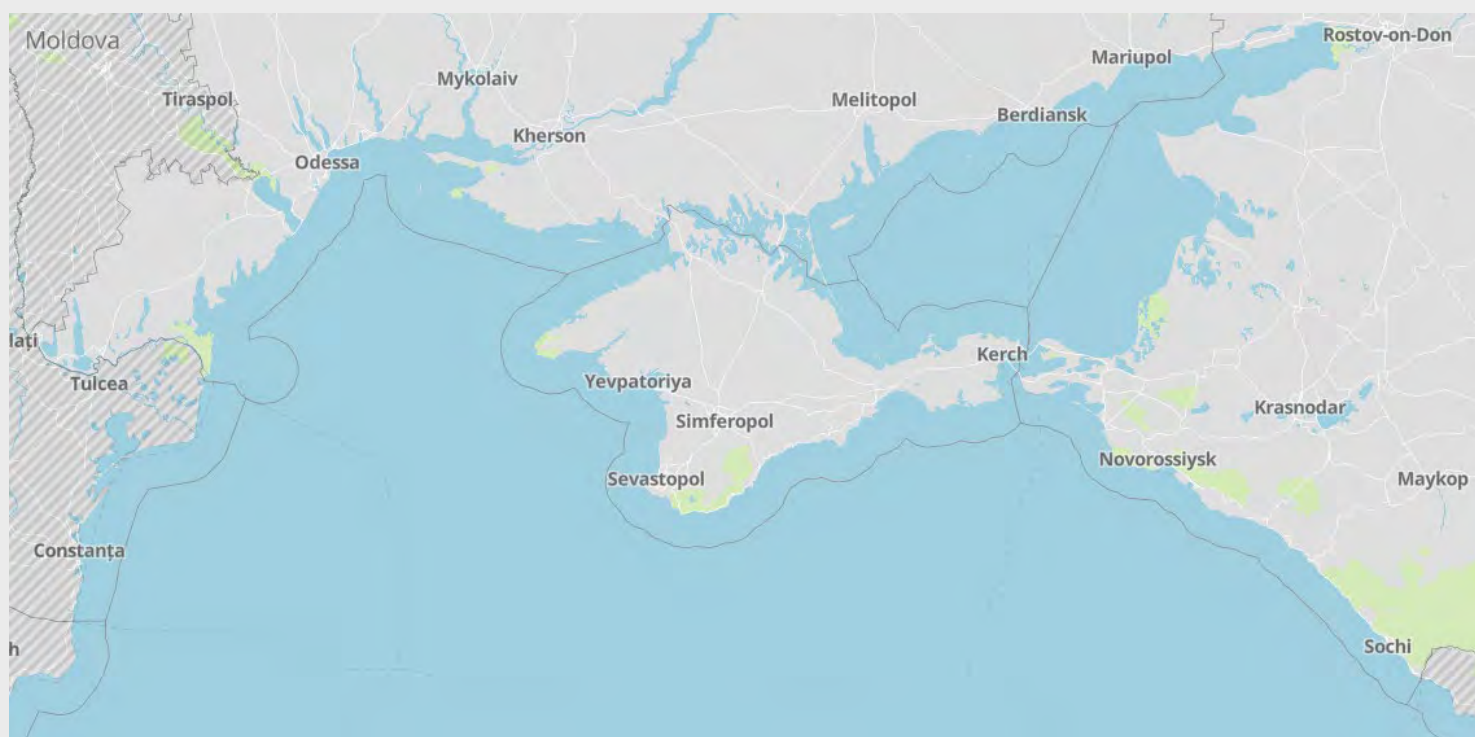


# Northern Black Sea and Russia (Ports and Terminals): Weekly Intelligence Report

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# Overview of current situation

## Brief update:

Russia targeted the port of Odesa in a missile strike on Friday 23MAY. Initially, the Russian Ministry of Defence announced that the strike was against a vessel in the container-section of the port - Risk Intelligence analysis has found no evidence of damage to vessels because of the strike. The Russian MoD later, on 27MAY, amended the announcement, saying that the strike was targeting containers in the port.

The 23MAY strike in Odesa is the first recorded instance of an attack against Ukrainian ports since early March. However, it itself is not indicative of a renewed Russian bombing campaign against Ukrainian ports.

