

INSIDE MAST

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



SWR team disarms knife suspect:

MAST officers praised after safely disarming a man carrying a knife on the rail network.

HR Staffology:

Your new HR hub for payslips, personal details and key documents.

#03

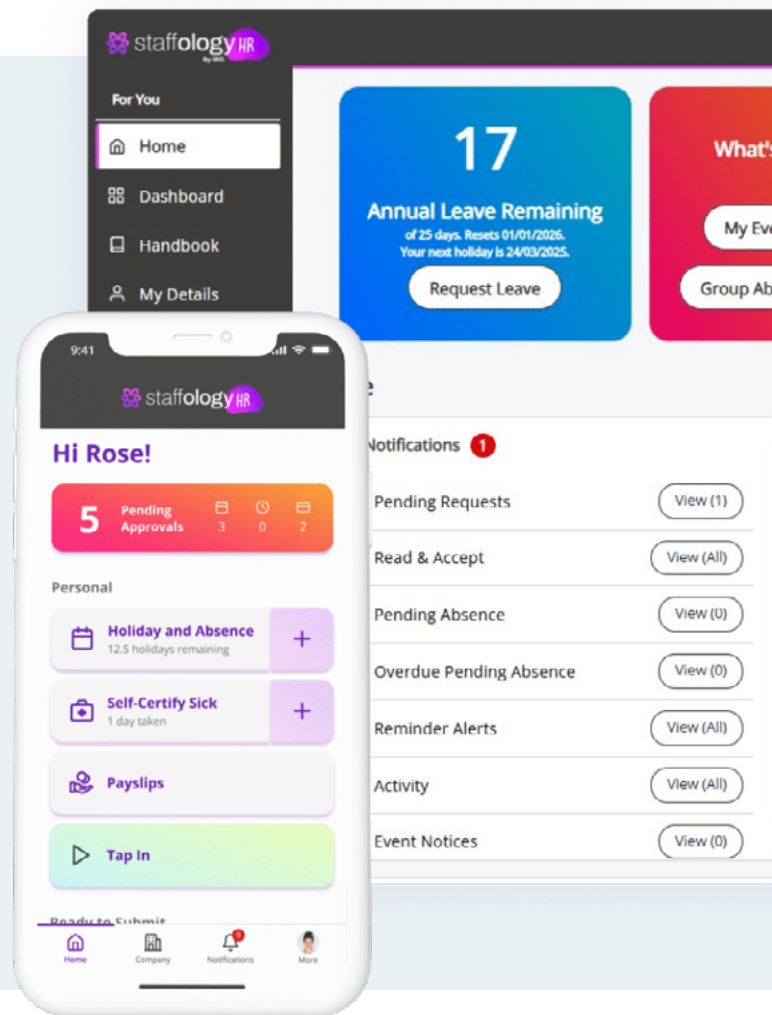
WINTER 2025
EDITION

HR NEWS UPDATE

HR Staffology has now launched

We're pleased to confirm the launch of our new HR system — HR Staffology.

by Abbie Maynard



This innovative self-service platform is designed to give you greater control and visibility over your own information. From personal details and payslips to policies and procedures, everything you need is now available in one secure place — at the touch of a button. HR Staffology puts your employee data back in your hands, making it easier than ever to access, update, and manage.

What Is HR Staffology?

HR Staffology is a modern, cloud-based HR and payroll platform from IRIS Software Group, created to make managing your work life simple and efficient.

Why We Have Introduced HR Staffology

This new system isn't just about technology — it's about making life easier for everyone.

By bringing all HR tools into one platform, we're improving access, communication, and efficiency.

Continued on page 3

With HR Staffology, you'll be able to:

