



Circular 2016/003

Warning: Yemen, Bab – el – Mandeb Strait and Red Sea area

Date: 17/10/2016

To whom it may concern,

During an ongoing complex situation in Yemen, with different factions (pro-government and pro-previous-government) fighting each other, each supported by different countries, missiles were fired at vessels passing the Bab – el – Mandeb Strait and the Red Sea area.

There are no guaranteed secure coastal zones in Yemen due to the ongoing multi -faceted conflict and the terrorist threat from AQAP. The Maritime Security Level for Belgian ships (Level 1) is currently under review. Depending on further developments, a raise in security level may follow (soon).

Due to the potential risks to commercial vessels from the civil disorder in Yemen, we recommend that vessels transiting the area avoid operating within 24 nautical miles of the Yemeni coastline and be especially vigilant when passing through the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait. Vessels are advised to remain as far west and south of Yemen as practicable, maintaining best speed, and transit the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait during daylight hours. Masters can expect to see an increased coalition warship presence in the Bab-el-Mandeb straits as a precaution.

Finally: The Belgian government advises Masters in the affected area to remain in contact with the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO). Furthermore the US Navy requests that masters stay in contact with the U.S. Naval Cooperation and Guidance of Shipping (NCAGS) at cusnc.ncags_bw@me.navy.mil and report any unusual activities or hostile or potentially hostile action observed by mariners within this region to Coalition naval vessels using Channel 16, via e-mail at cusnc.bwc@me.navy.mil or by phone 011-973-1785-3879.

E. VAN CRAEYVELT
Director-general,
Directorate-General Shipping