The lifting of Western range restrictions on the use of cruise missiles, and the Ukrainian use of these missiles, are likely to result in a Russian response. This response may include strikes on ports.

Developments during the reporting period have not resulted in significant changes in the threats in the Black Sea. The ports table details the operational and security conditions in the ports.

Russian bombings of critical infrastructure happen regularly across Ukraine. Under current circumstances, it remains likely that Russian forces will continue to attack Ukrainian critical infrastructure. As a part of that, future strikes against ports remain a possibility, and with such strikes, collateral damage to vessels is also possible.

Future targeted attacks towards vessels cannot be ruled out, but the threat of collateral damage remain the most likely possibility. Misidentification of targets or faulty Russian weapon systems may also result in mistaken strikes on vessels.

The current scenarios for targeted attacks against vessel are:

**Scenario 1:** Vessels can be targeted due to flawed intelligence from the Russian military, suggesting they carry military hardware.

The likelihood of this has dropped considerably since the US stopped supplying weapons to Ukraine.

**Scenario 2:** Attacks may be aimed at deterring vessels from using the Ukrainian transit corridor and disrupting maritime exports by creating uncertainty and danger.

**Scenario 3:** Russia could target vessels to increase pressure on Ukraine to influence future negotiations.

As long as Russia wants to signal positive intentions to the Trump administration on ceasefire negotiations, strikes against vessels are unlikely to be used as leverage.

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While previously it looked as if Presidents Trump and Putin had a useful discussion during their 19MAY phone call, Trump's opinion on Putin has seemingly deteriorated with the massive Russian strikes on Ukrainian cities over late May.

As a result of that, currently there are signs that US President Trump's patience with the warring parties is failing, and that US efforts of maintaining the negotiations process may end as a result. A potential collapse of the ceasefire-/peace negotiations process will likely lead to renewed attack campaigns against ports and energy infrastructure on both sides of the conflict.

## Ukrainian Black Sea Corridor:

Vessels continue navigating the corridor to the open Ukrainian Black Sea ports, during the past week.

Strikes impacting vessels underway is assessed as less likely to occur, as this would require direct targeting. The likelihood of collateral damage in Ukrainian ports remain greater, and future incidents involving commercial vessels—whether from collateral damage, debris, missile misidentification, or potential direct targeting—cannot be ruled out.

The Ukrainian Black Sea corridor and ports operate under IMO Circular Letter 4748 and

local guidance, though operational differences should be expected.

Operational disruptions such as power outages and air raid alarms are likely, until security improves. An elevated threat to maritime trade in the NW Black Sea and near the conflict area persists due to possible Russian actions against vessels and port infrastructure.

### **Black Sea:**

Reported war-related developments do not change the threat for the Black Sea region, with the north-western area still an active war zone.

The security situation varies within the Black Sea, with lower threats to maritime operations in the southern half. Potential harassment, AIS/GPS signal jamming or spoofing, and the use of warning shots remain possible. Ukrainian forces are expected to continue pressuring Russian forces in the Black Sea, including in and near Crimea, in order to achieve greater control over the maritime domain to secure future shipping corridors to Ukrainian ports.

Russia, despite reduced naval capabilities in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, maintains a presence that can deploy mines or munitions into the Black Sea. Submarine deployment will be influenced by Ukrainian anti-ship capabilities. However, under current conditions, Russia is unlikely to enforce any blockade or inspection regime in the north-western Black Sea.

The threat of sea mines persists in the wider Black Sea, with ongoing Mine Countermeasure (MCM) operations conducted by Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey, and Ukraine. Russian and Ukrainian military activity in the Black Sea, underlining the continued threats posed to shipping in the area. War-related implications, such as varying degrees of naval presence, congestion at regional straits and ports, sanctions on trade to and from Russia, and complications with crew changes, have become more common since Russia's withdrawal from the UN-backed Black Sea Grain Initiative in July 2023.

