

---

The IMCA HSSE Security Committee continues to work to raise awareness of security issues that can potentially harm member companies. The HSSE Security Committee concerns itself with two main areas. The first and main focus is ‘traditional’ maritime security, the threat posed to our members’ crews and ships, from piracy, criminality or terrorism. The second is the more general threat of cyber security, which potentially affects us all - all individuals and all organisations.

Information provided in this regular Security Bulletin is intended to be used by members to either directly pass on to employees or use the material it contains as part of an existing company security awareness programme.

---

## Security bulletin 02/21

### **Mozambique – continuing civil unrest and insurgency in the north of the country**

Energy industry activities had been shut down to a large degree owing to the lack of security in the north of the country as highlighted by the events at Palma in recent months. Little work is being conducted onshore at present as a result. A number of operators had called *force majeure* on their operations and withdrawn their crews. Whilst there was as yet no evidence of a security threat offshore, members involved there should remain vigilant, as it is an area where there could be a significant threat to maritime security in the future.

### **Gulf of Guinea – attacks occurring further offshore**

There had been fewer attacks in recent times but the attacks were occurring further (up to 250-300nm) offshore. These attacks were more successful, as vessels that far offshore tended to be in international waters and thus not so secure or protected against local piracy. Attackers were using “mother vessels” to be able to work so far offshore.

In one recent example, it was seen that the criminals were on board a vessel for around half a day but were not able to gain access to the crew in the citadel – and thus they left empty-handed. Members should ensure that crews understand that proper adherence to the procedures in [BMP5](#), including preparation of the “citadel” on board vessels, remained of the greatest importance.

Patrolling warships from a number of countries around the world may deter piracy; this deterrent effect has been seen near Malabo in Equatorial Guinea.

The government of Nigeria is taking steps to significantly increase maritime security in the region, an area blighted by piracy, armed robbery, and other maritime crimes, through Deep Blue, a multi-agency project to address the ongoing piracy issue in the Gulf of Guinea. Further information [here](#).

### **Arabian waters – geopolitical tension continues**

In the Strait of Hormuz and the Gulf of Oman, tensions between the Saudis and the Iranians continue to be a potential issue. In these waters the behaviour of local players can be unpredictable, and planning is often very difficult. It remains important to keep away from Iranian waters as far as possible, and to remain in touch with local military liaison organisations.

At the same time as continuing tension between Saudi Arabia and Iran, there exists also geopolitical tension between Israel and Iran. Political developments relating to these countries remains of importance in the context of maritime and offshore operations throughout these waters.

---

IMCA store terms and conditions (<https://www.imca-int.com/legal-notices/terms/>) apply to all downloads from IMCA’s website, including this document.

IMCA makes every effort to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the data contained in the documents it publishes, but IMCA shall not be liable for any guidance and/or recommendation and/or statement herein contained. The information contained in this document does not fulfil or replace any individual’s or Member’s legal, regulatory or other duties or obligations in respect of their operations. Individuals and Members remain solely responsible for the safe, lawful and proper conduct of their operations.

In the Straits of Bab al Mandeb and the southern end of the Red Sea, there are similar potential tensions as Yemen remains a war zone. The threat to shipping here is not direct as such, but is the indirect threat of becoming collateral damage when one local military organisation strikes against another. Members are encouraged to remain vigilant at all times, remain as far away from the coast as possible, and ensure that full AIS and ID are obvious. Vessels are employing armed contractors in this area, whereas this is *not* recommended in the Strait of Hormuz.

### **Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean – gangway security is paramount**

We understand that there had been few new attacks here, although further patrols by the Mexican Navy may have helped keep the number of attacks down. There has been geopolitical tension between Venezuela and Guyana. Caution and vigilance remained vital.

It has been reported that in one case, the authorities in one country discovered 20kg of cocaine onboard an offshore vessel. It was not clear how it got there, or who bought it aboard. Members are encouraged to check very carefully who comes on board their vessels in port, and particularly, what materials are brought on board.

Members may wish to review the video [IMCA HSSE 027 Gangway security](#).

### **Other issues**

The committee advises members to be generally aware of three further areas of interest.

- Territorial disputes between nation states. Two areas where this could become problematic were the Eastern Mediterranean and in Chinese and Taiwanese waters. The recent disagreement between France and the United Kingdom over fishing rights near the Channel Islands, is an example of how quickly this might become a security issue;
- The possibility of security implications for marine and offshore operations arising from disputes between third parties – for example, disputes between other stakeholders including fishermen, wind turbine operators, and environmentalist groups;
- The risk of “collateral damage” following cyber-attack, not only on an actual vessel, but on a port or on the infrastructure supporting a port. The recent cyber-attack on the fuel pipeline in the United States is an example of such an attack that could have had implications for maritime security.

The IMCA Security Committee meets quarterly and consists of security and safety professionals from a range of IMCA members, as well as representatives from other industry organisations. The Committee is a sub-committee of the IMCA Health, Safety, Security & Environment (HSSE) Core Committee. Further information on the security committee including a list of members, can be found at <https://www.imca-int.com/committees/hsse/security/>.