

Joint Maritime Information Center

Update 040 to JMIC Advisory Note:

01 March – 03 May 2026

Regional Tension - Impact on Maritime Security

Area of Concern:
Middle East Maritime Region

JMIC# 001-26

Regional Threat Level: **CRITICAL**

1. Operational Summary – Last 72 Hours

Arabian Gulf & Strait of Hormuz

Strait of Hormuz traffic remains significantly reduced. On 03 May 2026, UKMTO received a report of an incident 11NM west of Sirik, Iran, in which the Master of a northbound bulk carrier reported being attacked by multiple small craft. The vessel departed the area and all crew are reported safe.

Anchorage show no significant change in congestion. Reports of mines in and near the TSS persist, and GNSS interference remains sporadic but reduced from the level of activity recorded in March.

Gulf of Oman & Arabian Sea (No change)

Merchant vessels continue to report a strong naval presence. Blockade enforcement activity is reported in the area and mariners are advised to maintain prudent standoff distance from naval units. For ships carrying humanitarian cargos destined for Iran, JMIC has released Advisory 003-26 detailing coordination requirements for review and approval.

No new verified incidents affecting commercial shipping have been reported in the last 72 hours.

Southern Red Sea, Bab el Mandeb & Gulf of Aden (No change)

Commercial traffic remains steady in the Bab el Mandeb and Gulf of Aden. Houthi messaging continues without associated operational indicators.

Somali Coast and Somali Basin

Piracy threat level remains SEVERE. An oil products tanker continues to be held by pirates on the northeastern Somali coast, and a general cargo ship remains held south of Eyl. No injuries have been reported in either case, and there are no verified updates indicating movement, release, or escalation.

In the last 72 hours, a tanker reported an approach by a suspected Pirate Action Group approximately 500 NM east of Somalia. The skiff closed to within 400 m before disengaging; no injuries or damage were reported. Extended-range PAG operations enabled by motherships (hijacked dhows) are an active threat.

Three additional reports were issued regarding activity in vicinity of the Gulf of Aden:

- 01 May (UKMTO 048-26): A bulk carrier reported a black-hulled skiff with seven armed persons approaching approximately 92 NM SW of Al Mukalla.
- 02 May (UKMTO 049-26): A bulk carrier reported a green-hulled skiff, accompanied by a white fishing vessel, approaching to within 500 m approximately 84 NM SW of Al Mukalla.



- 02 May, a tanker was boarded by armed personnel ~10nm off the coast of Yemen. The crew is detained by the attackers and is currently underway towards Somalia.

Vessels transiting the region are advised to maintain heightened vigilance, apply BMP-MS measures, and report any suspicious activity to UKMTO.

Northern Red Sea & Suez Canal (No change)

No confirmed attacks or disruptions. Suez Canal transits continue normally. Electronic interference remains sporadic.

Eastern Mediterranean (No change)

No maritime attacks have been reported. Periodic electronic and navigational interference continues near Cyprus and the Levant. Naval presence remains elevated, and vessels are advised to maintain prudent separation from military units. An aid flotilla originating from Barcelona continues enroute Gaza. Vessels in vicinity of the aid flotilla should consider media activity likely as it travels east.

2. Regional Threat Overview

Overall Maritime Risk Level: ● CRITICAL

JMIC Threat Scale: ● Low | ● Moderate | ● Substantial | ● Severe | ● Critical

Region	Threat Level	Notes
Arabian Gulf / Strait of Hormuz	CRITICAL	Navigation interference, blockade enforcement, mine reports, residual kinetic risk. Risk of attack or miscalculation in the Strait of Hormuz.
Gulf of Oman / Arabian Sea	CRITICAL	Historical projectile/UAV strikes; naval presence remains high.
Bab el-Mandeb / Gulf of Aden / Southern Red Sea	MODERATE	No confirmed maritime attacks; stable posture; Houthi rhetoric persists.
Somali Coast / Somali Basin	SEVERE	Two vessels are held by Somali pirates, a third vessel is likely enroute Somalia after being boarded, and Pirate Action Group activity is assessed as highly likely across the Somali Coast and Somali Basin. PAG activity was reported 500 NM east of Somalia. Coastal and offshore weather conditions remain conducive to small-boat operations.
Northern Red Sea / Suez Canal	MODERATE	No attacks or disruptions; Suez Canal operating normally.
Eastern Mediterranean	MODERATE	EMI/GNSS disruptions; elevated naval presence; no maritime attacks. Aid flotilla, may produce localized media interest.



