

PIRACY OFF THE COAST OF SOMALIA AND EASTERN AFRICA

WARNING TO: U.S. Registered Yachts and Sailing Vessels

The U.S. Coast Guard strongly advises against all operation of and travel by U.S. yachts and sailing craft, or by U.S. citizens on foreign registered yachts and sailing craft, on the Gulf of Aden, Arabian Sea, Somali Basin and the western parts of the Indian Ocean. A U.S. registered sailing vessel was hijacked by pirates in February 2011 off the southern coast of Oman in the northern Arabian Sea and all of its crew were tragically killed. This case is a stark reminder of the grave dangers of operating in these high risk waters, especially by recreational vessels.

All mariners already in these waters are urged to register with the Maritime Security Centre (Horn of Africa) <<http://www.mschoa.org>> for up to date advice and guidance on passage round the Horn of Africa. They should also report regularly to the UKMTO (email: ukmto@eim.ae; Tel: +971 50 552 3215), giving location, course and speed, and plan their routing carefully to reduce the risk of an attack.

Piracy is a significant threat in the Gulf of Aden and the northwest Indian Ocean and has occurred in excess of 1000 nautical miles from the coast of Somalia. Up-to-date information about attacks and pirated vessels can be referenced from the EU Naval Force Somalia web site at <<http://www.eunavfor.eu>>. Sailing vessels are particularly vulnerable to attack due to their low speed and low freeboard. All mariners intending to sail through high risk areas should reconsider the necessity of their travel and alternatives, such as transporting the vessel by yacht carrier.

Participants in yacht races and rallies in these high risk areas are at great risk of attack. These events are often publicized and could draw attention from pirates, despite the security and safety measures that might be put in place. The U.S. Coast Guard strongly advises mariners not to participate in events that will require transit through high risk waters.

Requirements and amplifying guidance promulgated by the U.S. Coast Guard for commercial vessels intending to transit high risk waters are unaffected by this advisory.

Useful contacts:

The UK Maritime Trade Organization (UKMTO) <<http://www.mschoa.org/Links/Pages/UKMTO.aspx>> in Dubai is the primary point of contact for liaison with military forces in the region. Email at ukmto@eim.ae to join their voluntary reporting scheme, Tel: +971 50 552 3215, Telex: (51) 210473.

Maritime Security Centre Horn of Africa (MSCHOA) <<http://www.mschoa.org>> is manned 24/7 by military and merchant navy personnel from various countries and coordinates with military maritime forces in the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. It is the commercial/civilian link with the EU Naval Force Somalia. Tel: +44 1923 958545, Fax: +44 1923 958 520, email: postmaster@mschoa.org.

The NATO Shipping Centre (NSC) <<http://www.shipping.nato.int%20>> is the commercial/civilian link with the NATO maritime force. Tel: +44 1923 956 574, Fax: +44 1923 956 575, email: info@shipping.nato.int.

The Maritime Liaison Office (MARLO) <<http://www.cusnc.navy.mil/marlo/>> US Navy Bahrain, is a secondary point of contact after UKMTO and MSCHOA, but is manned 24/7. Tel: +973 3940 1395, email: marlo.bahrain@me.navy.mil.

The International Sailing Federation (ISAF) <<http://www.sailing.org/>>: You can read ISAF full set of updated guidelines <<http://www.sailing.org/34770.php>> here.