### **Sea of Azov:**

The Sea of Azov is largely restricted for commercial traffic without Russian consent. Mariupol and Berdyansk ports, controlled by Russian forces, have unclear operational statuses. Reports indicate stolen Ukrainian cargo is being transported from these ports. Ukraine monitors vessels to occupied ports in the Sea of Azov and may consider them potential military targets. Russia has increased defences around the Crimea bridge due to Ukrainian strikes. Non-Russian-flagged vessels face disruptions in the Kerch Strait, and Russia may prohibit vessels loaded outside its territory from transiting. Attacks on Russian Black Sea ports operating at ISPS level 2 are probable.

### **Ukraine:**

Power-outages and air-raid alarms continue throughout the country, which can also disrupt port operations. Concerns regarding the operational future of the country's energy network, including sufficient supplies and making the network more resilient to aerial attacks remain. Given the constant unpredictability, future disruption should be expected.

Although diplomatic efforts and focus by various parties continue to explore any possible solutions to ending the Russian war in Ukraine, it remains that until any form of a ceasefire is agreed and enforced, Russia is likely to use any pretext for future attacks on Black Sea maritime operations, if deemed useful to achieve their military or political objectives.

Martial law remains in place until 06 August – with some local night-time curfews in place. All Ukrainian ports are operating at ISPS level 3 following the communication to the IMO by the Ukrainian authorities.

### **Russia:**

Port information is located in the port table.

Ukraine has, to some degree, continued military activity in the Black Sea, with Ukrainian reports of strikes on Russian radar systems on the offshore platforms off Crimea, as well as Russian reports of engagements with unmanned naval drones in the Black Sea.

While the tempo of Ukrainian attacks against Russian energy and naval infrastructure has diminished in the Spring of 2025, potentially as a sign of good-will to appease President Trump, future strikes remain a possibility – especially in the case of a breakdown of the ceasefire process.

Previous videos of naval and aerial drone attacks in Russian ports also highlights a general lack of advanced counter measures. Russian anti-air is often fired at near horizontal angles. This is likely to lead to damage to port facilities and vessels and may potentially also wound or kill sailors or port workers.

When using Russian ports other than those in the Black Sea, for example Arctic or Baltic Sea ports, it is possible that Russian authorities will try to recruit or coerce crews on visiting vessels with non-Russian flag or crew, to conduct sabotage of undersea cables by releasing the anchor and dragging it across cables or pipelines. Such cases of recruitment have not been confirmed, but it is possible given the ongoing Russian effort to conduct sabotage of undersea cables in the Baltic Sea, and the requirement for plausible deniability.

### **Conflict outlook:**

Any negotiations or peace process are unlikely to continue without considerable US pressure, and a potential breakdown is likely to be directly linked to Trump's perception on the effort made by Presidents Zelenskiy and Putin in the ceasefire process.

In a post by President Trump on 26MAY on social media, as well as in comments to reporters, he notes that President Putin is no longer the same man he has previously had a working relationship with, and that Putin has gone "crazy". Further to this, he complains that President Zelenskyy is actively obstructing the peace process by making counterproductive statements in the press. Trump has made several similar comments since then, and this is a clear indicator of Trump and his administrations losing patience with the warring parties.

Overall, a US withdrawal from the peace process is likely in the near future, unless the

conflict parties make significant gestures toward negotiations or a ceasefire.

If the process around ceasefire/peace negotiations completely breaks down, attacks against ports and maritime infrastructure will likely increase again, both in Russia and Ukraine. This is the case as both sides will likely disregard the need to placate the US administration, and return to previous MOs of degrading the oppositions naval and economic capabilities as much as possible.

In the unlikely case of a positive breakthrough, a future ceasefire will probably be a limited one, focussing on either sectors such as energy or shipping, or on areas such as the Black Sea. Such cases have been seen before, both as concept proving, as well as signals of good faith. As the maritime domain is one of the main areas where Ukraine has established a relative superiority over the Russian military, a ceasefire at sea is one of the more likely scenarios acceptable to Russia.

On 26MAY the Western allies supporting Ukraine, announced that they are lifting the range restrictions otherwise imposed on Ukraine, also allowing for strikes inside Russia. This is mainly relevant for the suite of cruise missiles available to Ukraine that are ranged at around 500 km and enable Ukraine to hit targets otherwise out of Ukrainian reach. Russia is likely to respond to strikes with such weapons in kind, potentially by targeting Ukrainian ports or other major targets using their own high-profile weapons.

