Office of
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of Maritime Affairs

THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
LIBERIA MARITIME AUTHORITY

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Maritime Security Bulletin – 21/2026

Dear Owners/Operators/Company Security Officers/Masters

Subject: Security incident in the Gulf of Mexico

A Liberian flagged self-elevating drilling unit was the victim of a piracy attempt on 17 July 2026 while in position 18-49N 091-46W in the Gulf of Mexico. The night radio operator notified the crew of three (3) unidentified persons on the external deck. All accommodation doors had been locked, and the general alarm was raised and all crew mustered safely in the control room with no reported injuries. The intruders were believed to have left the platform after the alarm sounded. Coastal authorities were notified and naval patrol vessels were dispatched to investigate the incident. After a thorough search, the master confirmed the vessel had been cleared and had resumed operations. An internal company investigation is underway to determine if any items were stolen.

The U.S. government has updated its warnings about the threat posed by pirates to boats and oil installations in the southern Gulf of Mexico. Since January 2018, at least 55 vessels and platforms have been targeted. Of note, there was an attack in November on an Italian flagged vessel off the state of Campeche. And at least 5 attacks in April 2020 involving theft, firearms and hostage taking.

From MSCI Advisory 2020-008 “The U.S. government is aware of at least 20 fishing vessels and 35 oil platforms and offshore supply vessels that have been targeted by pirates and armed robbers since January 2018 in the Bay of Campeche area of the southern Gulf of Mexico. Significant underreporting of attacks in this area is suspected. These attacks have involved the discharge of firearms, crew injuries, hostage taking, and theft. At least five of these attacks occurred in April 2020, details of which are provided in the Office of Naval Intelligence's 09 April 2020 Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) report, available at https://go.usa.gov/xv7tF. A current summary of recent attacks and threats in this region will be included in the most recent Office of Naval Intelligence weekly WTS report, which is available at https://msi.nga.mil/Piracy

The pirates/robbers target offshore infrastructure and vessels in this area typically operate in small groups of between 5 and 15 individuals aboard several boats. They usually employ small fiberglass hulled craft, similar in appearance to local artisanal fishing boats, equipped with multiple high-powered outboard motors that enable fast travel to the oil fields located between five and ninety-five nautical miles offshore. They typically carry out their raids under the cover of darkness so that their approach is masked and so that they can use platform lights to navigate towards their target.

The attackers are reportedly armed with an assortment of weapons including assault rifles, shotguns, pistols, machetes, knives and tools. They are known to use violence to ensure compliance and prevent resistance".

Liberian Mariners and Liberian flagged vessels are advised to remain vigilant and to ensure familiarity with and adherence to their approved Ship Security Plan when operating in this area.

Suspicious activity and attacks in this region should be reported to the Mexican Navy's Third Naval Region Campeche at +52 981 812 0881 or rn3@semar.gob.mx.

The full MSCI Advisory and information about the current travel security levels is available at:

MSCI Advisory 2020-008-Southern Gulf of Mexico-Vessel Attacks:
https://www.maritime.dot.gov/msci/2020-008-southern-gulf-mexico-vessel-attacks

US Department of State Travel Advisory:
https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories/mexico-travel-advisory.html

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

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