

WEEKLY INTELLIGENCE REPORT | ISSUE NO. 45 (06 NOVEMBER 2025)

Northern Black Sea and Russia (Ports and Terminals)

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About the report

This report provides an overview of the current maritime security situation in the northern part of the Black Sea, particularly in the vicinity of specific ports and terminals. It is primarily aimed at assessing the threat of security incidents affecting operations of merchant ships operating in this area.

Comprehensive descriptions for individual incidents as well as statistics about attacks against merchant ships are available on the Risk Intelligence System.

Time of latest intelligence included in this report:
06 November 2025, 08:00 UTC.

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Overview of current situation

Summary

- Black Sea threat picture remains unchanged
- Tanker damaged during drone attack on Tuapse Oil Terminal
- Russia attacked Ukrainian Danube port of Izmail
- 19th EU sanctions package comes into effect

Brief update

Russian forces continued to target civilian Ukrainian energy infrastructure, during the past week.

The reported incidents during the past week continue to underline the present and ongoing threat picture regarding maritime operations in the Black Sea. Although the incidents in of themselves are not trivial, they do not represent any change of tactic or apparent strategy by both the Russian and Ukrainian forces. Both ports, Izmail and Tuapse have been targeted before and may be targeted again in the future, as attacks against port infrastructure remains likely. Details regarding the vessel damaged during the Tuapse attack, are scarce, However, taking previous incidents involving vessels, into account, damage to vessels during attacks tend more often to be collateral rather than deliberate. Until the information points towards an intentional targeting of the vessel, collateral damage would be deemed the most likely, given the current reports regarding the attack.

Although there were few political and diplomatic developments during the past week, reporting indicates that efforts are ongoing and positioning by the involved parties continues. There is presently no indication of any ceasefire being reached in the near future, and both Russian and Ukraine appear prepared to continue their fighting, in order to improve their respective positions.

The Russian attacks on Ukrainian infrastructure, including ports, but particularly energy, are likely to continue as winter approaches. This is generally seen as Russia's attempt to stress and undermine the Ukrainian authority's ability to provide heating and electricity to it's population. The degree to which power outages, scheduled or not, impact maritime related operations is unclear, but some disruption should be expected, although local and situational differences are likely.

The current scenarios for vessel attacks are (order does not represent likelihood):

Scenario 1: The threat of collateral damage to vessels in both Ukrainian and Russian ports, remains the most likely, due to Russia's apparent disregard of damaging cargo vessels when targeting port infrastructure near civilian areas. However, collateral damage towards vessels transiting the Ukrainian Black Sea corridor, can also not be ruled out.

Scenario 2: Vessels can be targeted due to flawed intelligence from the Russian military, suggesting they carry military hardware.

Scenario 3: Attacks may be aimed at deterring vessels from using the Ukrainian transit corridor and disrupting maritime exports by creating uncertainty and danger.

Scenario 4: Russia could target vessels to increase pressure on Ukraine to influence future negotiations.

Regardless of Russian objectives, Ukrainian ports and their infrastructure remain likely targets, as part of Russia's ongoing war in Ukraine.

Ukrainian Black Sea Corridor

Vessels continued using the Ukrainian Black Sea corridor last week. The threat to ships in transit is assessed lower than the threat of collateral damage to vessels in port, due to ongoing Russian attacks on Ukrainian port cities and infrastructure.

Strikes impacting vessels underway remain assessed as less likely to occur, as this would require direct targeting. Previous incidents involving vessels, indicate that the likelihood of collateral damage while in Ukrainian ports remain greater, but 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 remain likely, until security improves. An elevated threat to maritime trade in the NW Black Sea and near the conflict area persists due to likely 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.

Mine Countermeasure (MCM) operations conducted by Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey, and Ukraine, are ongoing to address the threat of sea mines that persists in the wider Black Sea. 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 can face disruption 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.

The direct targeting of vessels remains 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. Russian attacks on Ukrainian power infrastructure is likely intended 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. The same is likely if Ukraine is provided with other long-range weapon systems or assistance with targeting inside Russia.