Developments along the frontline do not change the threat assessment in the northwestern Black Sea. Both Ukraine and Russia are likely capable of continuing the conflict at present or near-present levels without significant escalation. Recent attacks by Russian forces underline that Russia still views the advantage of continuing to attack Ukraine for as long as it believes it will further its military and political objective. It therefore remains likely that until some workable path is agreed and enforced, Russian attacks on Ukrainian infrastructure, including port facilities, which may also result in collateral damage to vessels, or in some cases the direct targeting of vessels, will continue.

New sanctions on Russia could alter Black Sea security dynamics, with potential restrictions on EU, NATO, or Western-affiliated vessels accessing Russian ports. Detention and harassment of such vessels by Russian authorities are possible. The war has shown potential for broader hybrid warfare, with Western intelligence warning of increased Russian activities in Europe. Ukraine is also likely to continue to target Russian infrastructure beyond the Black Sea. Examples include "parcel bombs" at DHL sites and incidents involving Nord Stream pipelines.

**Annex 1 – Illustration of reported mined areas**

**Annex 2 – Announced temporary corridor from UKR Black Sea ports**

**Annex 3 – Reported Kerch Strait inspection area**

**Annex 4 – List of commercial vessel incidents**

**Annex 5 – Incidents**

## Ukraine and northern Black Sea ports

Refer to the following page for definitions and information on sanctions/commercial restrictions

Port	Current port situation	Current local situation	Operations	Security
<b>Odessa</b>	The port is understood operational in accordance with the IMO Circular Letter 4748, and local guidance.	Russian strikes do occur against critical infrastructure in the Odesa Oblast, including some direct targeting of Odesa city, with recent strikes on the port. The overall security situation remains highly unpredictable and local operational differences and issues should be expected. Disruptions to operations may occur due to power outages or air raid alarms.		
<b>Pivdenny</b>	The port is understood operational in accordance with the IMO Circular Letter 4748, and local guidance.	Russian strikes have occurred against targets in and near Pivdenny in the past, including targeting of the port. Future targeting in the area as part of military operations cannot be ruled out. The overall security situation remains highly unpredictable and local operational differences and issues should be expected. Disruptions to operations may occur due to power outages or air raid alarms.		
<b>Mykolaiv</b>	Closed. Cargo operations suspended for commercial operations.	In control of Ukrainian forces. Russian strikes against military targets and critical-infrastructure targets in or near the city do occur.		
<b>Mariupol</b>	Disputed operational status.	Controlled by Russian forces and part of annexed territory. Actual operational status is disputed with Russian authorities reporting the port to be open, although this is with very limited traffic prioritized by the Russian state. Reports indicate the rebuilding of the port facilities by Russian military and contractors.		
<b>Chornomorsk</b>	The port is understood operational in accordance with the IMO Circular Letter 4748, and local guidance.	Russian strikes have occurred against critical infrastructure in the Odessa Oblast. Future attacks targeting Chornomorsk port cannot be ruled out. The overall security situation remains highly unpredictable and local operational differences and issues should be expected. Disruptions to operations may occur due to power outages or air raid alarms.		
<b>Ukraine Danube ports</b>	Ukraine Danube ports are operating and handling ship calls via the Danube, and the Sulina and Bystre Canals.	Incidents involving mines have previously occurred in the Black Sea near the canals. Russian strikes against the ports in the Izmail region, do occur. Local weather conditions, water levels, and pilot shortages also impact maritime operations. ISPS Level 3 is in place, as communicated by the Ukrainian authorities. Delays and congestion have been reported in relation to port and canal operations.		

