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MARINE CIRCULAR

MC-5/2017/1

8/2017

FOR: Ship Owners, Ship Managers, Ship Operators, Ship Masters, Ship Officers

SUBJECT: REPORTING OF INCIDENTS OF PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY AGAINST SHIPS IN THE GULF OF GUINEA

DEFINITIONS:

The following abbreviations stand for:

- "ICC" – International Chamber of Commerce
- "IMB" – International Maritime Bureau
- "IMO" – International Maritime Organization
- "MDAT-GoG – Maritime Domain Awareness for Trade-Gulf of Guinea
- "MSC" – Maritime Safety Committee
- "PRC" – Piracy Reporting Centre

PURPOSE: The IMO MSC, at its 98th session, urged all ship owners, ship operators and ship masters to register with MDAT-GoG upon entering its voluntary reporting area and to report suspicious activity and incidents of piracy and armed robbery in a timely manner. The IMO MSC also urged ship owners, ship operators, ship masters and commercial companies providing risk and security advice to clients operating in the Gulf of Guinea to also report incidents of piracy and armed robbery and suspicious activity to the IMB PRC. The above comes on revelation that there has been under-reporting of such incidents against ships in the Gulf of Guinea. The timely provision of such information will support actions and interventions by regional navies in response to piracy attacks.

REFERENCES:

Refer to the appended IMO circular for details and contact information of MDAT-GoG and IMB PRC - MSC.1/Circ.1585.

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MSC.1/Circ.1585
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REPORTING OF INCIDENTS OF PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY AGAINST SHIPS IN THE GULF OF GUINEA

1 The Committee, at its ninety-eighth session (7 to 16 June 2017), considered the under-reporting of incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships in the Gulf of Guinea. According to information provided by the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), the under-reporting was estimated to be in the order of 60 to 70%. It was noted that this was leading to ineffective analysis and understanding of the problem, a less efficient response, and exacerbating the risk to crews. The Committee therefore agreed to remind all parties of the need to report such incidents in a timely and accurate manner to the appropriate authorities.

2 The Committee recalled the reporting mechanisms, set out in MSC.1/Circ.1333.Rev1 on *Recommendations to Governments for preventing and suppressing piracy and armed robbery against ships* and MSC.1/Circ.1334 on *Guidance to shipowners and ship operators, shipmasters and crews on preventing and suppressing acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships*, and in particular, the need to report to the coastal States.

3 With respect to the Gulf of Guinea, the Committee noted that the Maritime Domain Awareness for Trade – Gulf of Guinea (MDAT – GoG) commenced operations in June 2016. The Committee further noted that information provided by ships to the MDAT-GoG when transiting West African waters was intended to help build a common maritime picture between countries in the region and support actions and interventions by regional navies in response to piracy attacks.

4 The Committee urged the MDAT-GoG that it should work in collaboration with coastal States in the implementation of the Code of Conduct concerning the repression of piracy, armed robbery against ships, and illicit maritime activity in west and central Africa, adopted formally in Yaoundé, in June 2013, by Heads of State and Government or their representatives from 25 west and central African countries.

5 The Committee also urged all shipowners, ship operators and ships' masters to register with MDAT-GoG* upon entering its voluntary reporting area and to report suspicious activity and incidents of piracy and armed robbery in a timely manner (the MDAT-GoG can be contacted by phone at +33 (02) 98 22 88 88 or by email to watchkeepers@mdat-gog.org. All details for registration and reporting are contained on UKHO security chart Q 6114 and CS Carte de sûreté maritime 8801).

* Refer to Circular Letter No.3394 for further information.

6 The Committee further urged shipowners, ship operators, ships' masters, and commercial companies providing risk and security advice to clients operating in the Gulf of Guinea, to also report incidents of piracy and armed robbery and suspicious activity to the IMB Piracy Reporting Centre (PRC) (the IMB PRC can be contacted by phone at +60 3 2031 0014 or by email to imbkl@icc-ccs.org).

7 The Committee reminded flag, port, and coastal States of their responsibilities to investigate the incidents and to take into account the welfare of seafarers who are victims of crime.

8 Member States and organizations in consultative status with IMO are invited to bring this circular to the attention of shipowners, ship operators, ships' masters, and commercial companies providing risk and security advice to clients operating in the Gulf of Guinea, and all other parties concerned.