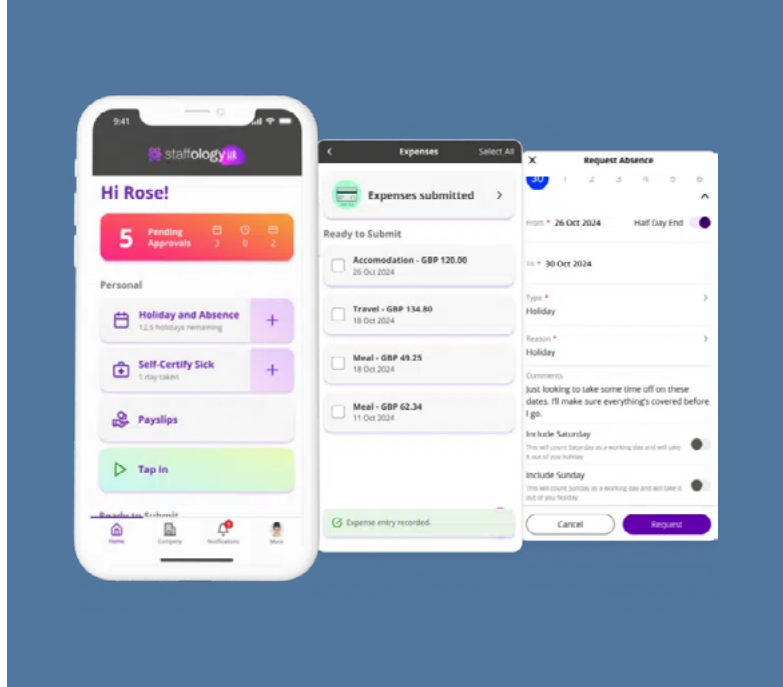
- Update and manage your own personal information (contact details, emergency contacts, etc.)
- Access key company documents — policies, memos, procedures, guides, and handbooks — instantly
- Complete and submit digital forms directly through the platform — no printing or paperwork
- View your contract details securely anytime
- Access all your historical payslips whenever you need them
- Enjoy peace of mind knowing your data is secure, accurate, and always up to date

Here's what makes HR Staffology such a valuable step forward:

- **Efficiency:** Streamlines everyday HR tasks, reducing admin time for both employees and managers.
- **Empowerment:** Gives employees control over their own information, removing unnecessary delays.
- **Insight:** Provides accurate, real-time data to support better decision-making across the business.
- **Sustainability:** Reduces our reliance on paper and supports a more environmentally friendly workplace.

Getting started with HR Staffology

HR Staffology has now gone live, and we're excited for you to start exploring it. You should already have received your login details and quick start guide to help you get set up. Once you log in, you can update your profile and see firsthand just how simple and convenient it is to manage your own information.



We'd Love Your Feedback

Now that HR Staffology is live, your feedback is vital.

Share your thoughts, ideas, and experiences — together we can make this new system even better for everyone.

Email feedback to: abbie.maynard@mast-security.com

Benefits for Everyone



For Employees:

- Full access to your data and documents anytime, anywhere.
- Quick and simple digital forms — no more printing or chasing.
- Instant access to your contract, policies, and payslips.
- Greater transparency and confidence in how your information is managed.



For Managers:

- Streamlined approvals and form management in one system.
- Real-time visibility of team data and updates.
- Less time spent on admin, more on supporting your team.



For the Company:

- Improved accuracy, compliance, and consistency in HR processes.
- Centralised, secure storage for all HR records.
- Enhanced communication and engagement across the organisation.

Recent Resurgence in Somali Piracy – Should the Shipping Industry be Worried?

By G R Northwood OBE

The recent spate of attacks in the Indian Ocean is perhaps an indication that the “investors” behind Somali piracy think that the Somali pirate business model “risk / reward” ratio maybe tipping in their favour.

The attacks on the *Hellas Aphrodite* and the *Stolt Sagaland* in early November which occurred several hundred miles off the Somali coast were no mean undertaking for the Somalis. The attacks involved a hijacked Iranian Dhow apparently identified as the “*Issamohahmdi*” acting as the mother vessel for several skiffs, personnel and weaponry. Mounting a “Pirate Action Group” (PAG) of this size and complexity is not a cheap undertaking.

“Mounting a Pirate Action Group of this size and complexity is not cheap.”

Following the attacks the UKMTO has increased the risk state, which we believe is the right call. We believe so because it is unlikely that the investors behind the PAG would have gone for it had they not felt they had a reasonable chance of success. Which means that they believe that if they can bring a captured commercial



Gerry Northwood OBE

SENIOR CONSULTANT

Gerry Northwood OBE: Security expert with naval & commercial experience. Skilled in crisis management, risk solutions & author of thought-provoking maritime articles.

vessel and crew back to an anchorage off the west coast of Somalia, they will be able to hold it securely at anchor while a ransom payment is negotiated and delivered.

Continued on page 5

For a hijacked vessel to be held by the pirates off the coast of Somalia while the ransom negotiation is ongoing, there has to be a “permissive environment” onshore. One in which the pirates will have access to logistics to feed and water the crew and the pirate teams on the vessel, be able to prevent other groups taking over or stealing the capture, and above all, no local or national Somali government interference. If it is judged by the investors that the above conditions cannot be met, it’s no cigar.


