



UNCLASSIFIED

(U) **WORLDWIDE: Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) Report, 31 January–28 February 2024**



28 February 2024

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1. (U) **Scope Note**

(U) The Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) report provides information on threats to merchant vessels, the shipping industry, and other maritime stakeholders worldwide in the last 30 days. This report is produced primarily to inform merchant mariners and naval forces.

2. (U) **Warnings, Advisories and Alerts:** See Appendix C for active advisories.

A. (U) U.S. Maritime Advisory 2024-003: Black Sea and Sea of Azov – Military Combat Operations

Issued on 26 February 2024. This advisory cancels U.S. Maritime Advisory 2023-010.

Issue: Since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine began in late February 2022, commercial vessels have reportedly been struck by projectiles and experienced explosions in the Black Sea and Sea of Azov. There have also been reports of moored and drifting naval mines. While some past actions may have targeted specific commercial vessels due to their association with certain countries or their activity, the potential remains for miscalculation or misidentification, resulting in a high risk of damage to commercial vessels in the region. For more information about U.S. Maritime Alerts and Advisories, please visit <https://www.maritime.dot.gov/msci/>. This advisory will automatically expire on 25 August 2024.

3. (U) **Summary:**

A. (U) RED SEA: On 27 February, a missile struck the water within 3 NM of a tanker approximately 60 NM west of Hodeida, Yemen.

B. (U) ARABIAN GULF: On 27 February, three small boats approached and followed a merchant vessel approximately 90 NM east of Ras Al Misham, Saudi Arabia.

C. (U) GULF OF OMAN: On 25 February, a small fast boat with two persons onboard approached and followed a merchant vessel for over a half hour approximately 20 NM east of Khor Fakkan, United Arab Emirates.

D. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 24 February, two anti-ship ballistic missile (ASBM) attacks targeted a U.S.-flagged product tanker approximately 70 NM east of Djibouti.

E. (U) ARABIAN SEA: On 23 February, a merchant vessel sighted three small boats operating near a larger boat approximately 175 NM east of Qalhat Liquefied Natural Gas Terminal, Oman.

F. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 22 February, two ASBMs launched from Houthi-controlled territory struck a cargo ship approximately 70 NM east of Aden, Yemen.

G. (U) RED SEA: On 21 February, merchant vessels reported an explosion and a flash in the southern Red Sea approximately 40 NM west of Hodeida, Yemen.

H. (U) BANGLADESH: (Late Reporting) On 19 February, nine robbers boarded an anchored a liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) tanker at Kutubdia Anchorage.

4. (U) Monthly Incidents by Region

(U) This section lists reports of active violence against shipping, credible threats to shipping, or the potential for a situation to develop into a direct threat to shipping over the past 30 days. Every effort is made to ensure that incidents are not double-counted. In the event that double-counting is detected, or an incident is later found to be different than initially reported, an explanation of the cancellation of the inaccurate report will be made in at least one message prior to dropping the erroneous report.

A. (U) NORTH AMERICA: No current incidents to report.

B. (U) CENTRAL AMERICA – CARIBBEAN – SOUTH AMERICA: No current incidents to report.

C. (U) ATLANTIC OCEAN AREA: No current incidents to report.

D. (U) NORTHERN EUROPE – BALTIC: No current incidents to report.

E. (U) MEDITERRANEAN – BLACK SEA: No current incidents to report.

F. (U) WEST AFRICA – GULF OF GUINEA:

1. (U) GUINEA-BISSAU: On 20 February at 2250 UTC, one small boat approached an underway cargo ship approximately 160 NM west of Eitoga Island, near position 11:24N – 018:50W. When the boat approached to

within 0.9 NM, the vessel implemented evasive maneuvers and the boat aborted its approach. Following the incident, the crew and vessel were reported safe. (MDAT-GoG; Clearwater Dynamics)

