THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
LIBERIA MARITIME AUTHORITY

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MARINE SECURITY BULLETIN –37/2026

Dear Shipowners, Operators and Masters

Subject: Multiple Vessel Attacks in the Black Sea

A Liberian flagged oil tanker was struck on 19 September while transiting the Black Sea by two unmanned surface vessel in position 43° 03.4'N 039° 15.9E approximately 38 nautical miles from Konstantinovskiy Point. The first impact was to the port side of the vessel, crew reported flash, smoke and blast effects. The second impact was to the port quarter section of the vessel. Crew identified hull openings with some ballast water loss creating a small list which was later corrected. All crew members were accounted for with no injuries reported, no risk of pollution and all machinery and navigation systems operational. The vessel was able to transit to a shipyard for repairs.

A second Liberian flagged bulk carrier was struck by an unidentified weapon, presumably a drone, on 20 September while at the Odessa Seaport near berth 18. The vessel sustained damage to the aft portion during the attack, resulting in a fire onboard. The fire was extinguished by state firefighting brigades. No crew members were injured, and no risks of pollution are present.

A third Liberian flagged bulk carrier was struck by an aerial drone on 27 September while underway in the Black Sea departing from the Odessa Sea Port. A fire broke out on the vessel as a result of the impact which was extinguished by the crew onboard. No crew members were injured. No casualties to machinery or navigation equipment reported and vessel continued on its course.

Liberian flagged vessels are to operate at security level 2 while transiting the affected area and at security level 3 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, that 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. Vessel operators and Masters are recommended to reference IMO Circular Letter No. 5252 prior to finalizing voyage planning in the region and proceed with appropriate caution.

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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