



Office of
Deputy Commissioner
of Maritime Affairs

THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

LIBERIA MARITIME AUTHORITY

8619 Westwood Center Drive
Suite 300
Vienna, Virginia 22182, USA
Tel: +1 703 790 3434
Fax: +1 703 790 5655
Email: security@liscr.com
Web: www.liscr.com

24 August, 2016

Marine Security Advisory: 05/2016

Subject: Guidelines for protection against piracy in the Gulf of Guinea region

Ref: (a) Maritime Security Chart Q6114 2nd Edition
(b) [Guidelines for Owners, Operators and Masters for protection against piracy in the Gulf of Guinea region \(Version 2, June 2016\)](#)
(c) [BMP4](#)

To Shipowners/Operators/Masters of Liberian flagged vessels;

Purpose

This Advisory updates previous Liberian Administration guidance for Liberian flagged vessels operating off the coasts of littoral states in the Gulf of Guinea Region and coastal/territorial waters off the Ivory Coast, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Cameroon, Gabon and south to Namibia.

Background

Piracy and armed robbery (hereafter referred to as piracy) in the Gulf of Guinea region is an established criminal activity and is of increasing concern to the maritime sector with recent attacks becoming more widespread and violent. Although piracy in the Gulf of Guinea region in many ways differs from that of Somalia based piracy, large sections of the Best Management Practices already developed by industry to help protect against Somalia based piracy are also valid in the Gulf of Guinea region.

Area for consideration

Pirates in the Gulf of Guinea are flexible in their operations so it is difficult to predict a precise area of falling victim to piracy.

However, recent incidents suggest that the area is liable to change. For the purpose of this Advisory the area off the coasts of Nigeria, Togo or Benin can be regarded as an area in which the counter-piracy management practices should be considered.

Mandatory Security Level equivalent to Level II shall be set when operating in or transiting West African waters, defined by the following boundaries:

FROM:
(Southernmost Tip of Cape Blanc*)
*20-45N 17-00W
20-45N 20-00W
10-00N 20-00W
00-00N/S 09-45W
00-00N/S 00-00E/W
10-00S 10-00E
17-15S 10-00E

TO:
20-45N 20-00W
10-00N 20-00W
00-00N/S 09-45W
00-00N/S 00-00E/W
10-00S 10-00E
17-15S 10-00E
**17-15S 11-45E
(Angola / Namibia border**)

Security Level equivalent to Level II is required to ensure higher vigilance and tighter controls to protect against possible acts of piracy, illegal boarding and stowaways.

Upon change of Security Level Masters should report to the Administration via email to security@liscr.com.

Reporting to Marine Domain Awareness for Trade – Gulf of Guinea (MDAT-GoG):

The recently established MDAT-GoG is a service operated by the French and UK navies from centers in Brest, France, and in Portsmouth, England and aims to develop, maintain and share details of the maritime domain picture of the waters off Africa's western seaboard. The MDAT-GoG administers a Voluntary Reporting Area (VRA) scheme under which merchant vessels are encouraged to report position information while operating in the VRA.

The VRA as shown on Admiralty Chart Q6114 has been issued to clearly define an internationally recognized area, so ship operators and vessels transiting, trading or operating in West Africa can join a trusted reporting scheme. The provision of Admiralty Chart Q6114 to all vessels operating in the VRA is strongly recommended.

These provisions include following reporting.

WHEN:	TYPE OF REPORT:
Entering the VRA	MDAT-GoG Initial Report
Underway within the VRA	MDAT-GoG Daily Position Report (12:00UTC)
Arriving at a Port within the VRA	MDAT-GoG Final Report
Leaving a Port within the VRA	MDAT-GoG Initial Report
Exiting the VRA	MDAT-GoG Final Report
Suspicious or Irregular Activity	Suspicious or Irregular Activity Report

The Center will provide advice and guidance on the maritime security situation and on mitigating the risk of armed robbery or other unlawful activities.

The MDAT-GoG provides a 24-hour manned service of military experts. The MDAT-GoG receives reports, shares important updates and provides guidance on vessel operating patterns, security risks with the Gulf of Guinea maritime community.

In addition, the Administration strongly recommends owners, operators and Master's ensure full

consideration is given to the Guidelines developed by BIMCO, ICS, INTERCARGO and INTERTANKO, and supported by the NATO Shipping Centre. Although piracy in the Gulf of Guinea is different from Somali piracy, large sections of the current Best Management Practices will also be applicable to the pirate attacks on vessels operating in the Gulf of Guinea.

The Guidelines aim to bridge the gap between the advice found in BMP4 and the prevailing situation in the Gulf of Guinea. Consequently, the Gulf of Guinea guidelines should be read in conjunction with BMP4 as they will make reference to BMP4 when relevant.

Action:

Prior to a vessel entering the affected area, CSO's should review the Ship Security Assessment (SSA) and ensure full consideration is given to the Guidelines in conjunction with BMP4.

For more information please contact the Security Department at telephone + 1 703 790 3434 email security@liscr.com.

* * * * *