Previous videos of naval and aerial drone attacks in Russian ports also highlight 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 generally less likely.

Conflict outlook

Again this week, there were no developments that present any changes to the threat picture in the Black Sea. Although there have been several political statements and some reported new deliveries of arms to Ukraine, these do not in of themselves present any change to the overall situation.

Reporting regarding testing nuclear capabilities, have continued during the past week, with seemingly, Russian announcing that if the US is going to test nuclear capabilities then Russia will as well. This is somewhat confusing, given previous announcements by Russia, that they had already conducted tests of their nuclear capabilities. However, the latest statements are likely intended to give Russia some wiggle room and space to adjust their future messaging in response to what the US Trump administration does. In other words, Russia is likely constantly trying to “read” the US, and is constantly evaluating how its own messaging can be used to influence the current US administration and its approach on the Ukraine/Russia war.

As previously stated, although nuclear weapons tests are important to note, they do not present any actual escalation and do not present any actual change to the threat picture and should be seen more as an attempt to influence the going political and diplomatic efforts to find a solution to end the war.

It therefore remains that, under current circumstances, until a comprehensive ceasefire, between Russia and Ukraine, is agreed, implemented and enforced the regional threat picture is likely to remain unchanged and influenced by the ongoing Russia/Ukraine war.

Future Russian attacks are likely to be of a large-scale, in terms of number of missiles and drones used, to attempt to inflict maximum damage to Ukraine’s energy infrastructure ahead of the winter months – as part of its attempt to put maximum pressure on the Ukrainian society. Several announced power cuts throughout Ukraine were announced during the past week, this is likely to continue. Power cuts can also impact port and maritime operations, although local differences are likely.

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

Port	Current port situation	Current local situation	Operations	Security
Odesa	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.		

* 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.

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.

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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.