3. Maritime Incidents & Traffic Assessment

3A. Confirmed Vessel Incidents (Since 1 March) (No change)

Total of 37 incidents since 1 March; no new confirmed vessel incidents in the last 48 hours.

3B. Infrastructure Incidents (Last 72 Hours) (No change)

No attacks on ports or maritime infrastructure reported. Overall risk remains SUBSTANTIAL, driven by the potential for renewed kinetic activity and ongoing uncertainty around Iranian coastal waters and blockade-related enforcement.

3C. Traffic Trends

- Strait of Hormuz:
 - Historical average: ~138 vessels/day
 - 30 April: 10 transits
 - 01 May: 15 transits
 - 02 May: 9 transits

- Bab el-Mandeb:
 - 104 vessel transits in past 72 hours
 - Still below pre-2023 baseline

* Metrics are a compilation of data from S&P Maritime and SeaVision sources.

3D. Port & Anchorage Congestion (No change)

High vessel density persists across major Arabian Gulf anchorages, with no significant change in congestion levels over the last 72 hours. Traffic patterns remain largely unchanged as operators continue to delay Strait of Hormuz transits in response to observed activity.

Vessels operating in crowded anchorages should maintain heightened situational awareness and monitor for any navigational degradation to reduce collision risk. Periodic repositioning within anchorages remains advisable to avoid predictability and reduce exposure to potential targeting.

3E. GNSS / AIS Interference (No change)

GNSS interference remains sporadic and localized across the Strait of Hormuz approaches, the Gulf of Oman, the Arabian Gulf, the central Red Sea, and the Suez Canal approaches. AIS reliability in the Arabian Gulf reflects overall improvement since 15 March.

4. Outlook (24–48 Hours)

Arabian Gulf / Strait of Hormuz (No change)

The operating environment remains high risk. Security pressure around the SOH is expected to persist, with aggressive hailing and assertive action by Iranian units. The ceasefire remains fragile, and blockade-related enforcement activity continues. Rapid, short-notice actions near Iranian coastal waters, anchorages, and predictable routing points remain possible. The TSS and adjacent waters may have associated mine risk based upon various reports.



Gulf of Oman / Arabian Sea (No change)

Naval activity remains elevated in the area. Verification hails and queries for vessels approaching the Strait of Hormuz or moving to/from Iranian ports is highly likely. Operators may encounter suspicious approaches and electronic interference near coastal transit lanes.

Southern Red Sea / Bab el Mandeb / Gulf of Aden (No change)

Houthi messaging continues without associated operational indicators. The potential for renewed disruption persists should regional tensions escalate. GNSS interference remains a residual hazard, with effects from the central Red Sea periodically extending into the southern sector.

Somali Coast and Somali Basin

There is a critical risk of pirate activity in the region. Two vessels are held, another vessel was taken in Yemeni territorial waters, and several recent suspicious approaches are noted. PAG activity is assessed as highly likely across both the Somali Coast and Somali Basin, supported by weather conditions favourable for small-boat operations. Mariners should maintain a vigilant watch and report any suspicious activity to UKMTO and MSCIO.

Northern Red Sea / Suez (No change)

The environment remains stable with no indicators of maritime escalation. Periodic EMI and GNSS disruptions are likely to continue.

Eastern Mediterranean (No change)

While there is no major change in the Eastern Mediterranean, periodic electronic and navigational interference may be encountered near Cyprus and the Levant. Naval presence remains elevated, and vessels should maintain prudent separation from military units. Operators should maintain awareness of the Gaza aid flotilla and associated media interest.



