

Joint Maritime Information Center

Update 043 to JMIC Advisory Note:

01 March – 10 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, with multiple security-related incidents reported in the last 72 hours.

On 08 May 2026, an Indian-flagged dhow transiting from Dubai to Yemen caught fire and capsized. One crew reported dead; 17 were rescued by a nearby vessel. Nature of the incident is under investigation.

On 09 May 2026, UKMTO WARNING 056-26 reported that a merchant vessel was struck by an unknown projectile northeast of Doha, Qatar. A small fire was contained, and no casualties were reported.

Mining in and near the TSS remains a threat, and GNSS interference is sporadic.

Gulf of Oman & Arabian Sea

Merchant vessels continue to report a strong naval presence across the Gulf of Oman and the northern Arabian Sea. Blockade enforcement activity is ongoing.

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. Three merchant vessels currently held:

- Oil/products tanker – held since 21 April 2026
- General cargo / cement carrier – held since 26 April 2026
- Oil tanker – held since 02 May 2026; taken 10 NM off the Yemen coast and diverted toward Somali waters; status unconfirmed

These three vessels remain contained within Somali TTWs and do not pose an imminent threat to merchant shipping in the area.

The hijacked dhow reported on 25 April 2026 is no longer assessed to be under pirate control, with AIS activity indicating the dhow is safely transiting toward Gulf of Oman.

A recent report from the Gulf of Aden (09–10 May) indicates a merchant vessel was approached by two groups of small boats. PAG activity remains highly likely across the Somali Coast and Somali Basin.



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. A flotilla originating from Barcelona continues enroute.

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	Three vessels are held by Somali pirates. The dhow taken on 25 April is no longer assessed to be under pirate control, with AIS indicating safe transit toward the Gulf of Oman. PAG activity remains highly likely, including at extended range.
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)

Total of 41 incidents since 1 March; one new confirmed vessel incident in the last 72 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
 - 07 May: 0 transits
 - 08 May: 0 transits
 - 09 May: 1 transits
- Bab el-Mandeb:
 - 96 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.

4. Outlook (24–48 Hours)

Arabian Gulf / Strait of Hormuz

The operating environment remains high risk based upon recent attacks on ships in the area. Multiple instances of aggressive hailing and assertive action by Iranian units have been noted in the last 72 hours. Blockade-related enforcement activity continues. Rapid, short-notice actions near Iranian coastal waters and anchorages remain possible. The TSS and adjacent waters may have associated mine risk based upon reporting. The attack on a bulk-carrier in vicinity of Qatar illustrates the risk to ships beyond the immediate Strait of Hormuz area.

Gulf of Oman / Arabian Sea

Naval activity remains elevated in the area and blockade enforcement is expected to persist. 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. Use of force against vessels failing to comply with blockading forces has been reported.

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

Piracy risk remains severe. Three merchant vessels are held by Somali pirates, and the dhow taken on 25 April is no longer assessed to be under pirate control, with AIS indicating safe transit toward the Gulf of Oman.

A more recent dhow incident reported on 09 May off the southern Somali coast remains under assessment as a suspected hijacking. The vessel fits the profile for use as a coastal mothership.

A separate report from the Gulf of Aden indicates a merchant vessel was approached by two groups of small boats; the vessel transited safely, and the activity is currently assessed as non-hostile, likely routine fishing.

Pirate Action Group activity remains highly likely across the Somali Coast and Somali Basin. Weather conditions remain conducive for small-boat operations close to shore.

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 flotilla and associated media interest.