Annex 1 - Illustration of reported mined areas

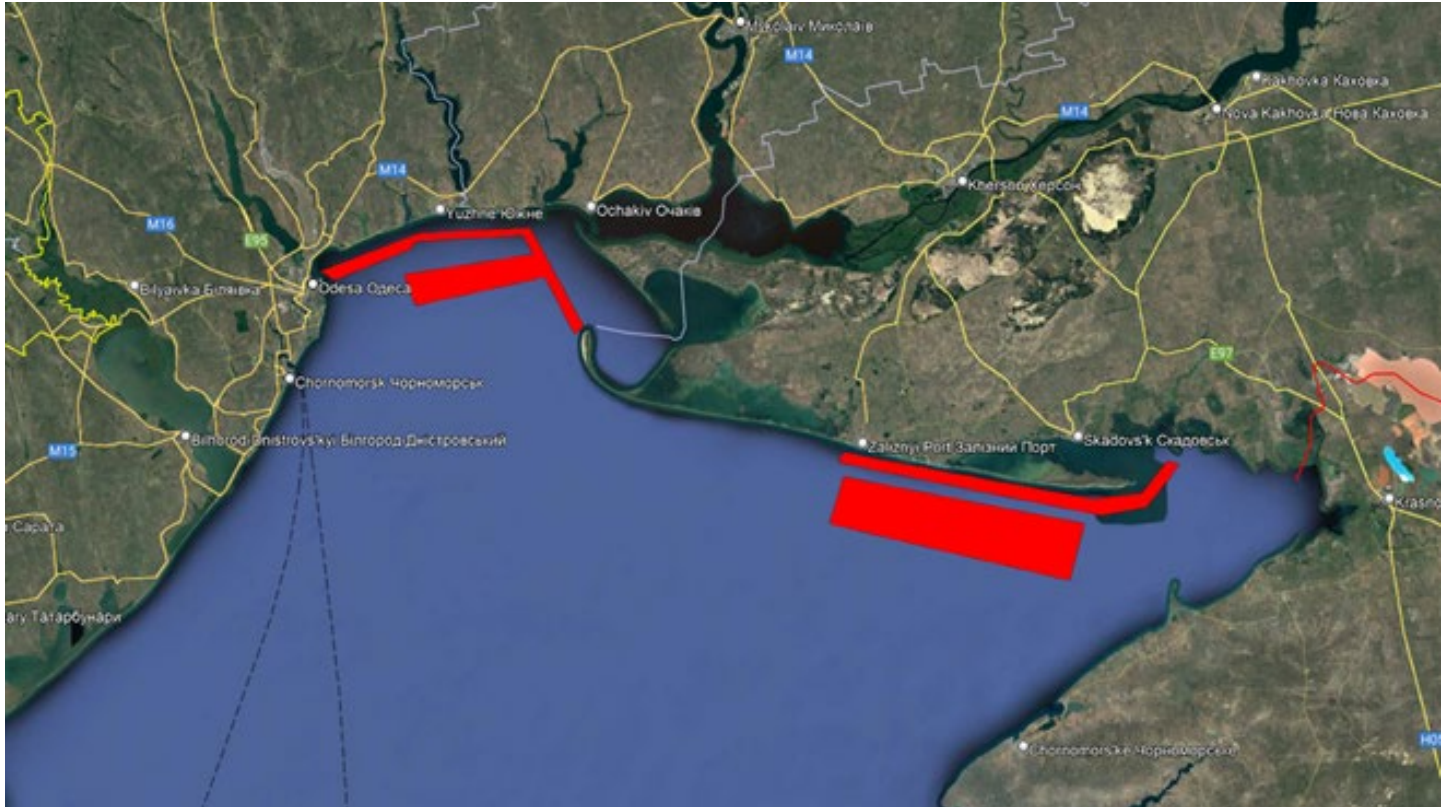


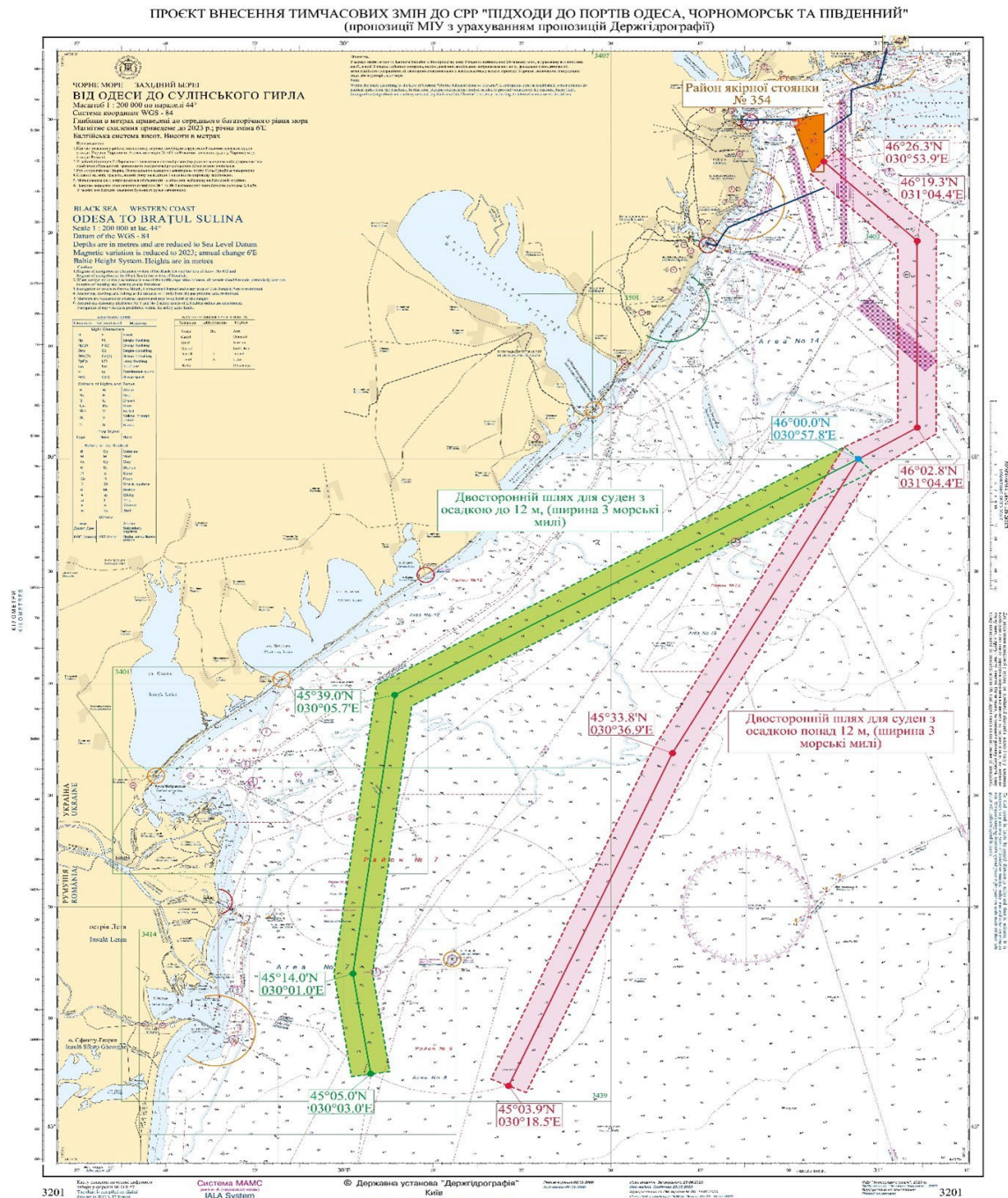
Image 1 - Risk Intelligence (Illustration for visual guidance only)