Annexes

Transit comparisons

CARGO VESSELS TRANSITS COMPARISON

Date	26-Apr	27-Apr	28-Apr	29-Apr	30-Apr	01-May	02-May
SoH E	2	2	7	10	2	6	3
SoH W	0	0	1	2	3	6	1
SoH Total	2	2	8	12	5	12	4
BAM NW	5	15	3	11	12	10	10
BAM SE	7	15	15	10	16	4	9
BAM Total	12	30	18	21	28	14	19

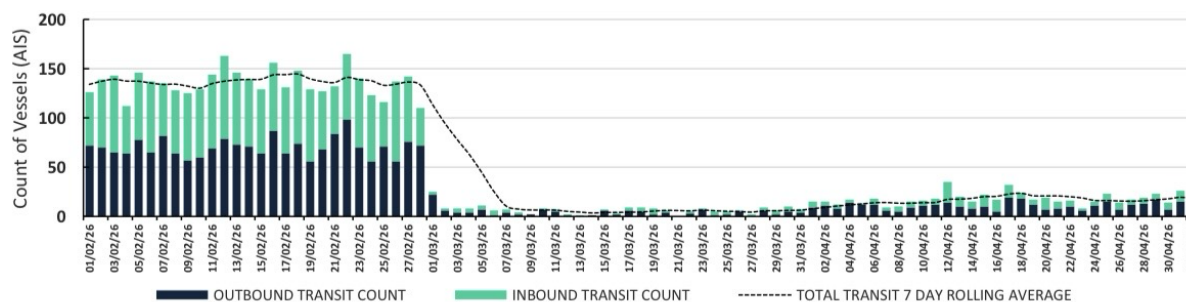
TANKERS (ALL TYPES) VESSELS TRANSITS COMPARISON

Date	26-Apr	27-Apr	28-Apr	29-Apr	30-Apr	01-May	02-May
SoH E	0	1	2	4	2	1	3
SoH W	1	0	1	0	3	2	2
SoH Total	1	1	3	4	5	3	5
BAM NW	8	3	9	8	5	9	10
BAM SE	9	4	10	7	9	5	5
BAM Total	17	7	19	15	14	14	15

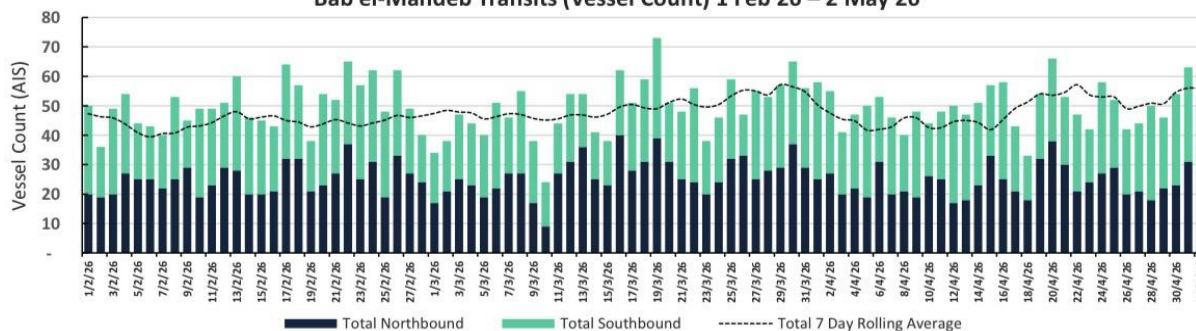
Source: S&P and SeaVision. Data based on cargo carrying vessels 1000 GT and above transmitting AIS

