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27 April 2010

To: All Masters, Ship Security Officers and Company Security Officers of Hong Kong registered ships

**Security and Quality Advisory No. 9**  
**Recent Pirate Attempt to board Hong Kong Registered Ship**

1. A Hong Kong registered container vessel was chased by suspected pirate skiffs in the Gulf of Aden on 13 April 2010. The Duty Officer called the Master to the bridge. The Master took evasive manoeuvre to avoid the pirates from boarding. At the same time the Master reported the incident to the coalition warships in the vicinity. The skiff dropped something into the sea that made a loud noise and a big splash. The skiff followed the vessel for about 2 minutes and aborted. The vessel successfully escaped from the pirate skiffs.
2. This circular letter is issued to remind Masters of the importance to follow the measures as advised in the "Best Management Practices to Deter Piracy in the Gulf of Aden and off the Coast of Somalia" when navigating in the pirate infested waters. Where possible the Master should consider joining the convoy when transiting the Gulf of Aden.
3. Attached annex to this advisory is a sample reference on measures to be taken to prevent pirate activity. Ships are encouraged to make reference to them when considered applicable.

(Y.K. Li)

Senior Surveyor/Security & Quality Assurance Section  
for Director of Marine

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## **A) Who is attacked / boarded and hijacked?**

Navy believes that vessels who have not been alert and kept a good look out have often been victims to piracy. Vessels are encouraged to display signs of alertness in form of reporting suspicious sightings, activity, using the whistle or strobe lights at night.

The pirates are generally untrained and only motivation is money. The people who come out to vessels are local opportunists who are actually paid an extremely small amount of the ransom. It is believed that the men who actually board just get a few hundred dollars.

With about 2,000 vessels moving thro this area every month, these pirates tend to prey on vessels that are easy rather than having to work their way on board in face of danger. Low freeboard, low speed and low status of alertness can be termed as EASY PREY.

**THE KEY IS TO DETECT THE PIRATES EARLY AND TAKE EVASIVE ACTION AND RASIE ALERT**

You must understand that if you pick up a skiff or mother vessel at 2 nautical miles, he watch has been ineffective and a skiff traveling at 45 knots will be on you in 2 minutes which is minimum time you need to react and raise alarm.

## **B) What a vessel must do?**

### 1) Situation Awareness

It is important that all members of vessel's crew are fully aware of the situation and dangers of being slack and /or being complacent.

The Pirates usually launch their attack from Mother vessels belonging to them or previously hijacked. These mother vessels are well equipped with Radars, AIS and other sophisticated communication equipment.

The pirates are known to jam radio frequencies prior an attack. This is one sign of activity in the region you are in and vessel should automatically heighten the alertness.

Pirates may use communication equipment to set up decoys and / or mislead you. Any suspicious instructions on radio which is suspicious should be always rechecked by calling the other party on telephone if necessary.

The pirates track your vessel using Automatic Identification System (AIS).

The pirates do fire at times on vessels. The AK rifles they use, some of which were confiscated by Navy, showed them as old and mostly rusted / prone to jamming. The AK47 they use has an effective range of 375 yards. The Rocket Propelled Grenades they fire are mostly of Russian / Afghanistan war relics.

## 2) Precautions

- a) Use of razor bladed barbed wire all around the vessel in coils extending outwards and held in place on angles welded to the shipside.
- b) Securing the accommodation completely in every respect. Lift off external access ladders from main deck.
- c) Secure all doors from inside. This includes Engine room skylights and funnel door, access to steering flat, access to provision spaces from outside.
- d) Keeping an efficient look out and ensuring that lookouts are well rested. Navy found that a lookout's efficiency normally starts to fall after 2 hours and the lowest after 3 hours when under pressure. It is recommended that Master and 3/O keep 6 hrs relieved by C/O and 2/O for next 6 hrs. For lookouts it is recommended that period on watch be restricted to 2 or maximum 3 hours. Lookouts must be briefed in detail what to look for and procedure for scanning the horizon and seas.
- e) Most attacks and accidents normally occur 30 minutes before end of a watch and first 30 minutes into the next watch. It is recommended that one of the two officers and one of the two lookouts on a watch is relieved in a staggered manner. This allows one officer and one lookout who has been on duty and who have the situation awareness to be on bridge while the new comers are absorbing the current situation.