Annexes

Transit comparisons

CARGO VESSELS TRANSITS COMPARISON

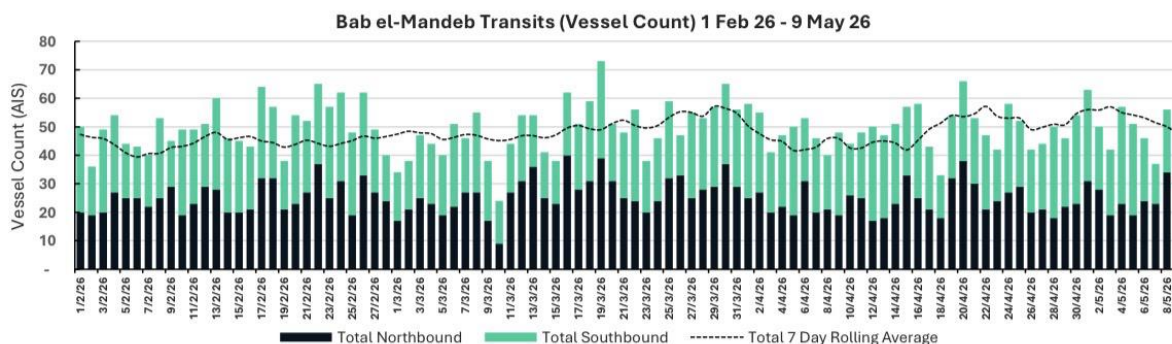
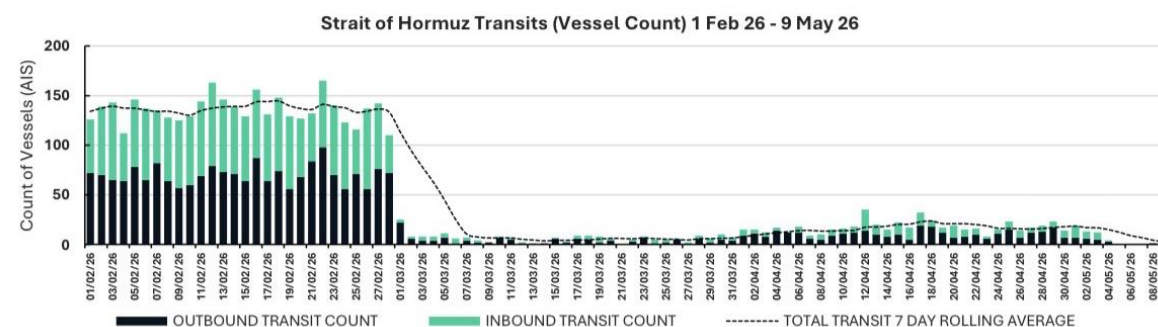
Date	03-May	04-May	05-May	06-May	07-May	08-May	09-May
SoH E	2	2	1	0	0	0	0
SoH W	3	2	0	0	0	0	0
SoH Total	5	4	1	0	0	0	0
BAM NW	6	10	7	9	13	13	11
BAM SE	12	20	15	12	4	12	6
BAM Total	18	30	22	21	17	25	17