UKMTO transits

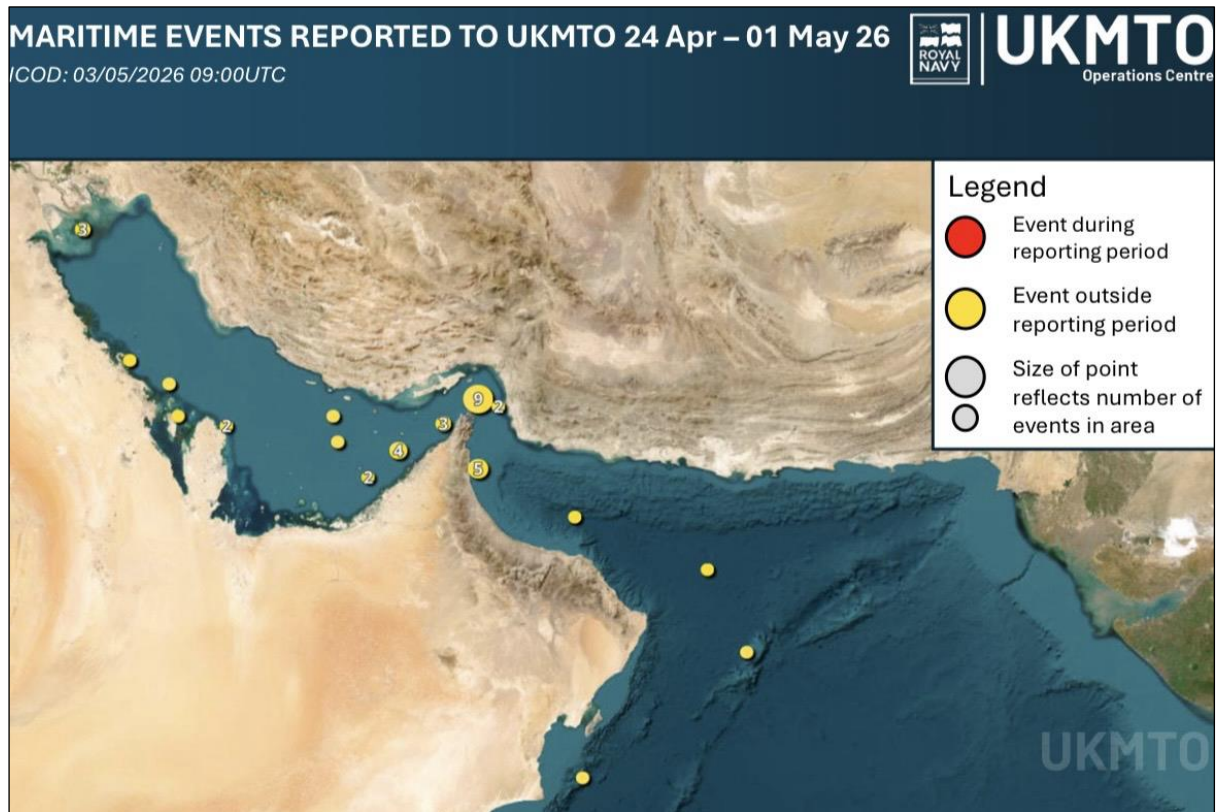
Strait of Hormuz Transits (Vessel Count) 1 Feb 26 – 2 May 26