Our advice for vessels transiting the Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden is to follow BMP. The latest version being BMP MS 2025. It is an excellent guide to keeping a vessel safe wherever there is a security risk. For complete safety, and peace of mind, we would advise taking an armed security team. Right now, Stolt Sagaland would be enjoying a Somali beach view had she not had one. Second to an armed team is a well-protected citadel and a crew that is drilled in retreating to it in the event of an attack.

Meanwhile, now is not the time to be complacent. Yes, the odds that it will be your vessel that is attacked are extremely low. But as many can attest from the relatively recent past, the cost of getting it wrong can be very high indeed, both commercially and in seafarers lives.



Top Five Emerging Maritime Threats (2024–2025)

- 1. Loitering Munitions & One-Way Attack Drones** - Increasingly used in the Red Sea, Black Sea and high-risk corridors due to their low cost and high precision.
- 2. GPS Spoofing & Navigation Interference** - Cyber-enabled attacks causing vessels to drift off course or lose positional accuracy.
- 3. Hybrid Operations Against Seabed Infrastructure** - Sabotage targeting undersea cables, pipelines and offshore assets by both state and non-state actors.
- 4. Cyber Intrusions into Vessel & Port Systems** - Ransomware, remote access breaches and compromised ECDIS, AIS or engine-control systems.
- 5. Long-Range Missile & Drone Strikes in Geopolitical Flashpoints** - Risks expanding beyond traditional hotspots into previously low-threat shipping lanes.

A photograph showing a close-up of a ship's deck. In the foreground, a person wearing a dark jacket and a red and black striped sleeve is visible. A machine gun is mounted on the deck, pointing towards the right. In the background, a large ship is visible on the water under a clear sky.

EU Operation Atalanta personnel monitor the Hellas Aphrodite from ESPS Victoria off Somalia, 7 Nov 2025.

Securing the Seas

How MAST Supports the Industry Amid Emerging Maritime Threats

By Erika Finch



The maritime domain has become increasingly fraught with security threats, both traditional and emerging, forcing the shipping and offshore industries to rethink their risk-management paradigms. According to a Safety4Sea article, the industry has endured “an extraordinary period of disruption,” including the crisis in the Red Sea, the war in Ukraine, and persistent piracy threats in South-East Asia. These developments underscore how once-relatively predictable threats (for example, piracy in certain hotspots) are now embedded in a far more complex environment.

One major challenge lies in the shifting nature of threat geography and typology. Where once certain sea-lanes

“A single cyber vulnerability can disrupt supply routes, cargo flows and critical infrastructure.”

or regions could be monitored and managed via long-standing frameworks (for example, the Gulf of Aden piracy risk), operators now face expanding risk zones, hybrid threats, and multipolar geopolitical tensions. As one summary notes, “three significant challenges dominate the maritime security horizon: regional conflicts, loitering munitions, and cybersecurity,” the

last two representing more novel threat vectors. The proliferation of asymmetric, non-state and state-sponsored actors complicates matters further: attacks on merchant shipping, sabotage of offshore and seabed infrastructure, and drone or missile threats are now real and evolving risks.



CMA CGM (2020): The French shipping giant was hit by a Ragnar Locker ransomware attack that affected its peripheral servers, forcing it to shut down external access to applications to prevent the malware from spreading.

Another significant dimension is cyber and digital vulnerability. The increasing digitalisation of ships, ports and supply-chain systems opens the door to new forms of attack that move beyond the physical domain. For example, mariners report experiences of GPS spoofing, ransomware, and other cyber-enabled

Continued on page 7

disruptions in maritime systems. The interconnected nature of maritime operations means that a vulnerability in one part of the system (say a port facility or a vessel's navigation system) can cascade and impact whole supply routes, cargo flows, and even critical infrastructure.

Furthermore, the governance, regulatory and coordination frameworks have struggled to keep pace with the quick-moving threat landscape. A recent UN-led report stresses that while traditional state-centric models of maritime security remain important, they often fail to account for human and ecological dimensions, complicating efforts to ensure resilience across the board. In practice, the patchwork of national, regional, and commercial stakeholders means that risk management often requires voyage-specific, threat-based approaches rather than relying purely on region-based risk assessments.



MPs say the UK must do more to protect its vulnerable undersea cables from attack.