TANKERS (ALL TYPES) VESSELS TRANSITS COMPARISON

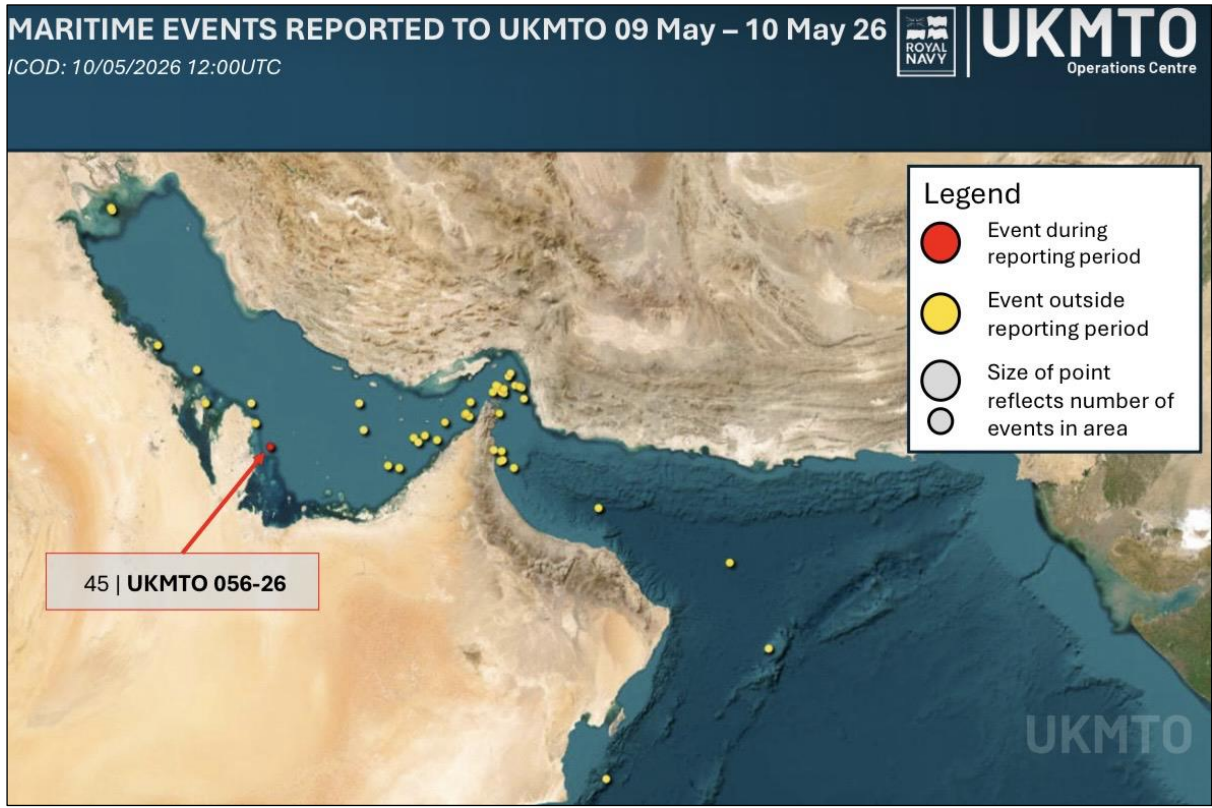
Date	03-May	04-May	05-May	06-May	07-May	08-May	09-May
SoH E	0	1	1	0	0	0	1
SoH W	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
SoH Total	1	1	1	0	0	0	1
BAM NW	7	9	8	9	5	11	9
BAM SE	9	7	11	5	2	3	7
BAM Total	16	16	19	14	7	14	16

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

UKMTO transits



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.