Port	Current port situation	Current local situation	Operations	Security
<b>Kerch Strait</b>	Open for navigation but only for authorized transit. Ports located within the Strait are reported to be operating.  Inspection regime and additional security measures are in place.	UKR naval drone or missile strikes against the Kerch Strait Bridge and nearby naval stations and critical infrastructure remain possible. Attacks are not expected to directly target commercial maritime traffic, but collateral damage cannot be ruled out. Russian defensive fire against drones may hit commercial traffic. Russia has announced transit restriction of vessels which are not loaded in Russian ports. Scrutiny against crew is possible *. See Annex 3 for reported Kerch Strait inspection area.		
<b>Russian Black Sea ports</b>	Open with restrictions. Additional security measures are in place.	Ports operating at ISPS level 2, some operational delays possible. Ukrainian attacks against naval or state-affiliated vessels, and port infrastructure, using naval drones, aerial drones, or cruise missiles, is possible. Collateral damage from drones may occur in case of incidents, and Russian defensive fire against drones may hit commercial traffic. Scrutiny against crew is possible *.		
<b>Russian Sea of Azov ports</b>	Open with restrictions. Sea of Azov is currently closed to unauthorized navigation by the Russian authorities. Additional security measures are in place.	Ports operating at ISPS level 2, some operational delays possible. Ukrainian attacks against naval or state-affiliated vessels, and port infrastructure, using naval drones, aerial drones or cruise missiles, is possible. Collateral damage from drones may occur in case of incidents, and Russian defensive fire against drones may hit commercial traffic. Scrutiny against crew is possible *.		
<b>Temporary corridor from UKR Black Sea ports</b>	Operational status is reported to be open, in accordance with IMO Circular Letter 4748 – though likely influenced by local operational circumstances in the NW Black Sea.	The corridor is reported to be running without considerable issues, although disruption following attacks are to be expected. Any tacit agreement from Russia on current transits are unknown, and further Russian acceptance is unclear if the increased tempo of Ukrainian strikes on Russian assets in the Black Sea continues. Military activity in and near the corridor is possible, collateral damage to vessels is possible.		
<b>Constanta</b>	Open.	Operating, with additional cargo diverted to Constanta due to closed Ukrainian ports. Congestion should be expected, and although this is being managed, it could lead to delays.		

\* Constraints and demands related to vessels with Ukrainian crewmembers. Russian crew with previous military service may be questioned by authorities withheld as part of Russian mobilization efforts. \*\* Risk Intelligence is not responsible for third-party content.

# Operations and Security definitions

## Operations:

**Green** – Operations in the area are ongoing normally with no significant issues.

**Yellow** – Some delays or disruptions in the area may be expected, which could be due to limitations to, for example, port operations and/or congestion in the area, or other difficulties with access or operating at the required ISPS level or complying with other procedures either at port or offshore.

**Red** – Operations have been significantly disrupted and ports or areas might be closed or only partially operating due to restrictions, blockades, lack of functioning infrastructure, personnel disruptions, and access concerns, or other issues preventing all or most operations.

## Security:

**Green** – The area is secure and there are no direct or indirect security threats in the port vicinity or offshore area. Low threat to vessels/personnel.

**Yellow** – There are no direct security threats but there are possible indirect threats in the vicinity, particularly but not limited to conflict taking place in proximity either on land or offshore. Moderate threat to vessels/personnel.

**Red** – Direct threats are possible to the port or area and/or its immediate approaches, including collateral damage in the immediate area or direct attacks that could target infrastructure and vessels at berth/anchorages/underway. High threat to vessels/personnel.

## Note on sanctions and commercial restrictions

Sanctions and commercial restrictions are being imposed on Russia in response to its invasion. These sanctions are evolving and will affect ongoing business operations in many complex legal ways. Sanctions are being applied to individual Russians, business entities, and to certain Russian export products (such as oil products). There are also restrictions on specific nationalities (such as US citizens) engaging in certain activities, restrictions on payments (in certain currencies and through certain institutions), and restrictions on Russia's import of particular dual-use items and technologies. Port entry bans for Russian vessels are being implemented (in the UK, for example).