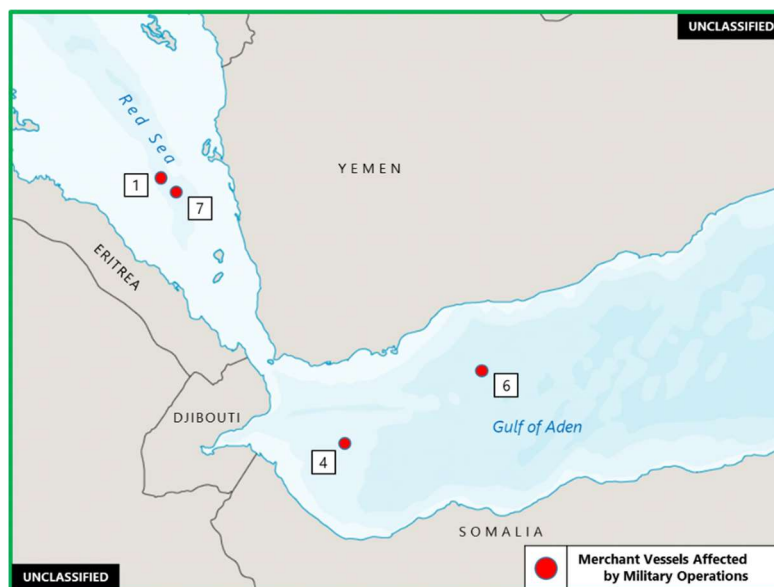
2. (U) LIBERIA: On 16 February at an unspecified time, an unknown number of robbers boarded a product tanker berthed at Monrovia Port, near position 06:21N – 010:47W. The robbers escaped unnoticed after stealing ship's property. The theft was discovered after the tanker departed port. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics)

3. (U) NIGERIA: On 7 February at 2300 local time, up to 10 robbers boarded a Marshall Islands-flagged cargo ship berthed at Berth 9, Lagos Port, near position 06:26N – 003:22E. The robbers gained access to ship's stores and stole containers of paint. (MDAT-GoG; Clearwater Dynamics)

4. (U) NIGERIA: On 7 February at 2300 local time, up to 10 robbers boarded a Bahamas-flagged container ship berthed at Lagos Port, near position 06:25N – 003:20E. The robbers gained access to ship's stores and stole more than 600 kilograms of paint containers. (MDAT-GoG; Clearwater Dynamics)

G. (U) ARABIAN GULF: No current incidents to report.

H. (U) INDIAN OCEAN – EAST AFRICA – RED SEA:



(U) Figure 1. Red Sea – Gulf of Aden Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea



(U) Figure 2. Indian Ocean Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea

1. (U) RED SEA: On 27 February at 1915 UTC, a missile impacted the water within 3 NM of a Panama-flagged tanker approximately 60 NM west of Hodeida, Yemen, near position 15:00N – 041:57E. No damage or injuries have been reported. The tanker continued to its next port of call. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)

2. (U) ARABIAN GULF: On 27 February at 0453 UTC, three small boats with two persons onboard each boat suspiciously approached and followed a merchant vessel approximately 90 NM east of Ras Al Misham, Saudi Arabia, near position 28:01N – 050:17E. The small boats followed the reporting vessel at a distance of less than 1 NM for one hour. No weapons or uniforms were visible. The crew and vessel were reported safe. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)

3. (U) GULF OF OMAN: On 25 February at 1420 UTC, a small fast boat suspiciously approached and followed a merchant vessel for more than a half hour approximately 20 NM east of Khor Fakkan, United Arab Emirates, near position 25:20N – 056:44E. The boat was white with an open top and was powered by a single outboard motor and the two people onboard wore military-style, camouflage-type uniforms. The small boat remained between 20 to 40 meters astern of the merchant vessel for the duration. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)

4. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 24 February between 1400 and 2200 UTC, two anti-ship ballistic missile (ASBM) attacks targeted the U.S.-flagged product tanker TORM THOR approximately 70 NM east of port of Djibouti (exact position not specified). The first ASBM was shot down by USS MASON, while the second missile missed the tanker and impacted the water. Neither USS MASON nor TORM THOR were damaged and there were no injuries reported. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics; U.S. Central Command)

