

Date: 24th October 2016

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Intelligence Report: Somali pirate approach on MV 22Oct16



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On the 22nd October, an MV reported being approached by a single blue open hulled skiff type vessel with 5 or 6 persons on board, in the HRA approximately 300 nm off Hobyo, Mudug, Somalia. It is understood the MV's embarked armed security team fired warning shots when the skiff was at 350m and that the occupants of the skiff returned fire before moving away.

Assuming that the reported vessel was a standard Somali skiff, it would have been powered by an outboard motor. Even with plenty of spare fuel drums, it is unlikely that such a vessel can operate more than 150 miles offshore without a mother vessel in support. It is therefore likely that this was part of a Somali Pirate Action Group.

This 'approach' comes days after the UN Security Council released a report on the situation of piracy off Somalia. To read the report [click here](#). The report notes the progress made to suppress and ultimately eradicate Somali piracy, but stresses that;

"Although significant, such progress remains fragile and reversible. Credible reports indicate that Somali pirates possess the intent and capability to resume attacks against large commercial ships, should the opportunity present itself, and to endanger smaller vessels, which remain particularly vulnerable. There have been reports of pirate groups being organized and equipped in Mudug and in the area in the Horn of Africa east of Boosaasoin Puntland. The uncertain political situation in the central region of Somalia, coupled with the finite mandate of the international naval force stationed off the coast, has the potential to become a security vacuum that could trigger a resurgence of piracy."

The 'approach' correlates with the UN reported positions of organised and equipped pirate groups in Mudug, which re-enforces the credibility of the reported 'approach' and the UN report.

It is well known that Somali pirates will target the most vulnerable vessels. Fortunately the MV concerned had an embarked armed security team onboard and was able to deter the pirates.

MAST is able to provide advice, risk assessments and security solutions to vessels operating within the HRA.



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