In addition to these broad thematic issues, the maritime sector also contends with enduring threats such as piracy, armed robbery at sea, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, smuggling, and human trafficking. These are now overlaid with new pressures: the search for control over strategic sea-lanes and chokepoints, hybrid warfare on the sea (including sabotage of undersea cables, pipelines, and other critical infrastructure), and the impact of climate change on maritime domain awareness, port resilience, and asset vulnerability. All of this means that maritime security is no longer just about protecting the ship, but about



Top Emerging Maritime Threats at a Glance

1. **Loitering munitions** – Low-cost armed drones that linger over sea lanes and strike opportunistically.
2. **Drone and missile attacks** – Naval drones and anti-ship missiles increasingly targeting commercial vessels.
3. **GPS spoofing & cyber intrusion** – Navigation deception and ransomware now routinely disrupting maritime operations.
4. **Hybrid state/non-state tactics** – Blended cyber, kinetic and proxy actions aimed at shipping and offshore assets.
5. **Undersea infrastructure sabotage** – Growing threats to subsea cables, pipelines and offshore energy installations.

protecting the broader maritime ecosystem, the ship, the port, the data, the undersea cables, the supply chain, and human lives.

Given this evolving landscape, shipping companies, offshore operators, and maritime service providers must raise their game in three broad areas: risk-identification (including non-traditional risks), training and preparedness (physical, procedural and digital), and integration of intelligence, governance and response capabilities. This is where a specialist organisation such as Maritime Asset Security & Training (MAST) Ltd. can play a pivotal role.

MAST can help by delivering targeted, high-quality training that addresses the full spectrum of contemporary maritime security threats, from piracy and boarding defence to cyber awareness, drone threat mitigation, and protection of offshore assets. Our programmes can be tailored to voyage-specific threat assessments and focus on both physical response (e.g., vessel hardening, boarding drills) and cognitive response

Continued on page 8

(e.g., scenario planning, recognition of hybrid threats). By embedding realistic drills and tabletop exercises, MAST ensures that crews, officers, and shore-based staff are better equipped to respond swiftly and effectively when an incident occurs.

Moreover, MAST has the scope to assist organisations in developing robust voyage-specific and asset-specific security plans. In an era where “geography-based” security is giving way to “threat-based” risk management, MAST’s expertise can support operators in assessing their unique requirements (whether in high-risk regions for certain types of cargo or offshore platforms) and

in implementing appropriate mitigations, including procedural controls, tracking and reporting systems, emergency response coordination, and liaison with private security resources.

Finally, given the increasing interplay of cyber and physical threats, MAST can offer consultancy and training on “cyber-physical” integration: protecting vessel systems, securing onboard communications, managing access controls, training crews in threat recognition (for example a boarding attempt masked by a cyber incident), and

helping to build organisational resilience to hybrid attacks. In doing so, MAST contributes to closing one of the most pressing gaps in current maritime security, the human and procedural side of the cyber-physical interface.

Maritime security today is challenged by a far more complex array of threats than in the past: evolving geopolitics, hybrid operations, technological vulnerabilities, persistent piracy and criminality, and fragmented governance all conspire to raise the stakes for shipping and offshore operations. In that environment, the value of specialised training, asset-specific risk planning and integrated physical-digital resilience cannot be overstated. Organisations like MAST are well placed to partner with industry operators to ensure that they not only survive but thrive in this era of unprecedented maritime security challenges.

Sources: SAFETY4SEA, The Maritime Executive, arXiv, Nature, UNIDIR

“Training, intelligence and preparedness are now the core pillars of maritime security.”



Where MAST Adds Value

- Voyage-specific risk planning – Tailored threat assessments for each route, not generic regional profiles.
- Cyber-physical resilience – Integrated digital and physical protections to counter spoofing, hacking and system disruption.
- Crew readiness & drills – Practical training and scenarios that build fast, confident responses at sea.
- Boarding defence strategies – Layered deterrence and vessel-hardening techniques to reduce boarding risks.
- Offshore asset protection – Specialist support for safeguarding subsea cables, platforms and other offshore infrastructure.

South Western Railway Team Recognised for Outstanding Service

Our South Western Railway (SWR) teams have recently been formally recognised by the client for their professionalism, courage and day-to-day commitment to passenger safety.

At Bracknell station, a distressed young man climbed over the public footbridge railing with the intention of ending his life. MAST security officers, working alongside members of the public, reacted immediately and helped pull him back to safety. In feedback to MAST, Chris Gale of South Western Railway wrote:

“Security staff quickly assisted in pulling the young man to safety, it was their quick actions that made sure that he and no one else was hurt... they did an amazing job, and they deserve to be commended for helping ensure the young man didn’t follow through with his intentions.”

– Chris Gale, South Western Railway

In a separate incident, our officers were also recognised for stopping an individual carrying a knife and safely apprehending them while awaiting the police. These actions formed part of a series of client awards for “great achievements” and “excellent service” to South Western Railway.