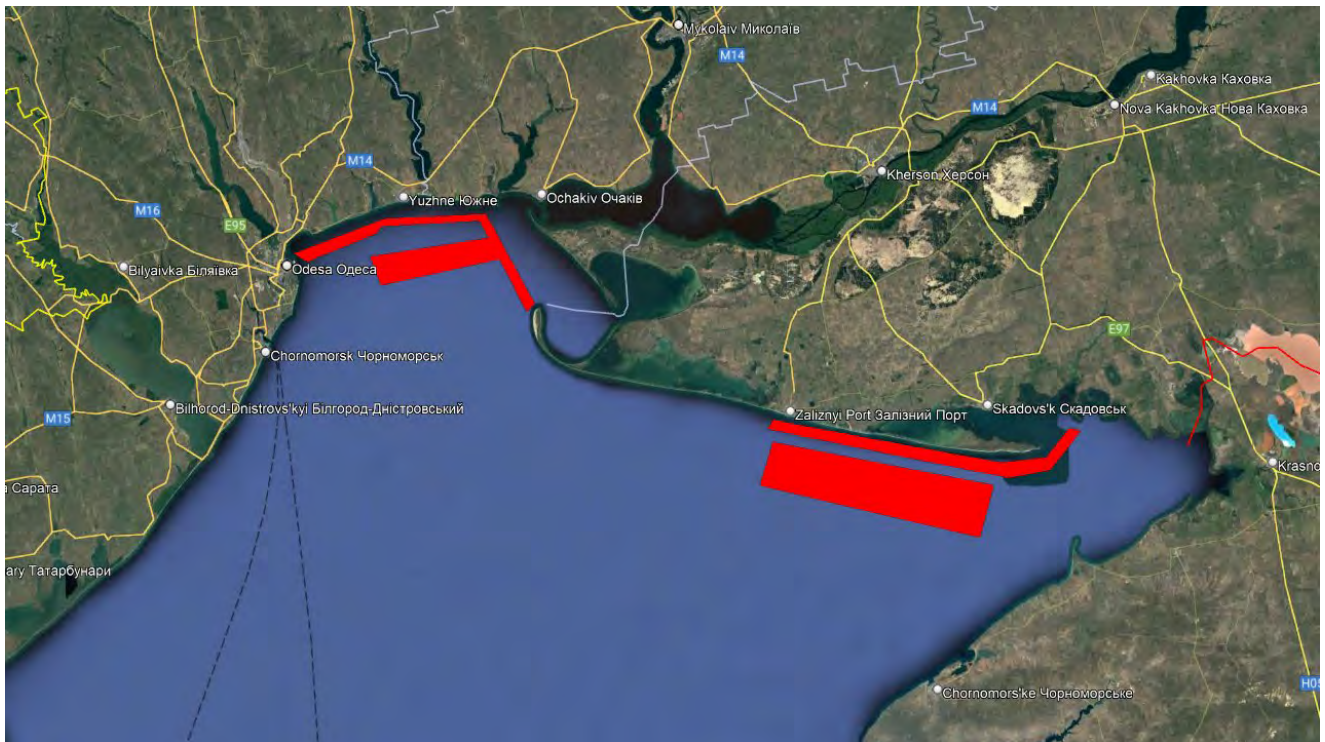
The fine print of sanctions and restrictions might affect chartering arrangements in unexpected ways, depending on the connection to Russia. These issues, as well as insurance issues for operating in war risk areas, are not covered in this report and might need to be assessed separately to reduce the risk of exposure.

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# Annex 1:

## Reported mined areas



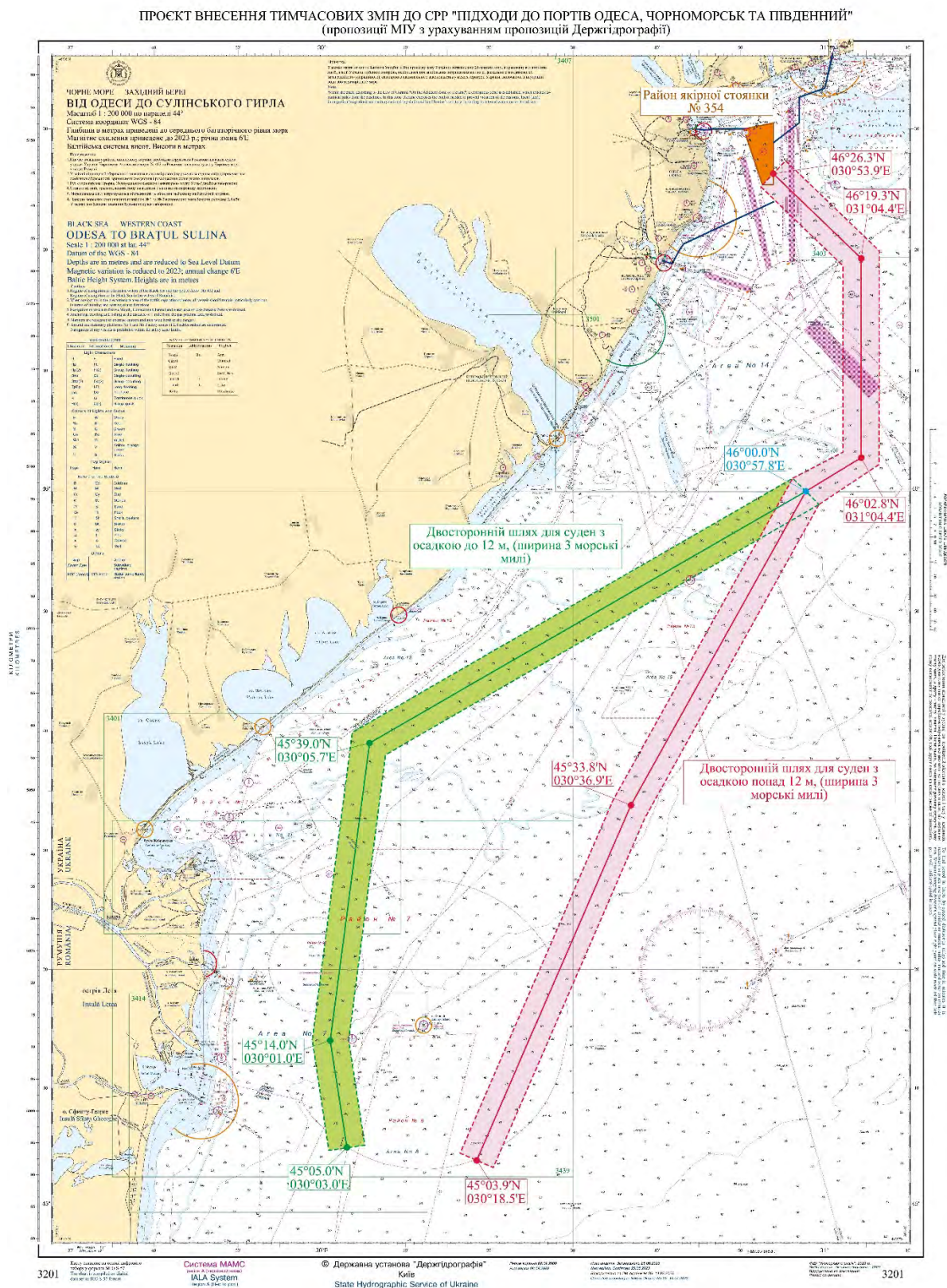
*Risk Intelligence (Illustration for visual guidance only)*

NAVAREA III: See above for visual guidance on mined areas according to the Spanish flag administration (NAVAREA III 0092).

Mined areas are most likely a combination of deeper sea mines and shallow water mines for anti-amphibious operations as well as on beaches. Mines in the sea are most likely cabled or anchored and under control.

Please also note that active NAVAREA III warnings include a warning of possible drifting mines (NAVAREA III 0122) for Northwest, West, and Southwest areas of the Black Sea.