Bab el-Mandeb Transits (Vessel Count) 1 Feb 26 – 2 May 26



UKMTO Incident Maps



Confirmed Maritime Security Incidents List since 28 February

Date	Vessel	Vessel Type	Event Type	Location	Summary
01 Mar 2026 - UKMTO 004-26	SKYLIGHT	Tanker	Attack	Strait of Hormuz	Vessel struck by projectile while at anchor causing fire; crew evacuated with injuries reported.
01 Mar 2026 - UKMTO 006-36 UKMTO 005-26	HERCULES STAR	Tanker	Attack (serious)	Strait of Hormuz	Vessel struck by projectile while transiting outbound; fire reported onboard.
01 Mar 2026 - UKMTO 006-26	OCEAN ELECTRA	Bulk	Attack (serious)	Arabian Gulf	Projectile detonated in close proximity while vessel was transiting westbound; no damage reported.
01 Mar 2026 - UKMTO 007-36	MKD VYOM	Tanker	Attack (serious)	Gulf of Oman	Vessel struck by projectile (USV) while transiting northbound causing fire; one fatality reported.
01 Mar 2026 - UKMTO 008-26	STENA IMPERATIVE	Tanker	Attack (serious)	Bahrain	Vessel struck by two projectiles while in drydock causing fire and damage.
03 Mar 2026 - UKMTO 009-26	PELAGIA	Bulk	Near Miss	Gulf of Oman	UAV observed near vessel before impacting water nearby; no damage reported.
03 Mar 2026 - UKMTO 010-26	GOLD OAK	Bulk	Attack (serious)	Gulf of Oman	Vessel struck by projectile while at anchor causing structural damage; crew safe.
03 Mar 2026 - UKMTO 011-26	LIBRA TRADER	Tanker	Attack (serious)	Gulf of Oman	Vessel struck by projectile while anchored; damage reported.
04 Mar 2026 - UKMTO 012-26	SAFEEN PRESTIGE	Container	Attack (serious)	Strait of Hormuz	Explosion was reported near stern following approach by small craft; crew abandoned vessel.
04 Mar 2026 - UKMTO 013-26	MSC GRACE	Container	Near Miss (serious)	Arabian Gulf	Projectile detonated approximately 1 NM from vessel while drifting.
06 Mar 2026 - UKMTO 015-26	MUSSAFAH 2	Tug	Attack (serious)	Strait of Hormuz	Vessel struck by projectiles while supporting operations with SAFEEN PRESTIGE.
07 Mar 2026 - UKMTO 016-26	ARABIA III	Offshore Rig	Attack (serious)	Arabian Gulf	Drilling rig struck by UAV causing injuries and evacuation of personnel.
10 Mar 2026 - UKMTO 017-26	GH KAHLO	Bulk	Near Miss	Arabian Gulf	The Master reports witnessing a splash and hearing a loud bang in close proximity of a bulk carrier.
10 Mar 2026 - UKMTO 018-26	ONE MAJESTY	Container	Attack (serious)	Arabian Gulf	Vessel struck by projectile at stern causing possible structural damage.
11 Mar 2026 - UKMTO 020-26	STAR GWYNETH	Bulk Carrier	Attack (serious)	Arabian Gulf	Projectile strike caused breach in cargo hold and adjacent ballast tanks resulting in listing.
11 Mar 2026 - UKMTO 021-26	SAFESEA VISHNU	Tanker	Attack (serious)	Northern Arabian Gulf (STS area)	Struck by projectile while conducting STS operations; fire onboard and casualty reported.
11 Mar 2026 - UKMTO 021-26	ZEFYROS	Tanker	Attack (serious)	Northern Arabian Gulf (STS area)	Struck by projectile during STS operations causing significant fire.
12 Mar 2026 - UKMTO 022-26	SOURCE BLESSING	Container	Attack	Arabian Gulf (North of Jebel Ali)	Projectile struck accommodation block causing fire; crew safe.
17 Mar 2026 - UKMTO 023-26	Name withheld UFN	LPG Carrier	Suspicious activity	Approx 23 NM of the coast of UAE	Vessel was subjected to falling debris from drone or Missile Interception minor structural damage, no fire; crew safe.