5. (U) ARABIAN SEA: On 23 February at 1200 UTC, a merchant vessel observed three small boats with three persons onboard each boat operating near a larger boat, approximately 175 NM east of Qalhat Liquefied Natural Gas Terminal, Oman, near position 22:12N – 063:00E. The reporting merchant vessel assessed the activity as suspicious. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)

6. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 22 February between 0530 and 0645 UTC, two ASBMs launched from Houthi-controlled territory struck the Palau-flagged general cargo ship ISLANDER approximately 70 NM east of Aden, Yemen (exact position not specified). The incident resulted in a minor injury to one crew member and minor damage to the ship. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics; U.S. Central Command)

7. (U) RED SEA: On 21 February at 0027 UTC, merchant vessels reported an explosion and a flash approximately 40 NM west of Hodeida, Yemen. Vessels and crew in the area were reported safe. There was no mention of a specific vessel having been targeted. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)

8. (U) BAB EL-MANDEB STRAIT: On 19 February at 1820 UTC, an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) struck the Marshall Islands-flagged bulk carrier NAVIS FORTUNA approximately 60 NM north of Djibouti, Djibouti, near position 12:28N – 043:30E. The UAV caused superficial damage to the accommodation superstructure. The crew were reported safe and the vessel proceeded to its next port of call. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics; U.S. Central Command)

9. (U) RED SEA: On 19 February at 1746 UTC, two UAVs approached a merchant vessel approximately 90 NM west of Jizan, Saudi Arabia, near position 16:32N – 040:55E. The UAVs followed the vessel for 30 minutes at an assessed height of 100 meters, and later departed the area. The crew and vessel were reported safe. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)

10. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 19 February at 0955 UTC, an explosion occurred in close proximity to the Greece-flagged bulk carrier SEA CHAMPION 100 NM east of Aden, Yemen (exact location not specified). About two hours later the vessel was targeted by another attack, in which an object impacted the water within 15 meters of the vessel's starboard side. Following the attacks, evidence of shrapnel and damage to the vessel's paintwork were observed. The vessel and crew were reported safe and the vessel continued its voyage. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics; U.S. Central Command)

11. (U) BAB EL-MANDEB STRAIT: On 18 February at 2000 UTC, multiple missiles struck the Belize-flagged bulk carrier RUBYMAR approximately 35 NM south of Mokha, Yemen (exact location not specified). One missile hit the side of the vessel near its engine room and another hit the vessel's deck. Following the missile strikes, the bulk carrier's 24 crew members and the armed security team that were onboard abandoned ship, and were transferred to another commercial vessel. As of Wednesday, the bulk carrier was still afloat, but listing, with its stern low in the water. The vessel's owner stated that it was being towed to Djibouti. (BBC; UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics; Washington Post)

12. (U) RED SEA: On 16 February at 1331 UTC, three missiles targeted the Panama-flagged crude oil tanker POLLUX approximately 72 NM northwest of Mokha, Yemen, near position 14:03N – 042:16E. The first two missiles landed in the water near the vessel, and the third missile hit the port side of the main deck. No casualties were reported. The tanker sustained minor damage, but reported no smoke or fire. The crew and vessel were reported safe. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics; U.S. Central Command)

13. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 15 February at 1345 UTC, an explosion occurred in close proximity to the Barbados-flagged bulk carrier LYCAVITOS approximately 85 NM east of Aden, Yemen, near position 12:40N – 046:55E. The

vessel sustained light damage and the crew were reported as safe. Following the incident, the vessel proceeded to its next port of call. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics; U.S. Central Command)

14. (U) RED SEA: On 14 February at 2300 UTC, a merchant vessel underway approximately 12 NM southwest of Mokha, Yemen, near position 13:09N – 043:05E spotted two possible UAVs. As soon as the master noticed the first flying object, the vessel performed evasive maneuvers including rapid course changes. A second flying object subsequently approached, but soon departed the area. After 10 minutes, the first flying object disappeared from view. The crew and vessel were reported safe and the vessel continued its voyage. (Clearwater Dynamics)

15. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 13 February at 1820 UTC, U.S. forces observed a ballistic missile launched from Houthi-controlled territory in Yemen into the Gulf of Aden (exact location not specified). U.S. Navy ships tracked the missile but took no action because the missile was not projected to impact near any ships. There were no reports of injuries or damage from ships in the area. (U.S. Central Command; Clearwater Dynamics)

16. (U) BAB EL-MANDEB STRAIT: On 12 February at 0035 UTC, the Marshall Islands-flagged bulk carrier STAR IRIS was attacked by two missiles while transiting southbound through the Red Sea, approximately 40 NM south of Mokha, Yemen (exact position not specified). The vessel sustained minor damage as a result of the attack. The crew were reported safe and the bulk carrier continued its voyage. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics; Reuters)

17. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 6 February at 1100 UTC, an explosion occurred in close proximity to the Marshall Islands-flagged bulk carrier STAR NASIA approximately 50 NM south of Aden, Yemen, near position 11:59N – 044:29E. U.S. Central Command reported that Houthi militants had targeted the bulk carrier with three anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASBMs). The explosion of one missile caused minor damage but no injuries. Later another missile impacted the water with no effect. USS LABOON, operating near STAR NASIA, shot down a third ASBM. The crew was reported safe and the vessel remained seaworthy. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics; U.S. Central Command)

18. (U) RED SEA: On 6 February at 0050 UTC, a projectile passed over the deck of a merchant vessel transiting approximately 57 NM west of Hodeida, Yemen, near position 14:19N – 042:14E. The projectile caused slight damage to the bridge windows. According to U.S. Central Command, at approximately the same time, Houthi forces fired three ASBMs likely targeting the Barbados-flagged cargo ship MORNING TIDE operating in the southern Red Sea. The three missiles impacted the water near the ship without damage. The crew and vessel are reported safe, and the vessel continued its planned passage. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics; U.S. Central Command)

19. (U) ARABIAN SEA: On 3 February at 1040 UTC, a cargo vessel transiting through the Indian Ocean reported a medium-sized vessel ahead acting suspiciously approximately 345 NM east of Socotra Island, near position 13:01N – 060:29E. The suspicious vessel launched a small boat, which approached and proceeded to follow the cargo vessel. After approximately 20 minutes, another small boat was seen approaching. The master increased speed and carried out evasive maneuvers, after which the small boats stopped following the vessel. No weapons or ladders were sighted. The master reported all crew were safe and the cargo vessel continued its voyage. (Clearwater Dynamics)

20. (U) RED SEA: On 2 February at 1820 UTC, USS LABOON and F/A-18 fighters from USS EISENHOWER Carrier Strike Group engaged and shot down seven UAVs over the Red Sea (exact location not specified). There were no injuries or damage reported. (Clearwater Dynamics)

21. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 2 February at 0730 UTC, USS CARNEY observed and destroyed a UAV over the Gulf of Aden (exact position not specified). There were no reported injuries or damage. (Clearwater Dynamics)

22. (U) RED SEA: On 1 February at 0950 UTC, two missiles exploded in the water 0.5 NM from a Liberia-flagged cargo vessel transiting north approximately 64 NM west of Hodeidah, Yemen, near position 14:37N – 041:49E. One missile impacted the water near the vessel's port side and the other impacted the water near the vessel's starboard side. Following the incident, the crew mustered. The vessel was undamaged and the crew were reported safe. The vessel continued its transit as part of a coalition convoy. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)

23. (U) RED SEA: On 1 February at 0730 UTC, U.S. Central Command identified an explosive unmanned surface vehicle (USV) in the Red Sea (exact location not specified). The USV had been launched from Houthi-controlled territory in Yemen and was heading toward international shipping lanes. U.S. forces determined the USV presented an imminent threat to vessels and U.S. Navy ships in the area and destroyed the USV. There have been no reports of injuries or damages sustained to any vessel. (Clearwater Dynamics)

24. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 1 February at 0300 UTC, U.S. forces observed and destroyed a UAV over the Gulf of Aden (exact position not specified). There were no reported injuries or damage. (Clearwater Dynamics)

25. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 31 January at 1730 UTC, USS CARNEY shot down an anti-ship ballistic missile fired from Houthi-controlled territory in Yemen (exact position not specified). Subsequently, at 1810 UTC, USS CARNEY intercepted three UAVs operating in its vicinity. No injuries or damage were reported. (Clearwater Dynamics)

26. (U) ARABIAN SEA: On 31 January at 1120 UTC, two suspected motherships altered course toward a merchant vessel and a skiff approached the vessel while it was underway 470 NM east of Socotra Island, Yemen, near position 12:44N – 062:29E. Threats were reported to have been heard over channel 16. The perpetrators abandoned their approach as the vessel increased speed and changed course. (Clearwater Dynamics)

I. (U) EAST ASIA – SOUTHEAST ASIA:

1. (U) INDONESIA: On 20 February at 0400 local time, two robbers armed with knives boarded an anchored bulk carrier at Panjang Anchorage, near position 05:29S – 105:17E. The duty oiler spotted the robbers in the engine room and raised the alarm after evading capture by the robbers. Seeing the crew's alertness, the robbers escaped with ship's spare engine parts. The crew was reported safe and the incident was reported to local authorities. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics)

2. (U) INDONESIA: On 20 February at 0308 local time, four robbers holding gun-like objects boarded the underway Hong Kong-flagged bulk carrier TOP DILIGENCE in the eastbound lane of the Singapore Strait Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS), near position 01:08 N – 103:29E. The crew detected the robbers in the engine room. A search of the vessel revealed no unauthorized persons onboard and that spare engine parts had been stolen. The

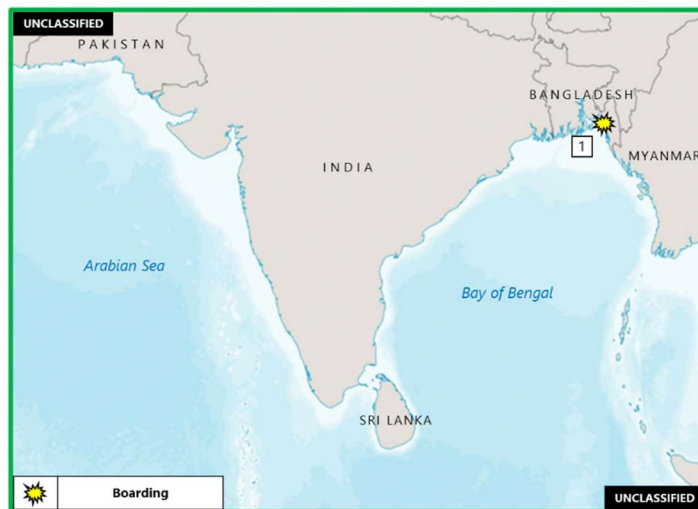
master reported all crew safe and that the vessel did not require assistance. The bulk carrier continued its voyage to Singapore. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics; ReCAAP)

3. (U) INDONESIA: On 6 February at 0405 local time, four perpetrators boarded the underway Cyprus-flagged bulk carrier MARIA MARIA in the eastbound lane of the Singapore Strait TSS, near position 01:09N – 103:28E. The crew reported up to four persons in the engine room. After a search by the crew, the master confirmed all crew safe, and nothing was reported missing. No assistance was required and the ship continued its voyage to Singapore. (Clearwater Dynamics; ReCAAP)

4. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 2 February at 0040 local time, five perpetrators boarded the Cyprus-flagged container ship NORDPUMA anchored at the Manila Bay Anchorage, near position 14:23N – 120:48E. The perpetrators stole ship's stores and then escaped. The alarm was raised, and fire hoses were activated while the crew conducted a search. The ship reported the incident to the vessel traffic management system Manila. The Philippines Coast Guard responded and carried out an inspection. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics; ReCAAP; vesseltracker.com)

5. (U) INDONESIA: On 31 January at 0200 local time, six robbers armed with long knives boarded the Singapore-flagged bulk carrier CLIPPER I-STAR underway in the eastbound lane of the Singapore Strait TSS, near position 01:09N – 103:28E. After gaining access to the engine room, the robbers tied up the chief engineer and oiler, and blindfolded the third engineer. The alerted crew raised the alarm, and, hearing the alarm, the robbers escaped with stolen ship's engine spare parts. The master reported the incident to the local authorities. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics; vesseltracker.com; ReCAAP)

