

Information Bulletin May 2023



EMASoH in May – Bottom Line Up Front

- EMASoH countries condemn the seizure and detention by Iran of the Marshall Islands-flagged oil tanker *Advantage Sweet* in the Gulf of Oman and the Panama-flagged oil tanker *Niovi* in the Strait of Hormuz.
- **Because the staff of operation AGENOR will be afloat, you can reach us by telephone via +39 0187024 DIAL 2 FOR ENGLISH and press: 7566903.**
- Operation AGENOR increased its presence in the Strait of Hormuz, while maintaining a de-escalatory posture.
- EMASoH participated in the Annual General Meeting of INTERTANKO, engaging with shipping companies from the Gulf area and across the globe to address maritime security concerns.
- The Force Commander presented a detailed briefing about EMASoH to the Spanish Ambassador to the UAE and paid a courtesy visit to the second in command of the UAE Navy.
- We provide some insights into when a merchant vessel is an EMASoH ship of interest.

AGENOR increased presence in the Strait of Hormuz



Figure 1: An Italian sailor is watching a merchant vessel in the Strait of Hormuz.

After the seizures of the oil tankers on the 27th of April and the 3rd of May, operation AGENOR has increased its presence in the Strait of Hormuz. While maintaining our de-escalatory posture, which is typical for this European initiative, we increased the accompaniments of EMASoH-linked merchant vessels. In May our frigates have accompanied a total of 31 merchant vessels in the Strait of Hormuz and conducted multiple reassuring radio communications.

General Annual Meeting INTERTANKO

EMASoH recently attended the Annual General Meeting of INTERTANKO, where we joined shipping companies from the Gulf area and around the world to discuss maritime security. It was a great opportunity for us to have meaningful conversations and gain valuable insights with regard to the freedom of navigation in our area of operation as well as tankers owners' general security concerns.

Rear Admiral Renaud Flamant, the Force Commander of operation AGENOR said *"Collaboration is the key to ensuring maritime security. At EMASoH, we are working together with 9 different European nations. We encourage shipping companies active in the Gulf region and organizations such as INTERTANKO to actively engage with initiatives such as ours in order to improve the exchange of information, coordination, and cooperation among stakeholders"*.



Figure 2: (L-R) Rear Adm. Renaud Flamant with chairman of INTERTANKO Paulo d'Amico.

During the meeting, we got the opportunity to share ideas, experiences, and best practices with shipping companies. We were also honoured to be featured in the presentation that emphasized the crucial aspect of maritime security in the Gulf area. This recognition reinforces our unwavering commitment to maritime security, which is not only vital for

EMASoH Headquarters telephone watch (24/7): +39 0187024 (DIAL 2 FOR ENGLISH) 7566903

E-mail (24/7): ctf474-emasoh.bwc.fct@def.gouv.fr

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the shipping industry, but also for the global economy. The Gulf region plays a significant role in international trade, making it imperative to maintain a secure maritime environment.

Assets in operation AGENOR



Figure 3: A petty officer on the Courbet waving to an Omani navy vessel.

In May we welcomed the Italian frigate Luigi Rizzo and the French frigate Surcouf in operation AGENOR. Both frigates will sail in the Strait of Hormuz and the Gulf area to patrol and increase our maritime situational awareness. They will participate to sea joint activities with other navies in the vicinity, perform radio calls with merchant vessels and strategically monitor merchant vessels that sail through the Strait of Hormuz.

The FS Courbet left the operation after 1,5 months of excellent endeavours to freedom of navigation and increased maritime situational awareness. She participated in operation AGENOR for 31 days, accompanied 10 merchant vessels and performed 37 radio communication calls to merchant vessels.

France participated in operation AGENOR with in total 24 vessels since the start of the operation.



Figure 4: The Force Commander is handing over a crest of EMASoH to the Commodore of the UAE Navy.

UAE Navy 2nd in command meets with FCdr

We extend our gratitude to Commodore Abdullah Faraj Al Mehairbi for receiving the Force Commander of EMASoH. It was an honour to discuss the contributions made by EMASoH towards enhancing maritime security in the Gulf region.

The fruitful meeting also opened doors for exploring further possibilities for mutual beneficial cooperation between the UAE NAVY and EMASoH. Recognizing the shared commitment to maritime security, both entities are eager to collaborate on initiatives that will yield even greater benefits for the region. We look forward to leveraging this partnership to address emerging challenges and contribute to maritime security in the Gulf.

Ambassador of Spain

Rear Admiral Flamant recently delivered a detailed briefing to the Spanish Ambassador in the UAE, shedding light on Spain's maritime interests in the Gulf region. The discussions underscored the crucial importance of maritime security and freedom of navigation for Spain and other European Union countries operating in the Gulf area. The meeting highlighted the shared understanding of the significance of maritime security in the Gulf region.



Figure 5: The Ambassador of Spain receives the crest of EMASoH from the Force Commander.

