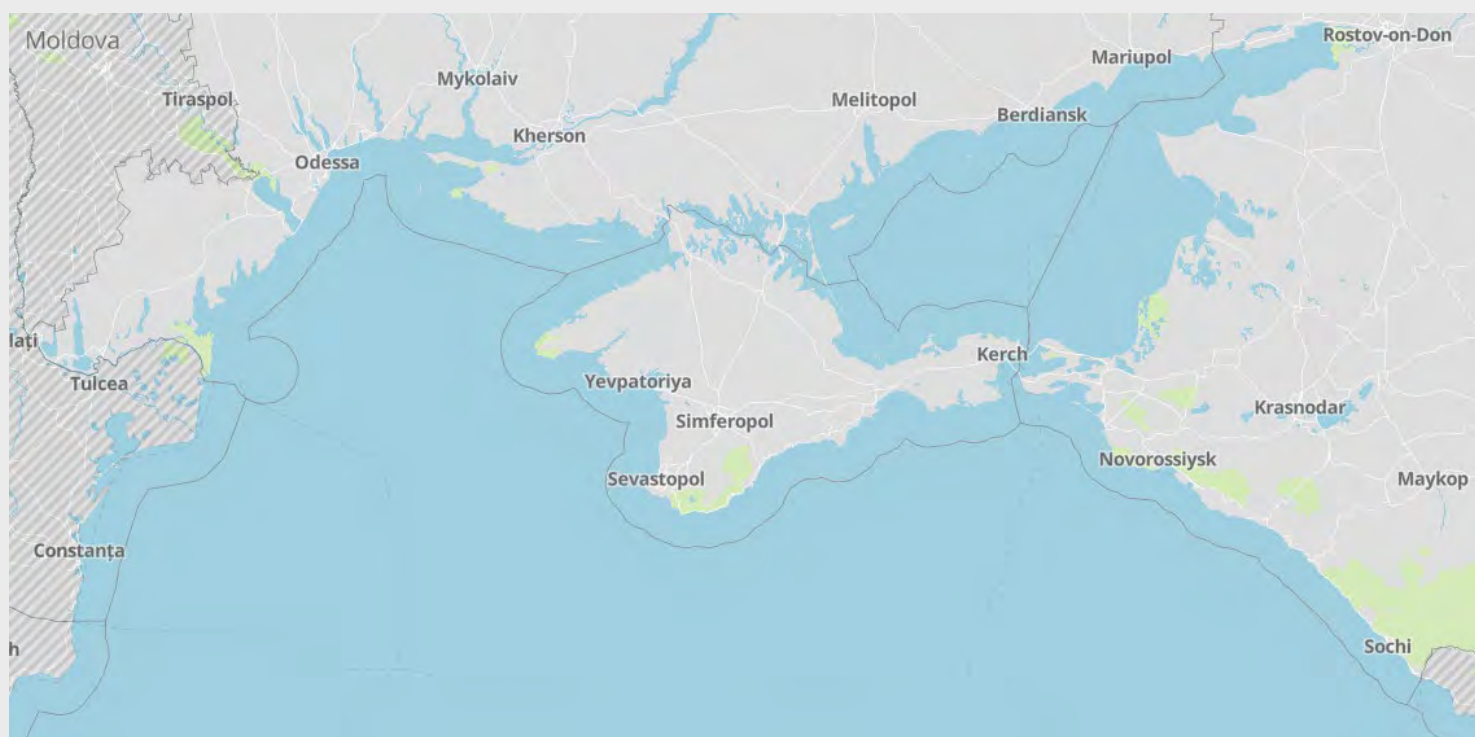


Northern Black Sea and Russia (Ports and Terminals): Weekly Intelligence Report

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Overview of current situation

Brief update:

During the past week Russian forces have continued to target Ukrainian infrastructure and have continued the campaign of drone attacks on civilian structures – including a large-scale attack on Kyiv on 28 August.

A reported maritime related incident, at an unknown time on 28 August, includes a claim by Ukrainian forces to have attacked a Russian naval vessel in the Sea of Azov.