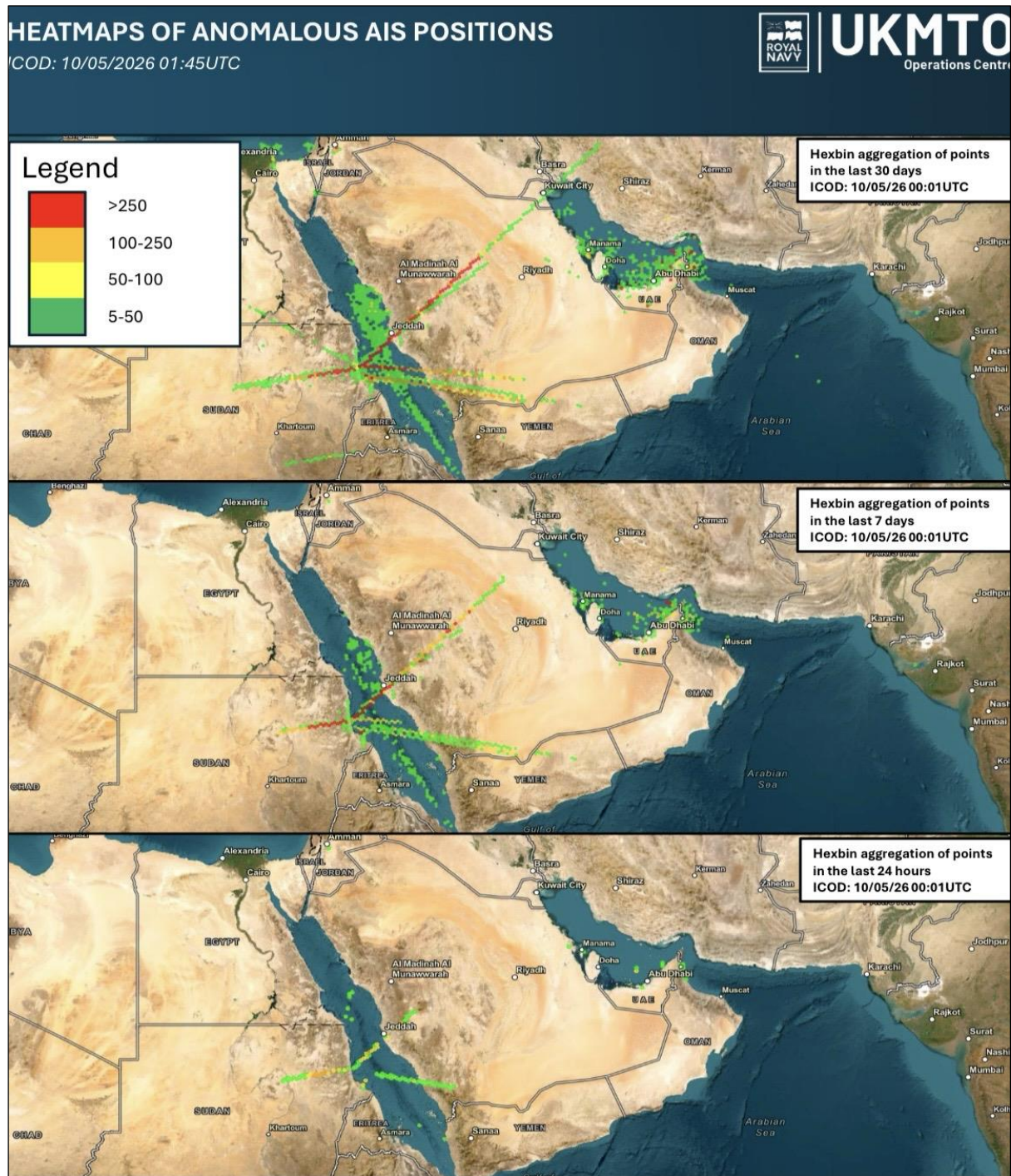
18/03/2026 - UKMTO 024-26	Name withheld UFN	Chemical products tanker	Attack	Vessel in TTW of UAE, 11NM off the coast	Hit by unknown projectile and caught fire. Crew of 16, 15 rescued and one crew member unaccounted for.
19/03/2026 UKMTO 025-26	Name withheld UFN	Tug, Multipurpose Offshore vessel	Suspicious 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.
03/05/2026 UKMTO 052-26	Name withheld UFN	Tanker	Attack	78NM of coast of UAE	Vessel attacked by possible drones in the engine room and cargo hold. All crew reported safe and no environmental impact reported.
04/05/2026 UKMTO 053-26	Name withheld UFN	Cargo Vessel	Suspicious Activity	36NM N of Dubai	Fire reported in engine room. Cause unknown. Authorities investigating. All crew reported safe and no environmental impact reported.
04/05/2026 UKMTO 054-26	Name withheld UFN	Tanker	Attack	40NM off the coast of UAE	Fire reported on deck as a result of attack. Ballast and cargo tank damage reported. All crew reported safe.
05/05/2026 UKMTO 055-26	Name withheld UFN	Cargo Vessel	Attack	Strait of Hormuz, IVO the coast of Oman	The vessel has reportedly been hit by an unknown projectile while transiting out of the Straits of Hormuz. 4 of the crew have been injured and 1 crew member is severely injured. Later 8 crew members were flown to hospital.
10/05/2026 UKMTO 056-26	Name withheld UFN	Bulk Carrier	Attack	23NM northeast of DOHA, QATAR	The Master of a Bulk Carrier reports being hit by an unknown projectile. A small fire was extinguished and there are no casualties or environmental impact.



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

