

Shipping industry to remove the Indian Ocean High Risk Area

- At 0001 UTC on 1 January 2023 the Indian Ocean High Risk Area (HRA) for piracy will be removed.
- The removal of the HRA reflects a significantly improved piracy situation in the region, but voyage preparation, threat and risk assessment is essential when following Best Management Practice 5 (BMP5).

22 August 2022. London, UK. After more than a decade of effective threat-reducing counter-piracy operations the shipping industry has removed the 'Indian Ocean High Risk Area' (HRA).

Notification of the removal of the HRA from 0001 UTC on 1 January 2023 by industry bodies was forwarded in a submission today, 22 August, to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) for the next meeting of the Maritime Safety Committee scheduled to start on 31 October 2022.

The removal of the HRA reflects a significantly improved piracy situation in the region, largely due to concerted counter-piracy efforts by many regional and international stakeholders. No piracy attacks against merchant ships have occurred off Somalia since 2018.

The IMO has been informed of the decision made by International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), BIMCO, International Marine Contractors Association (IMCA), INTERCARGO, INTERTANKO and Oil Companies International Marine Forum (OCIMF).

Measures enacted to secure the waters by military, political, civil society, and shipping industry, as well as Best Management Practices guidance, have reduced the threat of piracy in the Indian Ocean.

The removal of the HRA will come into effect at 0001 UTC on 1 January 2023, allowing charterers, shipowners and operators time to adapt to the changed threat from piracy. Best Management Practices 5 (BMP5) will continue to provide the necessary guidance for shipping to ensure threat and risk assessments are developed for every voyage to mitigate the risks presented by remaining security threats in the region. The shipping industry will continue to monitor and advise on maritime security threats to assist the safe transit of vessels and the seafarers who crew them. Pre-voyage threat and risk assessments should consider the latest maritime security information from organisations supporting the VRA.

The area being removed is the "High Risk Area" as shown on UKHO Chart Q6099. The Voluntary Reporting Area (VRA) administered by UKMTO has not changed. Ships entering the VRA are encouraged to report to the UKMTO and register with the Maritime Security Centre for the Horn of Africa (MSCHOA) in accordance with industry BMP (Best Management Practices).

The HRA IMO submission co-sponsors commented:

"This announcement is a testament to nearly 15 years of dedicated collaboration to reduce the threat of piracy in the Indian Ocean. Through a combination of efforts by military, political, civil society, and the shipping industry over the years, operators and seafarers are now able to operate with increased confidence in these waters.

“Thanks and gratitude is given to all the seafarers and offshore workers who have served during this time in safely maintaining global trade and operations.

“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.”

ENDS

Notes to editors:

About ICS

The International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) is the principal international trade association for merchant shipowners and operators, representing all sectors and trades and over 80% of the world merchant fleet.

www.ics-shipping.org

About BIMCO

BIMCO is the world's largest international shipping association, with around 2,000 members in more than 130 countries, representing over 60% of the world's tonnage. Our global membership includes shipowners, operators, managers, brokers, and agents. BIMCO is a non-profit organisation.

About International Marine Contractors Association (IMCA)

IMCA represents the vast majority of offshore marine contractors and the associated supply chain in the world, with members from over 65 countries. It publishes an extensive technical library of guidance documents on operational good practice, safety promotional materials, timely information notes and safety flashes. Its members benefit from a technical structure comprising four main divisions covering Offshore Diving, Marine (including an Offshore Renewable Energy Committee), Remote Systems & ROVs, and Offshore Surveying.

Further information on IMCA and its work on behalf of the global offshore marine construction industry is available from www.imca-int.com and imca@imca-int.com

About INTERCARGO

The International Association of Dry Cargo Shipowners (INTERCARGO) unites and promotes quality dry bulk shipping, bringing together more than 230 forward thinking companies from 30 countries. INTERCARGO convened for the first time in 1980 in London and has been participating with consultative status at the International Maritime Organization (IMO) since 1993. INTERCARGO provides the forum where dry bulk shipowners, managers and operators are informed about, discuss, and share concerns on key topics and regulatory challenges, especially in relation to safety, the environment, and operational excellence. The Association takes forward its members' positions to IMO, as well as to other shipping and international industry fora, having free and fair competition as a principle. Any enquiries should be directed to info@intercargo.org

About INTERTANKO

INTERTANKO is the International Association of Independent Tanker Owners, a forum where the industry meets, policies are discussed and best practices developed.

INTERTANKO has been the voice of independent tanker owners since 1970, ensuring that the liquid energy that keeps the world turning is shipped safely, responsibly and competitively. www.intertanko.com

About Oil Companies International Marine Forum (OCIMF)

OCIMF focusses on promoting best practice in the design, construction and operation of tankers, barges and offshore vessels and their interfaces with terminals inshore, onshore, and offshore. It does so by providing an independent forum for bringing together its members and external stakeholders to leverage their expertise in the creation of publications and programmes that enhance the safety and environmental performance of the marine industry.

www.ocimf.org