The actual outcomes from the recent weeks' diplomatic efforts by both the US administration and European leaders to seek a potential path forward to establish a lasting peaceful solution, remains to be seen. Although efforts are ongoing any tangible breakthrough in terms of either a pause in the fighting along the frontline or a pause in the Russian attacks on Ukrainian civilian infrastructure, appear unlikely. The US approach seems to have shifted away from seeking an immediate ceasefire and instead focussing on establishing a lasting peace. However, it is currently unclear whether this apparent change of desired outcome also reflects a change in policy and whether or not this also means no desire for a maritime focussed ceasefire in the Black Sea – which had been previously discussed as part of various ceasefire options.

What can be concluded is that the recent summit between President Trump, President Zelenskyy, and several European leaders has not resulted in any halting in Russia's military operations or objectives or focus.

Discussions are understood still ongoing regarding a potential bi- or trilateral meeting, between Putin and Zelenskyy, possibly joined by Trump, as part of peace negotiations. However, under present circumstances it is unlikely that the Kremlin will entertain such an idea. The reason being that for as long as the Russian leadership believe they can continue the current military operations, they will and will merely continue to convince Trump that they are actively working towards peace in good faith, to avoid triggering US sanctions or renewed military support for Ukraine.

Vessels are understood to continue to transit the Ukrainian Black Sea corridor. The general threat level remains unchanged as future attacks cannot be ruled out.

Given the recent uptick in Russian strikes against logistics hubs in the Izmail region, the security threat level for the Ukrainian Danube ports has been set to RED.

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.

Ukrainian Black Sea Corridor:

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

Strikes impacting vessels underway remain assessed as less likely to occur, as this would require direct targeting. Based on previous incidents involving vessels, indicate that the likelihood of collateral damage while 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:

Russian and Ukrainian military activity in the Black Sea, continue to pose a threat to shipping in the area. War-related developments during the past week, do not change the threat picture 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 the shipping in the area.

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. Although the overall usage of naval drones, both on surface and submerged is likely to continue to increase by both sides, the deployment, as part of military operations, do not, in of themselves present a change to the current threat picture to maritime operations.

The threat of sea mines persists in the wider Black Sea, as indicated by this week's incident, with ongoing Mine Countermeasure (MCM) operations conducted by Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey, and Ukraine.

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 defenses 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:.

Port information is located in the port table.

Due to recent Russian attacks against logistics hubs in the region of Izmail, the threat level for the Ukrainian Danube ports has been increased to RED from YELLOW.

It should be noted that direct targeting of vessels is possible, although collateral damage is the most likely threat to materialise. This is similar for all of Ukraine and Ukrainian ports.

Power-outages and air-raid alarms continue throughout the country, which can also disrupt port operations. There are indicators of a renewed Russian effort to disrupt energy production and supply in Ukraine. This is likely to cause as much damage before winter as possible. Therefore, 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.

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 with some local night-time curfews. 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.

Ukrainian forces continue military activity in the Black Sea, with numerous Russian reports of engagements with unmanned naval drones and special forces in the NW Black Sea. There are also reports of USVs reaching as far as Novorossiysk - as well as reports of attacks across Crimea.

The introduction of long-range Ukrainian produced missiles, "flamingos", may lead to strikes against Russian ports in the Black Sea, including against military assets and energy infrastructure.

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 espionage or reconnaissance on their behalf, or even 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 hybrid effort in the Baltic Sea, and the requirement for plausible deniability.

There have been a number of incidents of vessels being hit by explosions, likely due to limpet mines, after these vessels have called Russian ports, or during Russian port calls. While the circumstances are unclear, it is a possibility that Ukrainian special forces and intelligence units are part of a wider campaign of mining vessels calling Russian ports. Overt and direct attacks against shadow-fleet vessels is assessed to be unlikely.

Conflict outlook:

Recent developments along the frontline do not change the threat assessment in the northwestern Black Sea.

The recent attack on Kyiv is the largest since the separate meetings held by president Trump with Russian president Putin, and European leaders, with some reports indicating the attack as the second largest of the war so far. The attack will likely be followed by further sanction packages by European Union, although it is currently unclear how the US administration might respond. If anything, the Kyiv attack highlights that no real breakthrough was achieved during the recent meetings held by US president Trump. Ukraine has continued targeting Russian oil refinery infrastructure, which is reported to be impacting the Russian home market for fuel.