## 3) Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

The vessel must make a Standard Operating Procedure which will be in 5 parts:

- a) The first part consists of physical duration and preparation of the vessel prior entering the danger Zone. A brief introduction with sketch of the zone should be available.
- b) Second part consists of the actions required 96 hrs before the vessel's arrival to the zone. This will include details of information to be transmitted, specific briefing and drills. The do list must also include cleaning of seawater filters, LO and FO filters on ME and AEs, try out of all emergency equipment and communication equipment.
- c) The third part consists of procedures to follow in event of a suspicious sighting, for example i) raise alarm and upgrade the security measure on vessel ii) Inform authorities patrolling the area, UKMTO, HQ etc. This part must be clearly mentioned to the crew of their duties if an attack appears imminent. It must clearly specify what each crewmember on duty and resting must do and their responsibilities. It must also state what evasive action must be taken etc. Keep in

mind that if wheel with vessel at 13 knots is turned from port to starboard from 5 to 10 degrees is sufficient to create a wake that might deter small craft approach. These small crafts or skiffs travel upto 48 knots in burst and might founder in vessel's wake. It is important that vessel speed be maintained above 11 knots at all times. Dropping speed below this threshold allows easy pulling up alongside and boarding. Speed below 10 knots is a NO NO unless you have a naval vessel within 2 nautical miles.

- d) Fourth part details out what the crew must do in event boarding is successful. Be guided that even with pirates on board and crew secure away from pirates, master can on radio ask Naval authorities to board vessel to repel the pirates. The request must go from the vessel. Hence it is very important that either Master or an Officer who can remain calm under pressure mans the radio / sitcom to flash out prepared messages after filling in vessel's position and details of pirates requesting assistance.

Be reminded that you can make it extremely difficult for the pirates to access the Bridge and E/R and use ingenuity to develop methods to deter them without exposing yourself to danger.

- e) The fifth part should elaborate on the post attack period - follow up etc.

4) Check List - A checklist in this case is not for preventing an attack. This is a ship specific check list available for each crew member giving details of vessel's internal communication channels / outside contacts etc and details of jobs allotted to the particular individual. It is easier to carry out one's duty under pressure if one such 'Check list' is available rather than trying to think what one has to do next under pressure.

5) Rest - All crew during the passage must be well-rested and 100 percent alert on watch. Watching TV or playing TT in the Gym is not exactly resting. In the danger zone try and sleep when one is off duty.

6) AIS - Putting off AIS is usually not recommended. Some vessels do it and it does help keeping information of vessel's origin from pirates. However this also blinds the naval forces in the region who could monitor your progress and alert you of any incidents or assist you. It is recommended that in event of a situation requiring you to put off your AIS, you must every hour update the naval monitoring center about your position, heading and speed. They will in turn keep all naval vessel posted. If your vessel details do not appear on the hourly updates sent to the naval vessels from base, they will take it as you have been boarded or you do not need assistance. AIS is normally seen put off when vessel leaves a convoy and duration is normally 6 hrs. This is normally when vessels are most vulnerable.

7) Briefing the crew in detail of the situation / asking for inputs and drilling them is very important. The whole crew must work together and strongly believe that by working

together they can effectively deter any threat by early detecting and reporting.

8) From 96 hrs prior arrival 69 Deg E, while going towards Red Sea or if vessel travelling North / South, prior arrival 15 Deg N or 12 Deg S Master must call CSO daily and update vessel's readiness and plans. While transiting North / South between 15 Deg N and 12 Deg S it is advisable to keep east of 69 Deg E. (This may be amended as required based on situation.)

From entering the danger zone as recognized by CSO, this call must be made twice a day

From 12 hrs prior convoy point call must be made every 4 hrs and a brief verbal report to be given.

From start of convoy till exit, 4-hourly call is to be made to the company. Information to be given is

- i) Vessel's position;
- ii) Distance to go;
- iii) Present speed
- iv) Number of escorts / number of other vessels in convoy
- v) Any incident in last 4 hours.

Same information is to be transmitted to the Owners / Tech group and CSO every 6 hrs on e-mail. Vessel to maintain the same alert status for 24 hrs after drop of convoy but verbal reports to be rescheduled to one every 8 hrs.

9) We have attached a copy of the SOPs and some pictures for reference.

## ANTI-PIRACY WATCH SCHEDULES FOR GOA TRANSIT

**STARTS – DD/MM/YYYY/ XXXX HRS**

**ENDS - DD/MM/YYYY/ XXXX HRS**

### REMARKS

1. ALL LOOKOUTS TO BE PROPERLY RESTED BEFORE WATCH.
2. TO REMAIN VIGILANT AT ALL TIMES ESPECIALLY 30 MINUTES PRIOR & START OF EACH WATCH.
3. IMMEDIATELY INFORM DUTY OFF IF ANY SUSPICIOUS CRAFT IS SEEN APPROACHING.
4. DUTY OFF TO RAISE ALARM IMMEDIATELY ON SUSPICION & ALL CREW TO MUSTER ON BRIDGE IMMEDIATELY.
5. IMMEDIATE MANOEUVRES TO CARRY OUT BY GIVING RUDDER MOMENTS TO DETER ATTACK.
6. OTHER DUTY OFFICER TO INFORM NAVAL SHIP BY VHF CH-16 / CH 08
7. SSAS TO BE ACTIVATED AND PRE-SET SECURITY THREAT MSGS. THROUGH SAT-C & E-MAIL TO BE SENT TO UKMTO, MSCHOA, IMB, MARLO, NAVAL SHIP, CSO.
8. IN CASE PIRATES HAVE BOARDED VESSEL, M/E TO BE STOPPED AND CONTROLS CHANGED OVER TO CONTROL ROOM.
9. ALL CREW TO LATER PROCEED TO ENGINE CONTROL ROOM & BRIDGE DOORS TO BE LOCKED FROM OUTSIDE AND UPPER DECK DOORS TO BE LOCKED FROM INSIDE.