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.

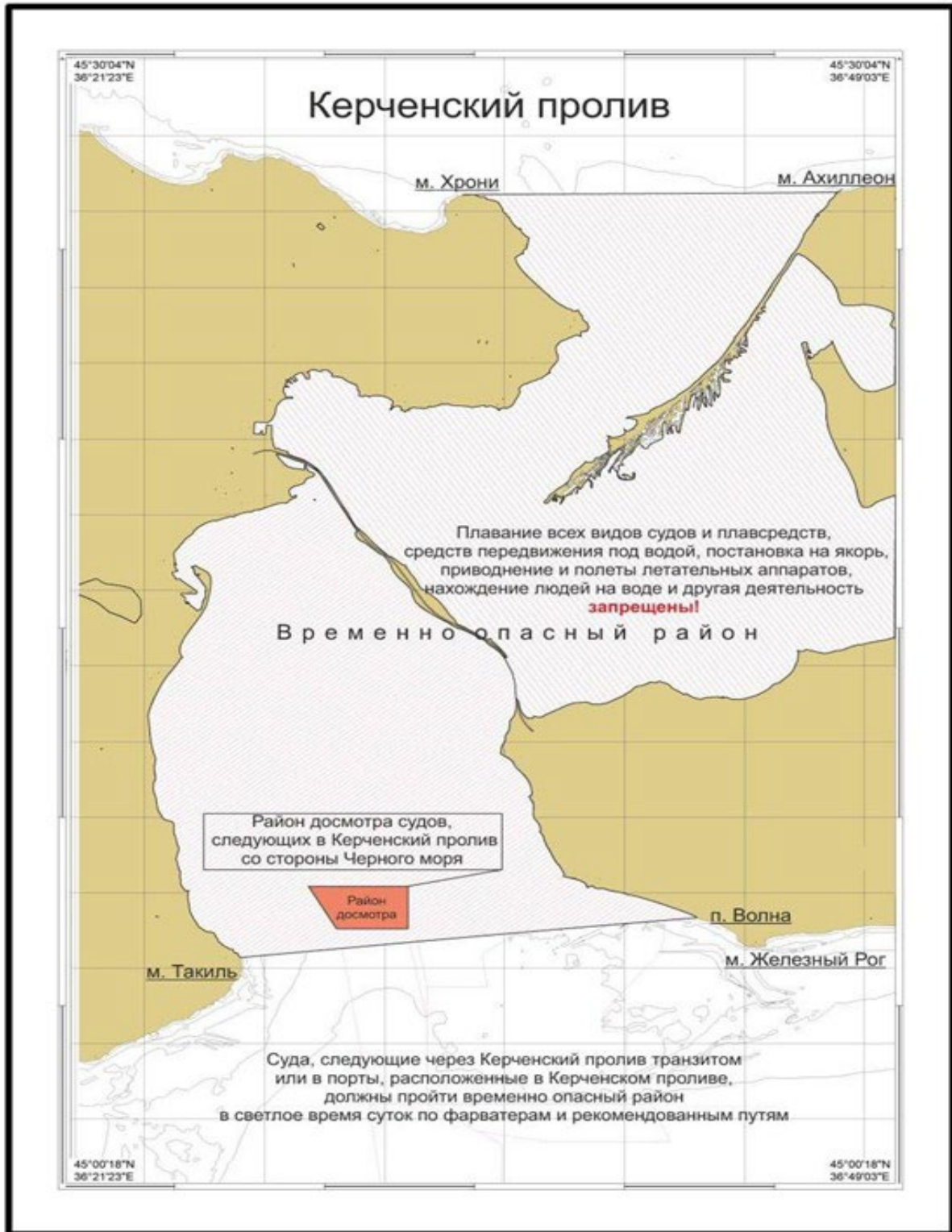
Please also note that active NAVAREA III warnings include a warning of possible drifting mines (NAVAREA III 0122) for Northwest, West, and Southwest areas of the Black Sea.