As part of the political and diplomatic efforts during the past weeks there was much talk about providing security guarantees, even NATO Article 5 style security guarantees. However, with no real details known and no real indication of what such guarantees would actually amount to, or indeed how much they would actually be worth. Ukraine already had security guarantees granted to it by the United States, the United Kingdom and Russia, as part of the Budapest Memorandum when the country gave up its nuclear weapons in 1994.

The US administration has currently moved focus to Gaza and Israel but may well return focus to Ukraine in a couple of weeks, when it has been alleged a meeting between Zelenskyy and Putin could take place – although this seems highly unlikely. It is possible that the intensity of the US diplomatic effort may only last until 10 October, when the Nobel Committee are set to announce the annual winners of the Peace Prize. As Trump has been outwardly obsessed with the prospect of winning a peace prize, evident from his own and official media and social media, and the timing of the intense August effort to end the war, suggests a connection. If this is a main driver behind the effort, and because of the erratic and unpredictable US Presidency, it is possible that US Diplomatic efforts may subside after the announcement of winners - especially if Trump fails to win a Nobel. In such

a case Trump may abandon the negotiations entirely out of anger with the parties, or even impose penalties on those viewed as having slowed the process.

The main goal of both the Ukrainian and Russian leadership is to convince Trump that they are actively working towards peace in good faith, as to not trigger any US sanctions against Russia and to secure further military support for Ukraine. However, as long as Putin and Russia see progress along the contact-line, regardless of the cost, it is unlikely to engage earnestly in any negotiations toward a sustainable peace.

The Russian maximalist war goals – notably demilitarization of Ukraine and control over the annexed territories – will continue to derail any real progress. Proposed security guarantees for Ukraine, including any proposals of Western/NATO troops in Ukraine, may also use by Russia as an excuse to say that Ukrainian demands are non-starters, and that negotiations will not happen on that background. Furthermore, vague demands or requirements for the protection of “Russians” or Russian-speaking people in Ukraine, without any real tangible or realistic demands, may also be used as argument.

Although the US administration appears to have moved away from focussing on reaching an initial ceasefire, it is possible that Ukraine will be willing to accept a ceasefire, considering the extreme pressure of indiscriminate Russian attacks on large cities over the Summer. However, a ceasefire will also limit Ukraine’s own successful attacks against the Russian rear and Russian energy infrastructure. Both parties will also be very aware of how their actions are perceived by the US – where Trump is under pressure to show some progress on the conflict - and this is also likely to influence the Ukrainian response. In the event of a ceasefire, the monitoring and implementation of such a ceasefire remain uncertain. Large and high-intensity strikes may occur before the ceasefire takes effect, including against ports. Large and high-intensity strikes may occur before a ceasefire takes effect, including against ports.

It therefore remains that regardless of the political and diplomatic efforts of the past few weeks, have not initially changed anything and until a tangible breakthrough occurs, which is unlikely for as long as Russia sees it can both continue its war and achieve some degree of its objectives, regardless of the cost, and Ukraine can continue to defend itself sufficiently against Russia, the current situation remains the same.

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
Odessa	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 and port. Future attacks targeting Odesa 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.		
Pivdenny	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.		
Mykolaiv	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.		
Mariupol	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.		
Chornomorsk	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.		
Ukraine Danube ports	Ukraine Danube ports are operating and handling ship calls via the Danube, and the Sulina and Bystre Canals.	Incidents involving mines have 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
Kerch Strait	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.		
Russian Black Sea ports	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 *.		
Russian Sea of Azov ports	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 *.		
Temporary corridor from UKR Black Sea ports	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.		
Constanta	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



