



Australian Government

**Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development and Local Government**

MARITIME SECURITY NOTICE

Security Regulated Australian Ships: Protective security arrangements for transiting through the waters surrounding the Gulf of Aden and the Somali Coast (2-08)

Purpose

The purpose of this Maritime Security Notice (2-08) is to emphasise the importance of robust protective security arrangements for security regulated Australian ships¹, particularly whilst transiting through shipping lanes in high risk locations.

Recent increases in Acts of Piracy

The current surge in acts of piracy in shipping lanes and waters surrounding the Gulf of Aden and the Somali Coast is affecting the international shipping trade.

Recent acts of piracy in the region demonstrate that a range of ships are considered potentially attractive hijack and ransom targets to Somali-based pirates. Ships that have come under attack include cargo ships (e.g. *MV Faina*), luxury cruise liners (*Nautica*, *MV Athena*, *Seabourn Spirit*), pleasure craft (such as yachts e.g. *Le Ponant*) and a very large crude carrier (*Sirius Star*). Somali-based pirates are also becoming increasingly sophisticated, including through the use of improved weaponry and 'mother ships' to enable attacks further off the coast line and into neighbouring waters.

Transport Security Implications

It is essential for regulated Australian ships to apply a robust and layered protective security regime, including exercising a high level of vigilance and extreme caution and stringent access control measures, in particular when transiting through the Gulf of Aden or accessing waters off the coast of Somalia and neighbouring waters.

Strong preventive ship security should build a keen security awareness culture that encourages the identification and reporting of any unusual or suspicious behaviour on or around the ship by crew members and passengers, which may potentially indicate impending pirate activity. Any behaviour that cannot be satisfactorily explained should be reported to the Ship Security Officer (SSO) and/or Master of a Ship for resolution and, if appropriate, to the local port security authorities.

Security regulated Australian ship operators should give consideration to the local security environment to inform decision making when undertaking security planning and mitigation strategies appropriate for their operations.

¹ As defined in the *Maritime Transport and Offshore Facilities Security Act 2003*

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade issues travel advice for shipping and ports which can be found at

http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/shipping_and_ports - this should be read in conjunction with destination specific travel advice.

The International Maritime Bureau established the 24-hour Piracy Reporting Centre for shipmasters to report actual or attempted attacks or suspicious movements. The Centre also provides information on the areas of high risk associated with acts of piracy or specific ports and anchorages associated with armed robberies on board ships.

Further information on the Piracy Reporting Centre can be obtained at: <http://www.icc-ccs.org/> or via email to: imbkl@icc-ccs.org or piracy@icc-ccs.org.

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