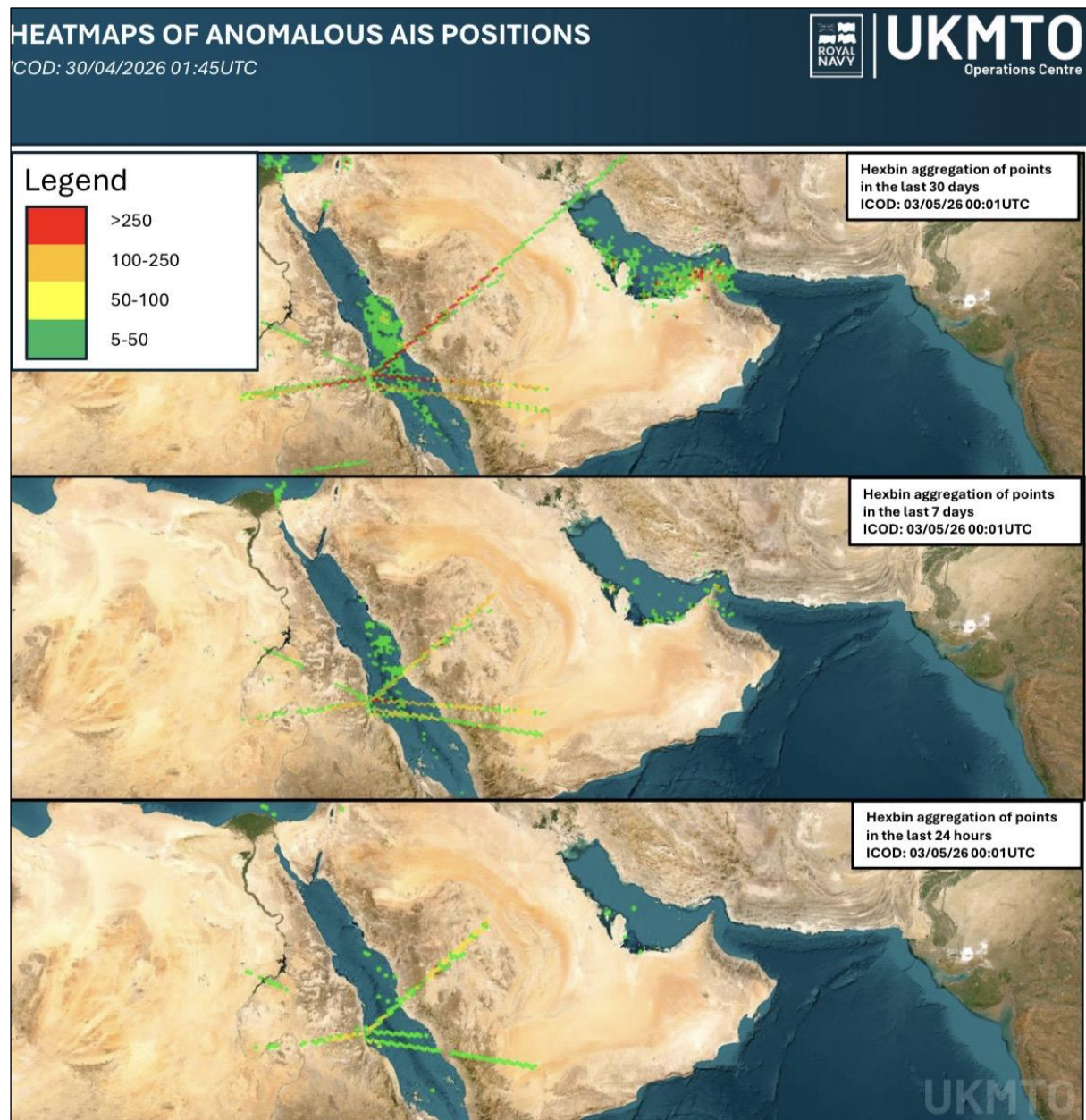
18/03/2026 - UKMTO 024-26	Name withheld UFN	Chemical products tanker	Attack	Vessel in TTW of UAE, 11NM off the coast	Hit by unknown projectile and caught fire. Crew of 16, 15 rescued and one crew member unaccounted for.
19/03/2026 UKMTO 025-26	Name withheld UFN	Tug, Multipurpose Offshore vessel	Suspicious activity	Inner anchorage at Ras Laffan Port, approx 4 NM out.	Debris from a drone impacted on board, resulting in damage to the bridge window. No injuries to personnel and no structural damage to the vessel have been reported.
21/03/2026 UKMTO 026-26	Name withheld UFN	Bulk carrier	Suspicious activity	Arabian Gulf, approx 12 NM from the coast of UAE.	Vessel crew heard an explosion and observed a fire for a short period approx 1300 meters from vessel, crew of 24 safe.
30/03/2026 UKMTO 028-26	EXPRESS ROME	Container	Suspicious activity	Transiting eastbound via the Arabian Gulf, 22NM from Saudi Arabia	2 missiles splash into the water approximately 50 – 100 meters on the starboard side of the vessel. No damage and all crew are safe
30/03/2026 UKMTO 029-26	AI SALMI	Crude oil Tanker	Suspicious activity	Stationary, 31NM from the coast of UAE, Arabian Gulf.	Vessel was hit by an unknown projectile. There was a fire located in the STBD side cargo tank, fire was extinguished. Crew safe.
31/03/2026 UKMTO 030-26	AQUA 1	Tanker	Suspicious activity	Stationary 12NM from the coast of Qatar.	Vessel was hit by 2 unknown projectiles. As a result, a small fire started but was extinguished. Crew safe.
05/04/2026 UKMTO 031-26	Name withheld UFN	Container	Suspicious activity	Alongside in Khorfakkan port, UAE	Three unknown projectiles impacted in close proximity, no damage. Crew safe.
07/04/2026 UKMTO 032-26	Name withheld UFN	Container	Attack	In transit westbound Arabian Gulf, 25 NM off the cost of Iran.	The vessel was struck by an unknown projectile causing damage above the waterline. The crew are safe.
07/04/2026 UKMTO 036-26	Name withheld UFN	Bulk Carrier	Attack	112nm SE of Ras-al-Hadd	The vessel was struck by 2 unknown projectiles resulting in a fire. The crew is safe.