Insights: EMASoH ships of Interest

The strategic watch that EMASoH conducts in its area of operation focuses on the EMASoH Ships of Interest. There are 3 criteria used for determining whether a ship is an EMASoH Ship of Interest:

- the Flag State: the country where the ship is registered (UNCLOS);
- the Beneficial Ownership location: the location of the primary reference company, that is, the country/economy in which the company that has the main commercial responsibility for the vessel is located (UNCTAD); and
- the ships designated by the EMASoH national Maritime Security Centres (MSC) as Ship of Interest, for any reason whatsoever (i.e. not necessarily linked to the beneficial ownership or flag of the merchant ship).

As illustrated in the image on the next page, there can indeed be many stakeholders and many different nationalities involved on board a ship. EMASoH cannot possibly be aware of them all. The third criteria used for determining whether a ship is an EMASoH Ship of Interest shows therefore the importance of regular information exchanges via proper communication channels between EMASoH and the relevant national maritime authorities, so as to make sure that if there is an EMASoH national interest (beyond beneficial ownership and flag) worth of the strategic watch EMASoH conducts, EMASoH is made aware of it by the relevant MSC.

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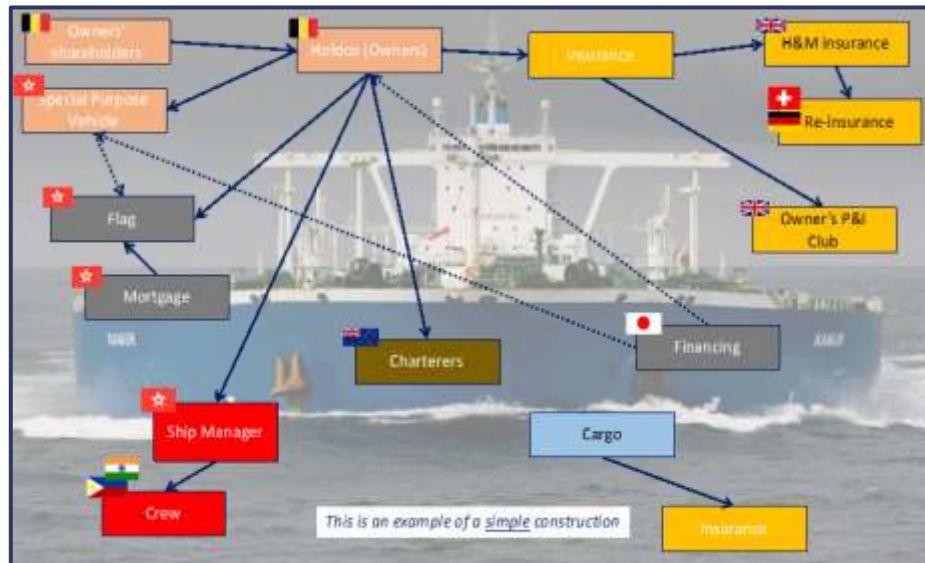


Figure 6: an example of a simple construction of the flags involved in the operation of a merchant vessel.

Voluntary Reporting Scheme

We have an average of 55 ships reporting each day in the EMASoH Voluntary Reporting Area (VRA).

Shipping companies are invited to participate to our Voluntary Reporting Scheme. Voluntary reporting improves the cooperation and guidance EMASoH can provide to ships. Voluntary reported ships are also prioritised for possible accompaniments with EMASoH's naval assets and reassuring calls with naval and aerial assets. Before entering the Voluntary Reporting Area (VRA), 48 hours in advance, or as soon as possible:

- ✓ **inform** EMASoH about the timing of your intended entry and exit of the VRA;
- ✓ **confirm** the planning 6 hours before entering and share possible changes to the journey planning;
- ✓ **report** any suspicious behaviour to the coast guard of the coastal state and to EMASoH.

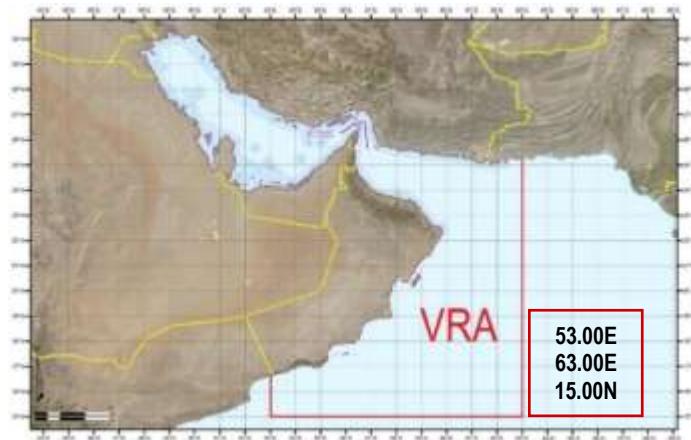


Figure 7: The EMASoH Voluntary Reporting Area.

Voluntary reporting to EMASoH via ctf474-emasoh.vra.fct@def.gouv.fr or phone +39 0187024 (DAIL 2 FOR ENGLISH) 7566903

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