THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
LIBERIA MARITIME AUTHORITY

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MARINE SECURITY BULLETIN –19/2026

Dear Shipowners, Operators and Masters

Subject: Multiple Security incidents in the Black Sea

Over the last five (5) days, there have been multiple attacks on commercial vessels in the Black Sea. The regional maritime security threat remains high.

A Liberian flagged tanker vessel was attacked by aerial drones on 15 July 2026, while drifting in position 42-53N 037-11E in the Black Sea, awaiting a berth at Novorossiysk, Russia. The Master reported damage to the aft port section of the vessel, reporting hull damage and partial flooding in the engine room. Vessel is currently operating on emergency power and has arranged for a tow. No crew members are injured and currently there is no risk of pollution being reported.

A second Liberian flagged bulk carrier vessel was struck on 17 July 2026, likely by unmanned aerial drones while moored at the Olvia seaport in Ukraine, where the vessel has been laid up since 2022. The drone struck the superstructure of the vessel. A fire broke out onboard the vessel as a result of the attack and the Master reported that two (2) crew members were killed. Damage assessment is ongoing.

A third Liberian flagged bulk carrier vessel was struck on 17 July 2026, by unmanned aerial drone while moored at Mykolaiv Sea Port in Ukraine, where the vessel has been moored since 2022. The vessel was struck on the aft portion of the vessel where a fire broke out onboard, which was extinguished by the crew. No crew members are reported injured and there is no risk of pollution. Damage assessment of the vessel is ongoing.

A fourth Liberian flagged bulk carrier vessel was struck on 17 July 2026, by unmanned aerial vehicle, likely a drone attack, while at the shipyard in Mykolaiv, Ukraine. The vessel had been moored at this location since 2022. The drone struck the superstructure of the vessel. As a result, a fire broke out and ship's crew together with the state emergency services were engaged in firefighting efforts. No crew members were reported injured.

A fifth Liberian flagged tanker vessel was struck on 15 July 2026, by an unknown projectile, likely an unmanned aerial drone, in position 45-02.5N 036-39E, while at anchor in the Black Sea. During the attack, a fire broke out on the open deck, using all of the vessel's supply of fixed foam fire-fighting liquid in the process. The blast generated from the explosion severely damaged the survival craft as well as damaging steel deck plates and some hydraulic pipelines resulting in a small hydraulic oil leak. The vessel is enroute to shipyard for emergency repairs. Three (3) crew members were reported with only minor injuries and have been transferred to local hospital for treatment.

A sixth Liberian flagged bulk carrier was struck on 19 July 2026 in position 44-48N 036-34E, while transiting the Black Sea enroute to Russia, likely by an unmanned aerial drone. The attack caused damage to the crew accommodation area and stern of the ship. Small fires broke out on the bridge and C/D deck but were successfully extinguished by the crew. Master reported that two (2) crew members sustained minor injuries and are receiving care.

A seventh Liberian flagged oil tanker was struck on 18 July 2026 in position 42-20N 032-44E, while transiting the Black Sea, likely by an unidentified sea drone. Damage assessments are currently ongoing but the vessel reports no injuries to crew members and no casualties to major machinery.

An eight Liberian flagged bulk carrier was struck on 18 July 2026, while transiting the Black Sea in position 44-44.9N 036-32.6E, most likely by an unmanned aerial drone. The vessel sustained external structural damage and localized fires, which were extinguished by the crew. The master reported that no crew members were injured, there was no pollution and no damage to cargo. Vessel was able to depart the area under her own propulsion and is enroute to leave the area.

Liberian flagged vessels should implement measures equivalent to Ship Security Level 2 while transiting the affected area and at the security level set by the port while in Ukrainian ports in accordance with **MSA 10/2022** and implement all protective measures in their Ship Security Plan. Vessels at other ports in the affected area are required to act upon the security level set by the Designated Authority at those ports.

Operators and Masters should ensure that any planned operations or voyages do not take the vessel into any area, or engage in any activity, which would expose her to the risk of ongoing military operations. Vessels operating in these areas may encounter GPS interference, AIS spoofing, and/or other communications jamming. Vessels should ensure they are broadcasting on AIS (except when the Master believes that continuing to operate AIS might compromise the safety or security of the ship or when a security incident is imminent) and clearly state their intentions across VHF, consistent with provisions of the International Convention for Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) and monitor VHF Channel 16. Any vessels challenged by military vessels should comply fully with instructions.

Recommendations

Ships Masters should obtain the relevant NAVAREA III warnings and contact the local port authorities and ships agents for additional information. Ships navigating in these areas should also monitor NAVTEX messages, maintain a proper lookout for suspicious drifting objects and report immediately to ships and coast radio stations in the area with position and direction and speed of wind and current.

This is a dynamic situation, and changes may occur at any time. Owners, Operators, Company Security Officers and Masters are suggested monitoring the developments and liaising closely with local port agents and P&I correspondents for the latest information on facility conditions, dangerous sea areas and temporary port closures and navigational restrictions.

Advice, updates and links to external resources can be found at the following link: https://www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/HotTopics/Pages/MaritimeSecurityandSafetyintheBlackSeaandSeaofAzov.aspx

Operators and Masters should complete a Risk Assessment prior to entering the Black Sea area. In the event of any incident or suspicious activity, Liberian flagged vessels should activate the Ship Security Alert System (SSAS) immediately and notify the Liberian Security Department.

Contact Information

Please keep LISCR's Security Department informed of any security incidents at:
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