level for direct attacks against port and oil facilities in Saudi Arabia and the UAE is therefore lower while talks are ongoing. In addition, Saudi Arabia has so far refrained from criticising the Houthis for the recent wave of attacks against merchant ships which is a significant difference from Saudi announcements about alleged interceptions of waterborne drones off Saudi port facilities in the past.

There is a dispute between Yemen and Eritrea in the Hanish Islands area, primarily due to fishing. In an incident in June 2021, there was a clash between coastguard/naval forces. In August 2021, several fishing vessels and three Yemeni crew were detained by the Eritrean coastguard near the Hanish Islands. Due to the irregular nature of Yemeni coastguard forces, or the difficulty in identifying Eritrean craft (which are small speedboats), there are problems with merchant vessels misidentifying small patrol craft from Yemen and Eritrea as pirate vessels.

Aggressive enforcement by coastguard vessels, or local craft attempting to warn away merchant vessels, are possible threats in the area. The piracy threat is minimal, even in southern areas, as this area is now considered to be outside the operational range of Somali pirates. The fighting in Sudan is not expected to affect threat levels in the Red Sea.

Threat levels

Refer to the section "Methodology / Definitions" for a detailed definition of the threat level. A concise assessment of all threats listed in the table can be found on the Risk Intelligence System.

Threat type	Threat level
Terrorism	Moderate
Piracy	Low
Insurgency and Military Operations	High
Cargo Theft	Moderate
Smuggling	Elevated
Stowaways and human trafficking	Low
Fraud and corruption	Low
Activism	Low

Indian Ocean – threat assessment (summary)

This area covers the western Indian Ocean (north of Madagascar, east towards India), including the Somali Basin, Gulf of Aden, and western Arabian Sea. Houthi operations targeting merchant ships in transit can take place in the western Gulf of Aden where threat levels are similar to the southern Red Sea. In the Indian Ocean, there is an elevated threat of piracy off Somalia and a moderate-elevated drone threat to merchant ships in the Somali Basin, Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea.

There is still a potential for pirate operations in the Somali Basin and the Gulf of Aden and the threat is elevated. Recent cases show that pirates still have boarding capabilities at significant distances off the coast: as far as 800 nautical miles from Somalia but prefer to operate at around 400 nautical miles. The hijacked ABDULLAH was released on 14 April after a claimed $5 million ransom was paid. The successful ransom has demonstrated that the piracy model still functions – that vessels can be held by pirates off the Somali coast and ransom payments received (refer to the Piracy assessment).

There have also been nine reported boardings of fishing dhows off Somalia since November 2023; there were no cases reported in April 2024, suggesting a decline in activity, but there was one vessel hijacked in May – a fishing vessel held temporarily while the attackers took food and supplies. These are likely linked to illegal fishing activity in the area, which is an ongoing issue and has been a focus for Somalia in expanding its maritime enforcement capabilities.

In general, merchant ships in transit should be aware of the potential to encounter small armed craft in this area, particularly in the Gulf of Aden. These might be fishermen, traders, smugglers, militia or irregular military forces, or military or coastguard patrol craft operating out of southern Yemen or northern Somalia. The boarding of the product tanker CENTRAL PARK in the Gulf of Aden on 26 November 2023 was very likely related to Houthi-led actions against Israel-linked vessels, even though it has been described as a 'piracy incident' by military sources.

The Houthis have announced their intentions to target vessels not just in the Red Sea/Gulf of Aden, but also the Indian Ocean. These intentions have been announced and in some cases communicated directly to operators from the so-called Humanitarian Operations Coordination Centre (HOCC). However, the capabilities of the Houthis to target these areas is limited without outside assistance. Claims of successful strikes in the Indian Ocean (and the eastern Mediterranean) have not been corroborated and are likely to be explained by the Houthi intention to appeal to broader Arab audiences. Nonetheless, the MSC ORION was attacked by a drone on 27 April off Socotra in an attack claimed by the Houthis. The threat is generally assessed to be moderate in this area, as the main area of Houthi operations remains the Red Sea/Gulf of Aden but is elevated for vessels that have been specifically assessed by the Houthis as being targets for their links to Israel – including port calls.

