

Circular From UK

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Remotely Piloted Craft Attacks off Yemen's Red Sea Coast

The Club has received information that on 29th July & 12th August 2017 a small explosive-laden remotely piloted craft (ERPC) had been utilised in and around the Port of Mocha, Yemen.

The crafts are believed to have been deployed by the Houthi faction their intended target being Saudi led Coalition Forces vessels. Both attempts failed to reach their designated target, one being destroyed on route and the second hitting a pier causing limited damage to the structure.

There is no intelligence to suggest that the Houthi faction are targeting commercial shipping, however, due to such activities collateral damage to large commercial vessels is a possibility due to misidentification. As such, vessels operating in the area should maintain extra vigilance.

Marine Asset Security and Training Ltd (MAST) when questioned on this topic have given the following advice:

“...The last 6 months has seen an increase of indirect methods of offensive action/sabotage by the Houthi's in the maritime domain against the Saudi-led coalition, a number of which have been successful. Likely this threat to coalition vessels will persist for the foreseeable future...”

The greater threat to fuel carrying vessels is posed by (it is thought) Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) who targeted LNGC Galicia Spirit in October 2016 and MT Muskie in May 2017. Although both attacks failed, it is thought that their intent was to create a spectacular in the Bab El Mandeb (BAM) inc. considerable environmental damage which would affect the Straits navigation.”

Source of Information: UK P&I Club