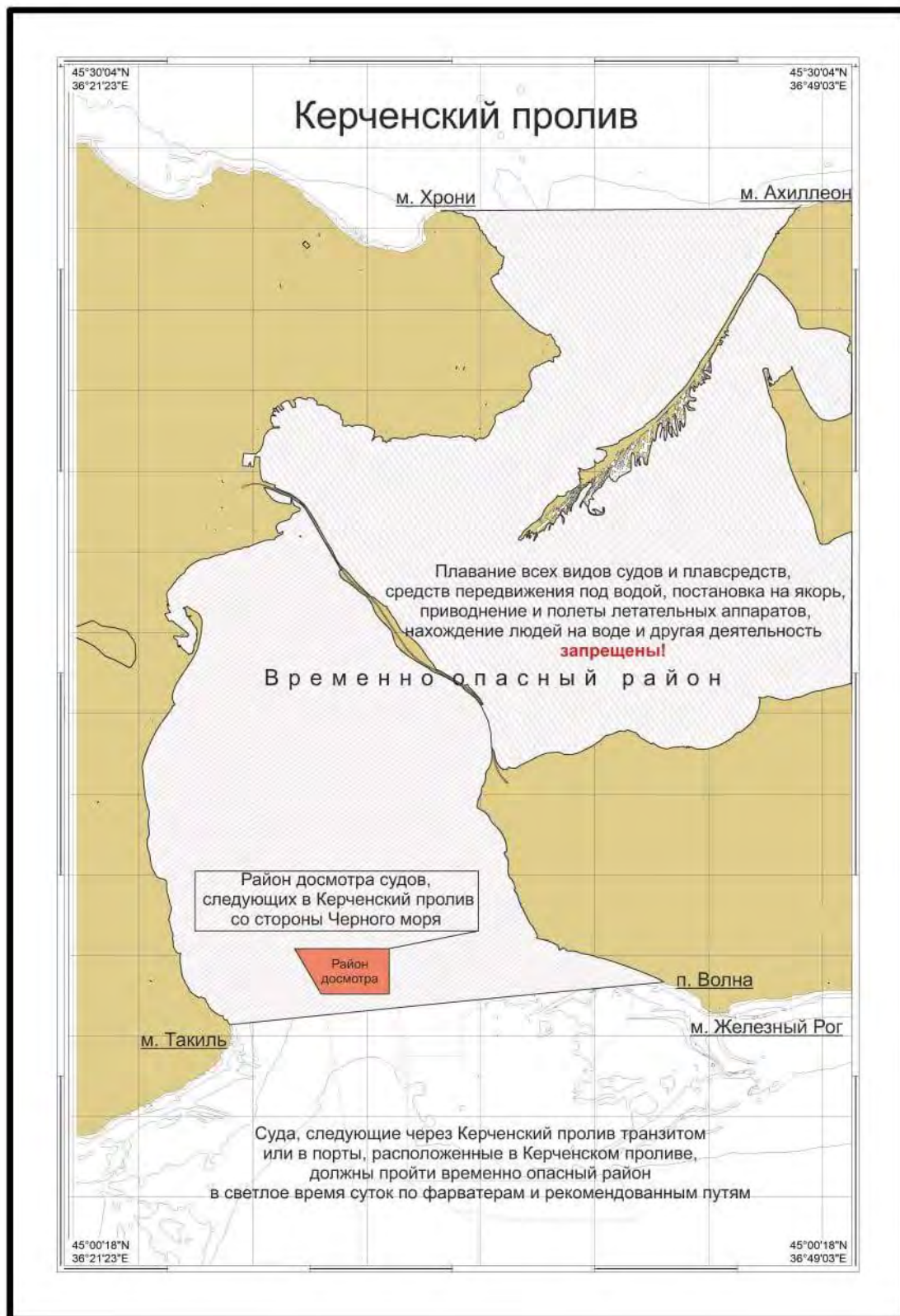
## Annex 2:



The above chart shows the announced temporary routes for civilian vessels to and from Ukrainian Black Sea ports. The Ukrainian Navy emphasizes that war risks, including mines, remain. Further details can be found in the IMO Circular Letter No.4748 (*Source: IMO Illustration for visual guidance only*)

## Annex 3:

Reported Kerch Strait inspection area, as announced by the Russian authorities 02 August 2023.



## Annex 4:

Black Sea commercial vessel incidents: Latest 10

Date	Name of ship	Type	Flag
11 MAR 2025	MJ PINAR	Bulk carrier	Barbados
01 MAR 2025	SUPER SARKAS	Bulk carrier	Siera Leone
01 MAR 2025	MSC LEVANTE F	Container ship	Panama
14 OCT 2024	NS MOON	Civilian vessel	Belize
14 OCT 2024	OPTIMA	General cargo vessel	Palau
09 OCT 2024	SHUI SPIRIT	Container ship	Panama
07 OCT 2024	OPTIMA	General cargo vessel	Palau
05 OCT 2024	PARESA	General cargo vessel	St. Kitts and Nevis
20 SEP 2024	GOLDEN LION	General cargo vessel	Antigua and Barbuda
11 SEP 2024	AYA	Bulk carrier	St. Kitts and Nevis

## Port of Odesa reportedly hit by missile attack

maj 23 2025



### Region: Europe

The port of Odesa, Ukraine was hit by a missile attack at an unknown time on 23 May 2025.

According to social media and official sources, the port was struck by at least two ballistic missiles fired from Russia.

One fatality and eight wounded were reported, as well as damage to infrastructure.