Annex 2 - Announced temporary corridor from UKR Black Sea ports



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



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

Annex 4 – List of commercial vessel incidents

Date	Name of ship	Type	Flag
31 AUG 2025	NS PRIDE	Bulk carrier	Belize
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

Annex 5 – Incidents

Tanker struck by drone fragments

November 2 2025

Region: Europe

An unnamed tanker was reportedly damaged during a drone attack at Tuapse, Russia during the early hours of 02 November 2025.

The incident took place near: 44:05.05N 039:04.30E.

Multiple reports indicate that a Ukrainian drone strike hit the port, damaging port infrastructure and setting one tanker ablaze. Drone fragments reportedly struck the vessel's deck superstructure, igniting a fire that led to the crew's evacuation. The attack also damaged buildings at the Tuapse Black Sea oil terminal, a key export outlet, though its operational status remains unclear. Unverified images showed the tanker and terminal engulfed in flames during the night.

Subsequently, Russian reporting said that two vessels were affected. "As a result of the drone attack... two foreign civilian ships were damaged," the emergency operational headquarters of the Krasnodar region said in a statement. Another source reported that there were three tankers at the terminal at the time of the strike.

Additional drone debris reportedly impacted an apartment building in nearby Sosnovyi and caused minor damage to Tuapse's railway station. No injuries were reported.

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Ukrainian forces reports strike on offshore facilities

November 2 2025

Region: Europe

Ukrainian official channels have reported that they struck Russian forces on the SYVASH offshore rig in the Northern Black Sea at an unknown time on 02 November 2025.

According to various channels, both Russian affiliated and Ukrainian, the Ukraine special forces conducted strikes on Russian forces on the SYVASH rig, part of the so called "BOIKO towers" west of Crimea in the Black Sea using water-borne drones and other means. According to official Ukrainian sources the strike destroyed reconnaissance equipment and killed an anti-tank missile crew. These claims are disputed by Russian sources.

Russian strike on Izmail port facilities reported

November 4 2025

Region: Europe

A Russian drone strike was reported to have hit port facilities in Izmail, in Odesa oblast, Ukraine at an unknown time on 04 November 2025.

According to official Ukrainian sources, the Russian drone strike hit civilian port and energy infrastructure facilities. There are no casualties reported.



Knowing Risk

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