SWR’s Revenue Protection Team have also praised the consistent standard of our officers:

“Their commitment to supporting revenue protection operations has been nothing short of outstanding. The team consistently go above and beyond to ensure passenger interactions are handled with respect, tact, and firmness where required.”

– Revenue Protection Team, South Western Railway



Our South Western Railway team being recognised for their quick thinking and professionalism.

We are extremely proud of everyone involved. Their conduct reflects the very best of MAST’s values: calm under pressure, strong safeguarding instincts, and unwavering support to our clients and the travelling public.

HALLSVILLE QUARTER

Keeping a Busy Community Safe

Retail crime, patrol vigilance and community partnerships at the heart of our East London operation



Hallsville Quarter is one of our busiest mixed-use sites, with thousands of residents, commuters and shoppers moving through the main square every day. The team continue to show what good neighbourhood security looks like in practice – calm, visible and proactive.

Tackling retail crime in a busy public square

Over August and September, the Hallsville Quarter main square was identified as a local crime hotspot, with several retail-related incidents linked to theft from supermarkets and other stores. Working closely with in-house store security, our officers assisted in a number of interventions, including supporting Lidl's security team in intercepting a shoplifter.

Thanks to swift, coordinated responses, all six reported incidents in the square were dealt with safely, reinforcing MAST's reputation as a reliable partner for retailers operating in high-footfall locations.

Spotting “ghost plated” vehicles

The team have also been alert to a growing trend in the area: “ghost plating” – attempts to obscure or alter vehicle number plates to avoid detection or conceal

identity. During a routine patrol, officers stopped a vehicle using this method and advised the driver that such practices are not only suspicious but against the law.

By challenging this behaviour early and recording the details, the team helped deter further attempts and supported wider efforts to keep the local road network and public realm safe.

Continued on page 11



What is “ghost plating”?

- “Ghost plating” is when someone deliberately alters or obscures a vehicle's number plate to avoid being identified. Common tricks include:
- Bending or folding the plate to hide characters
- Using tape, screws or stickers to change how numbers and letters look
- Adding reflective covers or dirt to make the plate unreadable on CCTV



Jean, recognised for calm, practical support to residents during a recent water-supply issue.

Above and beyond for residents

Hallsville is a residential community as much as it is a retail destination. During a recent water-supply shutdown caused by a leak in a riser cupboard, officer Jean stepped in to help a resident in Himalaya who was particularly affected.

Jean arranged to manage the water on the resident's behalf – placing a bucket under the leak and personally turning the supply on when needed over several days until the issue was fully resolved. It was a simple, practical solution that showed real empathy and initiative, and it made a difficult situation much easier for the resident involved.

“Jean’s actions reflect commendable initiative, empathy, and problem-solving under pressure.”

Farewell to Edgar, Mercy and Dean

Finally, the team are saying goodbye to three familiar faces: Edgar, who continues his journey within POD, and Mercy and Dean, who are moving on to pursue new personal and career goals.

Their contribution to Hallsville Quarter has been hugely valued and they leave with our thanks and best wishes.

As with all good security work, much of what they did will never make headlines – but residents, retailers and colleagues will feel the benefit of their efforts for a long time to come.

The Importance of Good Grooming Standards

Maintaining high grooming standards is not just about looking smart – it directly supports safety, professionalism and public confidence on site. At Hallsville Quarter, our officers are expected to present a consistent, well-kept appearance every shift, backed up by appropriate PPE such as stab-proof vests for maximum protection.

Key reasons grooming standards matter:

- Safety first – Officers are correctly kitted out, including stab-proof vests where required, helping to protect them while they protect others.
- Professional image – A well-groomed officer looks disciplined, focused and ready to deal with whatever the shift brings.
- Public confidence – Clean, consistent presentation reassures residents, retailers and visitors that security is in control.
- Deterrence – A sharp, visible security presence can discourage anti-social behaviour and criminal activity before it starts.

Grooming might seem like a small detail, but together with training, attitude and awareness, it is a key part of the professional image our teams project across all MAST sites.

A Christmas Message from the CEO of MAST

As we reach the end of 2025, I want to thank our staff, clients, and suppliers for the trust you place in MAST and for the hard work, commitment, and partnership shown throughout the year.

Your dedication allows us to continue in our mission to 'make the world a safer place to live and work'.

As we celebrate Christmas with our families and friends may we carry forward the spirit of peace, service, and gratitude into the year ahead.

I wish you and your families a joyful Christmas and a blessed New Year.

Phillip Cable

Chief Executive Officer
Maritime Asset Security and Training





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