J. (U) INDIAN SUBCONTINENT:



(U) Figure 3. Indian Subcontinent Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea

1. (U) BANGLADESH: (Late Reporting) On 19 February at 0155 local time, nine robbers boarded the anchored Panama-flagged LPG tanker GAS COURAGE at Kutubdia Anchorage, near position 21:49N – 091:43E. The robbers tied up the watchman and escaped with the ship's stores. The ship reported the incident to the local authorities

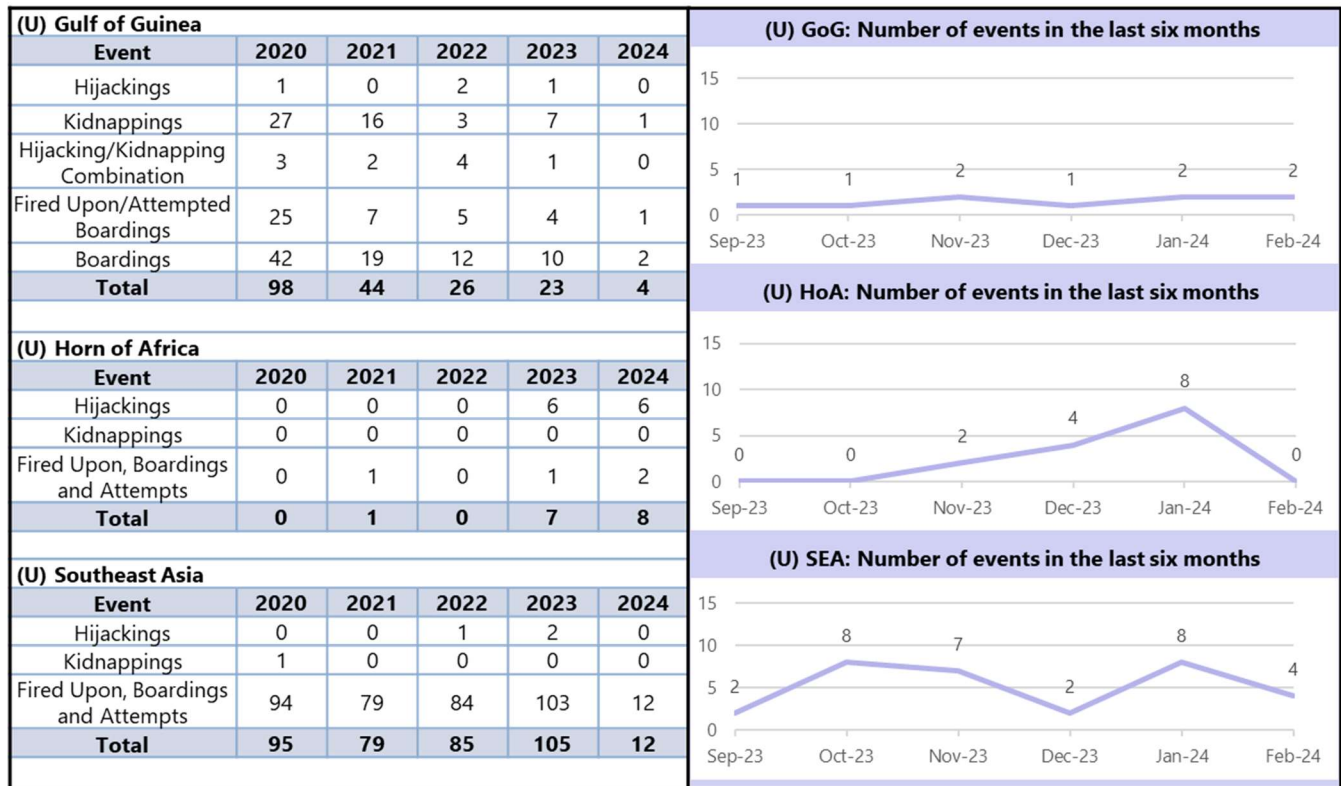
who responded quickly, apprehended all the robbers, and recovered the stolen ship's stores. All crew were reported safe. (ReCAAP; Clearwater Dynamics)