S.NO.	TIME FROM	TIME TO	RANK	NAME	POSITION
1	0000	0200	2/OFF		BRIDGE
2	0000	0200	CH OFF		BRIDGE
3	0000	0200	AB		BRIDGE
4	0000	0200	MTM		BRIDGE WING PORT
5	0000	0200	CADET		BRIDGE WING STBD
6	0200	0400	2/OFF		BRIDGE
7	0200	0400	CH OFF		BRIDGE
8	0200	0400	AB		BRIDGE
9	0200	0400	MTM		BRIDGE WING PORT
10	0200	0400	5TH ENG		BRIDGE WING STBD
11	0400	0600	2/OFF		BRIDGE
12	0400	0600	CH OFF		BRIDGE
13	0400	0600	AB		BRIDGE
14	0400	0600	CH CK		BRIDGE WING PORT
15	0400	0600	GS		BRIDGE WING STBD
16	0600	0800	MASTER		BRIDGE
17	0600	0800	3RD OFF		BRIDGE
18	0600	0800	AB		BRIDGE
19	0600	0800	BOSUN		BRIDGE WING PORT
20	0600	0800	OS		BRIDGE WING STBD
21	0800	1200	MASTER		BRIDGE
22	0800	1200	3RD OFF		BRIDGE
23	0800	1200	AB		BRIDGE WINGS PORT & STBD
24	1200	1600	2ND OFF		BRIDGE
25	1200	1600	CH OFF		BRIDGE

26	1200	1600	AB		BRIDGE WING PORT & STBD
27	1600	1800	2ND OFF		BRIDGE
28	1600	1800	CH OFF		BRIDGE
29	1600	1800	AB		BRIDGE
30	1800	2000	MASTER		BRIDGE
31	1800	2000	3RD OFF		BRIDGE
32	1800	2000	AB		BRIDGE
33	1800	2000	POEN		BRIDGE WING PORT
34	1800	2000	CADET		BRIDGE WING STBD
35	2000	2200	MASTER		BRIDGE
36	2000	2200	3RD OFF		BRIDGE
37	2000	2200	AB		BRIDGE
38	2000	2200	CH CK		BRIDGE WING PORT
39	2000	2200	GS		BRIDGE WING STBD
40	2200	2400	MASTER		BRIDGE
41	2200	2400	3RD OFF		BRIDGE
42	2200	2400	AB		BRIDGE
43	2200	2400	BOSUN		BRIDGE WING PORT
44	2200	2400	OS		BRIDGE WING STBD