18/04/2026 UKMTO 037-26	Name withheld UFN	Tanker	Attack	20NM NE of Oman	The vessel being approached by 2 IRGC gun boats, no VHF challenge that then fired upon the tanker. Tanker and crew are reported safe.
18/04/2026 UKMTO 038-26	Name withheld UFN	Container	Attack	25NM NE of Oman	A report of a vessel being hit by an unknown projectile which caused damage to some of the containers, no fires or environment impact reported
18/04/2026 UKMTO 039-26	Name withheld UFN	Unspecified	Suspicious activity	3NM E of Oman	The Master reported sighting a splash in close proximity of the vessel.
20/04/2026 UKMTO 040-26	Name withheld UFN	Unspecified	Suspicious activity	Strait of Hormuz	Vessel experienced aggressive hailing and threats by IRGC during transit of the Strait of Hormuz. Vessel proceeded unharmed.
22/04/2026 UKMTO 041-26	Name withheld UFN	Container	Attack	15NM from the coast of Oman	A container vessel was attack by 1 small craft with 3persons onboard. The bridge was heavily damaged by RPG and small arms fire. The Master was informed he has permission to transit the Strait of Hormuz. AIS was off. There was no VHF warning prior to the attack. Crew are reported safe and well.



22/04/2026 UKMTO 042-26	Name withheld UFN	Container	Attack	6NM west of Iran	The vessel was transiting southbound through the Strait of Hormuz. The vessel was fired at and VHF hailed by the IRGC to drop anchor.
22/04/2026 UKMTO 043-26	Name withheld UFN	Cargo	Attack	8NM west of Iran	An outbound cargo ship reported been fired upon and then stopped in the water. Crew are safe and accounted for. There is no reported damage to the vessel.
03/05/2026 UKMTO 050-26	Name withheld UFN	Bulk Carrier	Attack	11NM west of Sirik, Iran	The Master of a northbound bulk carrier has reported being attacked by multiple small craft. All crew reported safe and no environmental impact reported.



AIS/GNSS Interference Graphics



JMIC Regional Threat Levels

Threat Level	Definition
Low	An attack is highly unlikely
Moderate	An attack is possible but not likely
Substantial	An attack is a strong possibility
Severe	An attack is highly likely
Critical	An attack is almost certain