2. (U) BANGLADESH: On 16 February at 2130 local time, four robbers armed with knives boarded a container ship anchored at Chittagong Anchorage, near position 22:09N – 091:46E. After the duty watch stander observed the robbers, the alarm was raised and the crew mustered. The crew conducted a search and discovered ship's stores had been stolen. The master notified port control, local agents, and the coast guard. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics)

3. (U) BANGLADESH: On 3 February at 0610 local time, the duty watchkeeper spotted two perpetrators attempting to board a container ship at Chittagong Inner Anchorage, near position 22:09N – 091:46E. The alarm was sounded, and the crew mustered. Upon hearing the alarm and seeing the crew's alertness, the perpetrators aborted the boarding and left empty-handed. The ship informed port authorities of the incident. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics)

K. (U) **AUSTRALIA – NEW ZEALAND – PACIFIC OCEAN AREA:** No current incidents to report.

5. (U) Appendix A: Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea Statistics and Trends



6. (U) **Appendix B: Definitions and Sourcing**

A. (U) Definitions: In order to promote consistent use of accurate terms of reference, we use the following definitions to describe a range of criminal antishipping activity and impediments to safe navigation in our worldwide reporting and analysis.

- (U) **Attempted Boarding** – Close approach or hull-to-hull contact with report that boarding paraphernalia were employed or visible in the approaching boat.
- (U) **Blocking** – Hampering safe navigation, docking, or undocking of a vessel as a means of protest.
- (U) **Boarding** – Unauthorized embarkation of a vessel by persons not part of its complement without successfully taking control of the vessel.
- (U) **Fired Upon** – Weapons discharged at or toward a vessel.
- (U) **Hijacking** – Unauthorized seizure and retention of a vessel by persons not part of its complement.
- (U) **Kidnapping** – Unauthorized forcible removal of persons belonging to the vessel from it.
- (U) **Hijacking/Kidnapping Combination** – Unauthorized seizure and retention of a vessel by persons not part of its complement who forcefully remove crew members from vessel when disembarking.
- (U) **Robbery** – Theft from a vessel or from persons aboard the vessel.
- (U) **Suspicious Approach** – All other unexplained activity in close proximity of an unknown vessel.

B. (U) Sourcing: ONI derives information in this report primarily from government agencies, piracy reporting centers, maritime security companies, and open press.

7. (U) **Appendix C: Active U.S. Maritime Advisories**

Title	Effective Date	Expiration Date
2024-003: Black Sea and Sea of Azov – Military Combat Operations	26 FEB 24	25 AUG 24
2024-002: Worldwide – Foreign Adversarial Technological, Physical, and Cyber Influence	21 FEB 24	19 AUG 24
2024-001: Southern Red Sea, Bab el Mandeb Strait, Gulf of Aden, Northwestern Indian Ocean, Somali Basin, Arabian Sea, Gulf of Oman, Strait of Hormuz, and Persian Gulf – Threats to Commercial Vessels	2 FEB 24	31 JUL 24
2023-016: Gulf of Guinea – Piracy/Armed Robbery/Kidnapping for Ransom	27 DEC 23	24 JUN 24
2023-015: Global – Overview of the U.S. Maritime Advisory System	22 DEC 23	19 JUN 24
2023-014: Eastern Mediterranean Sea – Regional Conflict	26 OCT 23	23 APR 24

2023-013: Various – GPS Interference & AIS Spoofing	2 OCT 23	30 MAR 24
2023-012: Global – New U.S. Maritime Alert and Advisory Subscription Process	22 SEP 23	24 MAR 24

(U) **ICOD:** 28 February 2024

(U) The Worldwide Threat to Shipping reports are posted weekly on the ONI Intelligence Portal:
<https://www.oni.navy.mil/ONI-Reports/Shipping-Threat-Reports/Worldwide-Threat-to-Shipping/>