**CHECKLISTS OF JOBS TO BE CARRIED OUT FOR GOA TRANSIT**

1	BARBED RAZOR WIRE FENCING AROUND VESSEL'S SHIP'S RAILS.	
2	DUMMIES TO BE PLACED AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS.	
3	FIRE HOSES TO BE RIGGED AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS.	
4	ALL ACCOMMODATION ENTRANCES ON UPPER DECK, A-DECK, B-DECK, C-DECK, D-DECK TO BE CLOSED FROM INSIDE.	
5	STEERING GEAR ROOM ENTRANCE TO BE LOCKED FROM INSIDE.	
6	FUNNEL DOOR ENTRANCE TO BE LOCKED FROM INSIDE.	
7	E/R SKYLIGHT TO BE BATTENED DOWN COMPLETELY.	
8	CO2 ROOM PIPING TO PILOT CYLINDER TO BE DISCONNECTED AND DOOR LOCKED BY PADLOCK FROM OUTSIDE.	
9	PAINT STORE DOOR TO BE LOCKED BY PADLOCK FROM OUTSIDE.	
10	FPK STORE DOOR TO BE LOCKED FROM OUTSIDE BY PADLOCK.	
11	FPK STORE BOOBY HATCH TO BE SECURE FROM INSIDE.	
12	STEERING GEAR ROOM BOOBY HATCH TO BE SECURE FROM INSIDE.	
13	OXYGEN & ACETYLENE ROOM DOORS TO BE PADLOCKED FROM OUTSIDE.	
14	SOPEP STORE DOOR TO BE LOCKED FROM OUTSIDE BY PADLOCK.	
15	PROVISION STORE ENTRANCE ON POOP DECK TO BE LOCKED FROM INSIDE.	
16	ALL COMPANION LADDERS LEADING TO BRIDGE FROM P&S SIDES TO BE BLOCKED BY BARBED RAZOR WIRE.	
17	ALL ACCOMMODATION ENTRANCES ON B-DECK, C-DECK, D-DECK TO BE BLOCKED BY BARBED RAZOR WIRE.	
18	BRIDGE ENTRANCE DOOR FROM STAIRWAY LOCKING ARRNGMNT FROM OUTSIDE TO BE KEPT READY.	
19	E/R ENTRANCE DOORS FROM UPPER DECK LOCKING ARRANGEMENTS TO BE KEPT READY.	
20	M/E & A/E CHECKS TO BE CARRIED OUT & LO FILTERS TO BE CLEANED.	
21	SW FILTERS TO BE CLEANED.	
22	STEERING GEAR CHECKS TO BE CARRIED OUT.	
23	EMERGENCY GENERATOR TO BE TRIED OUT.	
24	ALL COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT TO BE CHECKED AND TRIED OUT.	
25	SSAS TO BE TRIED OUT.	
26	SECURITY DRILL FOR HIJACKING & PIRACY ATTACK TO BE CARRIED OUT.	
27	SECURITY MEETING TO BE HELD WITH CREW.	
28	REPORTING TO UKMTO, MSCHOA, MARLO BY E-MAIL ON ENTERING 78 Deg E.	
29	DAILY REPORTINGS TO CSO, VSL SUPTD.	
30	VESSEL TO BE REGISTERED TO NAVY FOR GROUP TRANSIT.	
31	AIS - VOYAGE RELATED INFO RE DRAFT, NO.OF CREW, DESTINATION, ETA TO BE REMOVED.	
32	PROVISIONS FOR 2 DAYS TO BE KEPT READY IN ECR.	
33	USE OF NIGHT VISION BINOCULARS	



**CONTINGENCY CHECKLIST IN CASE OF SUSPICIOUS BOAT APPROACHING VESSEL  
OR VESSEL BEING HIJACKED DURING GOA TRANSIT**

1	RAISE ALARM.	
2	ALL CREW TO MUSTER ON BRIDGE	
3	VESSEL TO BE CHANGED OVER TO HAND STEERING AND USE RUDDER MOVEMENTS BY 5 ~ 10 DEGREE TO CREATE A WAKE TO DETER PIRATES FROM COMING ALONGSIDE.	
4	CALL NAVAL SHIP ON VHF CH-16 & INFORM SHIP BEING CHASED BY SUSPICIOUS BOAT, SHIP'S POSITION, CALL SIGN, COURSE & SPEED.	
5	ACTIVATE SSAS.	
6	INFORM MANAGERS/OWNERS/CSO BY TELEPHONE.	
7	SEND SECURITY ALERT MESSAGE TO UKMTO, MSCHOA, MARLO, IMB PIRACY CENTRE, OWNERS, CHRTRS.	
8	BRIDGE WING DOORS TO BE LOCKED FROM INSIDE.	

**IN CASE VESSEL BOARDED BY PIRATES**

1	STOP MAIN ENGINES & CHANGE OVER CONTROL TO ENGINE ROOM.	
2	INFORM NAVAL SHIP ABOUT HIJACKERS BOARDED VESSEL AND ALL CREW PROCEEDING TO ENGINE ROOM & LOCKING THEMSELVES, M/E STOPPED & CONTROLS CHANGED OVER TO ENGINE ROOM AND VESSEL REQUIRES IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE AND NAVAL FORCES	
3	DUTY AB TO TAKE 2 PORTABLE GMDSS VHF TO ECR.	
4	ALL LIGHTS FACING FOR'D TO BE SWITCHED OFF FOR NAVAL ASSISTANCE.	
5	ALL CREW TO PROCEED TO ECR.	
6	DUTY OFF TO BE LAST PERSON LEAVING BRIDGE & BRIDGE EXIT DOOR TO STAIRCASE TO BE BLOCKED BY ANGLE BAR FROM OUTSIDE.	
7	DUTY OFF BEING LAST PERSON TO BLOCK E/R ENTRANCE DOOR ON UPPER DECK FROM INSIDE & PROCEED TO ECR.	
8	WAIT FOR NAVAL HELP TO ARRIVE & TAKE CONTROL OF SHIP. WAIT FOR ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS ON PA SYSTEM BY NAVAL AUTHORITIES. AUTHENTICATE PRESENCE OF NAVAL AUTHORITIES.	



All accommodation ladders blocked from upper deck to Bridge Deck.



All accommodation entrances locked from inside and blocked from outside.



Barbed wire fencing completed all around vessel.

Dummies placed at various locations.



Fire Hoses rigged at various locations