№ 7/CIRC/FSI   06 / September / 2018

To: Shipowners, ship managers, operators, masters, crew members,
recognized organizations, surveyors and the shipping community

Subject: PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY AGAINST SHIPS AND AMENDMENT TO BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (VERSION 5) TO DETER PIRACY IN THE HIGH RISK AREA AND ENHANCE MARITIME SECURITY IN THE RED SEA, GULF OF ADEN, INDIAN OCEAN AND ARABIAN SEA

 1   This Circular draws the attention of the shipping community towards the latest Best Management Practices (BMP5) to deter piracy and enhance maritime security in the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea which was published in June 2018.

Reporting to MSCHOA and UKMTO

2   Registering with and reporting to the Maritime Security Centre – Horn of Africa (MSCHOA) and The UK Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) are part of the key fundamentals of the BMP. It is essential for all ships to keep the naval forces operating in the area aware of their sea passages through the High Risk Area. Once ships have commenced their passage, it is important that they continue to update the naval forces on their positions and movements. A High Risk Area (HRA) is an industry defined area within the VRA where it is considered that a higher risk of attack exists, and additional security requirements may be necessary. The HRA is outlined on maritime security chart Q6099.

 3   Georgian-registered ships which are:

   a)   Transiting the High Risk Area; or

   b)   Operating within the High Risk Area

should register with **BOTH** MSCHOA **AND** UKMTO. The reporting requirements apply even if the ship is stationed for prolonged periods in ports or in the offshore waters of ports in the vicinity of the HRA.

 4   The detail of reporting is as follows:

   i.   <u>MSCHOA</u>. MSCHOA is the planning and coordination centre for the EU Naval Forces (EU NAVFOR).

      a)   The MSCHOA vessel registration area is designed to inform military counter piracy forces of   the transit of merchant ships in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden.

      b)   The MSCHOA vessel registration area is defined on maritime security chart Q6099.

      c)   MSCHOA encourages companies to register their ships' movements before entering the HRA and if   participating in the group transit system via their website: **www.mschoa.org.**

   ii.   <u>UKMTO.</u> UKMTO acts as the primary point of contact for merchant ships and their CSOs, providing liaison with military forces in the region. UKMTO administers the Voluntary Reporting Scheme, under which merchant ships are encouraged to send regular reports.

a) The UKMTO Voluntary Reporting Area (VRA) is identified on maritime security charts such as UKHO Q6099. Ships entering and operating within the VRA are encouraged to register with the UKMTO.

b) Registration establishes direct contact between the reporting ship and UKMTO. Upon entering the VRA, reporting should be done via the "Vessel Position Reporting Form - Initial Report".

c) Ship masters should also report daily to the UKMTO via the "Vessel Position Reporting Form - Daily Position Report". Upon reaching port, or upon exiting the High Risk Area, ship masters are to submit the "Vessel Position Reporting Form - Final Report".

d) The reporting forms are attached as Annex D to the BMP. Reporting to the UKMTO is done via email: **ukmto@eim.ae.**

5 Masters of ships sailing within the Internationally Recommended Transit Corridor (IRTC) while transiting through the Gulf of Aden should make use of the "Group Transit" scheme by registering with the MSCHOA. "Group Transits" had been established by the EU NAVFOR for vessels to conduct their passage through the UKMTO MSPA in groups, based on different passage speeds. This process is known as "GOA Group Transits" (GOA GT). In order to achieve this, the position, time, and speed for vessels to pass through a waypoint at the eastern and western limits of the UKMTO Transit Corridor are promulgated in the MSCHOA website: **http://www.mschoa.org.**

6 Shipowners, managers and operators of Georgian flagged vessels are advised to instruct their shipmasters and crew to remain vigilant when passing through the High Risk Area and to monitor situational updates as per provided by the MSCHOA website: **http://www.mschoa.org.**

7 The contact details of MSCHOA and UKMTO are:

 Maritime Security Centre – Horn of Africa (MSCHOA)

Email **postmaster@mschoa.org**

Telephone +44 1923 958545; +44 1923 958700

Fax +44 1923 958520

Website **www.mschoa.org**

 United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO)

Email **watchkeepers@ukmto.org**

Telephone (24hrs) +44 2392 222060

Website **www.ukmto.org**

 Email: **ukmto@eim.ae**

Self-Protection Measures

8 In addition, Georgian flagged ships should implement self-protection measures which would act as highly-visible deterrents. Such measures would include arrangement of additional lookouts, installation of physical barriers and proceeding at full sea speed in the High Risk Area. The guidance contained in BMP was based on experiences of piracy attacks to date and these measures should be viewed as the minimum preparations that should be adopted. Ships making frequent transits through or operating in the High Risk Area should consider taking additional self-protection measures beyond the BMP recommendations to further reduce the risk of a successful piracy attack.

 Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships

9 The IMO guidance on preventing and suppressing acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships. Please refer to **Annex B** for the complete text of the MSC.1/Circ 1334. Shipowners, shipmasters and crews of ships operating in waters which are prone to acts of piracy or armed robbery attacks are strongly recommended to increase the level of surveillance and security onboard.

10 The ANNEX of MSC.1/Circ 1334 lists the precautions to be taken to reduce the risks of piracy on the high seas and armed robbery against ships at anchor, off ports or when underway through a coastal State's territorial waters. Shipowners and shipmasters are required to send reports of any attacks or attempted attacks onboard their ships immediately to the Rescue Co-ordinating Centre (RCC)1 for the area and subsequently to MPA. The immediate and subsequent reports should contain the information listed in APPENDIX 5 and 6 of MSC.1/Circ 1334.

Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in waters off the Coast of Somalia

11 We would also like to draw the attention of the shipping community to the IMO Assembly Resolution A.1044(27). Please refer to **Annex C** for the complete text of the Resolution.

12 In particular, we draw your attention to the advice in Res A.1044(27), which is reproduced below:

> NOTING WITH GREAT CONCERN that incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships continue to occur in waters off the coast of Somalia, some of which have reportedly taken place more than 1,700 nautical miles from the pirates' home bases,

> FURTHER NOTING that the increased geographical spread of pirate attacks in the Indian Ocean necessitates Governments providing additional naval vessels, maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft and other surveillance assets, operating bases and logistic support,

> MINDFUL OF the grave danger to life and the serious risks to navigational safety and the environment that attacks by pirates may cause,

13 List of RCCs can be found in Admiralty List of Radio Signals – Global Maritime Distress and Safety System.

"Annex A – BMP 5 Annex B – MSC.1/Circ 1334 Annex C – Res A.1044(27). "

Sincerely,

Director   SIGNED/SEALED ELECTRONICALLY   Tamar Ioseliani