In Yemen, multiple political factions operate their own militias in addition to security forces from Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Terrorist groups have a limited presence. There have been no recent incidents, aside from those linked to Houthi operations. The general situation in Yemen is primarily a consideration for operations close to the Yemeni coast or for port calls in the country.

Naval patrols operate in the area, such as EUNAVFOR's Operation Atalanta. Naval mandates include maritime crimes (such as drugs and arms smuggling) as well as countering piracy. The group transit scheme for the Gulf of Aden is still operational. National deployments are also ongoing, such as the Indian naval presence which has been effective in recent actions.

Shipping industry associations have published transit guidance for the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea, emphasising the importance of thorough ship and voyage-specific threat and risk assessments before passing through the area. The shipping industry removed its high-risk area (HRA) designation for the Indian Ocean, effective 1 January 2023, although notes that: "Threat and risk assessments should still be carried out, and best management practices followed to continue to mitigate the risks presented in a changeable and often complex and potentially threatening environment."

UKMTO operates the Voluntary Reporting Area for the Indian Ocean, specifically the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, and Arabian Sea, administered by the Maritime Trade Information Centre (MTIC)/UKMTO (Dubai). UKMTO acts as point of contact for merchant vessels and liaison with military forces in the region. Vessels are encouraged to report their positions while operating in the area. MSCHOA manages the EUNAVFOR (EU Naval Forces Somalia and Operation Atalanta) voluntary registration scheme for vessels transiting the area and administers an interactive website that enables EUNAVFOR to communicate counter-piracy guidance to the maritime industry, and for shipping companies and operators to register vessel movements through the region.
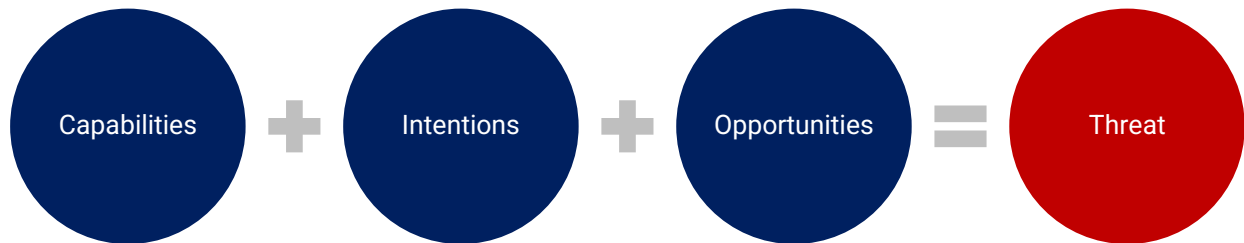
Threat levels

Refer to the section "Methodology / Definitions" for a detailed definition of the threat level. Concise assessments of all types of threats listed in the table below can be found on the Risk Intelligence System.

Threat type	Threat level
Terrorism	Moderate
Piracy	Elevated
Insurgency and Military Operations	Moderate
Cargo Theft	Low
Smuggling	Moderate
Stowaways and human trafficking	Low
Fraud and corruption	Low
Activism	Low

Methodology / Definitions

All threat levels are based on the likelihood of a threat type occurring, with generic consequences described in the relevant sections. All threat levels are based on an assessment of capabilities, intentions and opportunities of potential perpetrators, separated into different categories.

Capabilities **+** Intentions **+** Opportunities **=** Threat

Maritime operators are typically unable to lower the threat level by influencing the underlying variables. However, all variables are subject to change over time, e.g. changes in the intentions or capabilities of potential perpetrators. They should therefore be re-assessed as required.

In an additional step, the threat levels assessed here can be used to identify the risk level for a particular type of operations. Determining the risk level also requires an assessment of the vulnerability and the potential consequence of a particular incident. Appropriate mitigation measures can then be implemented to lower the risk level.

Threat levels

All threat levels mentioned above are assessed based on the likelihood and consequence of a particular threat type occurring. The levels are:

- Low: Not expected in the operational area or in proximity.
- Moderate: Not expected in the operational area but possible in proximity.
- Elevated: Possible in the operational area or in proximity.
- High: Expected in the operational area or in proximity.
- Severe: Commonplace in the operational area or in proximity.