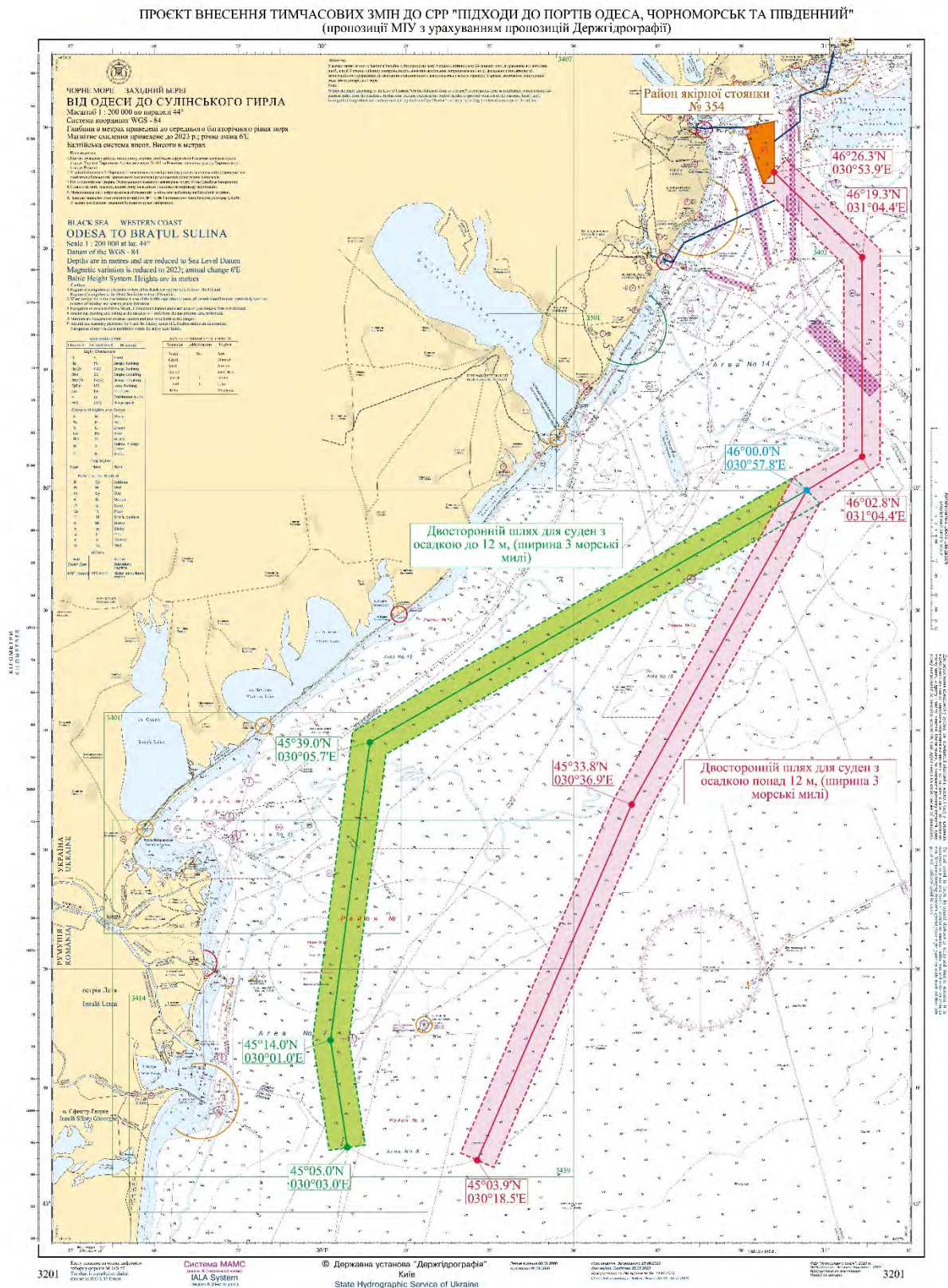
Risk Intelligence (Illustration for visual guidance only)

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.

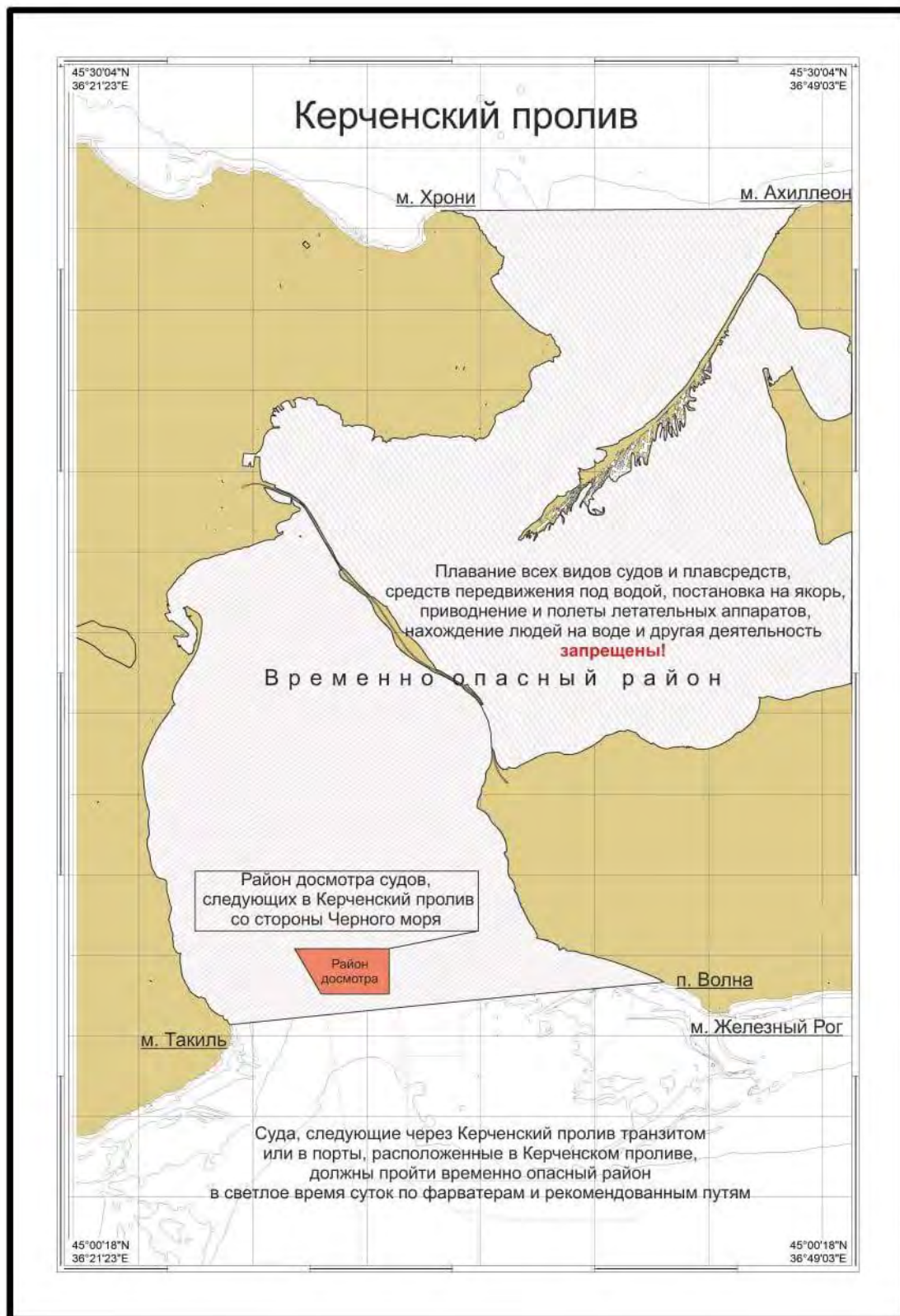
Annex 2:



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
20 AUG 2025	EXCELLION	Chemical and oil tanker	Panama
03 JUL 2025	AJ ROSE	Bulk carrier	Sao Tome and Principe
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

Ukraine reports strike on Russian corvette

August 28 2025



Region: Europe

Ukraine reported a drone strike on a Russian corvette in the sea of Azov, Ukraine, at an unknown time on 28 August 2025.

According to official Ukrainian sources on social media, the strike was carried out against a BUYAN-M class vessel by two drones targetting the radar installations and the missiles of the vessel. Video footage indicate that the vessel is hit. There are no reports on the extent of damage caused.