

Information Bulletin September 2023



EMASoH in September – Bottom Lines Up Front

- A delegation of EUNAVFOR's Operation ATALANTA visited EMASOH FHQ in Abu Dhabi.
- We engaged with several Greek authorities to have a dialogue regarding the Greek ships of interest to EMASOH.
- French frigate *FS Languedoc* has been essential in support of Operation AGENOR in September.
- CTF151 came to visit EMASOH FHQ in Abu Dhabi to discuss mutual challenges and experiences.

ATALANTA visits EMASOH FHQ – Abu Dhabi, UAE

On September 4th we hosted a meeting between EUNAVFOR's Operation ATALANTA and EMASOH's Operation AGENOR in Abu Dhabi. Operation ATALANTA, which has its operational headquarters in Rota, Spain, sent a delegation of their international staff to meet us in our forward headquarters ashore (FHQ) in the United Arab Emirates.



ATALANTA has been operational for 15 years and has been focusing mainly on counter-piracy operations off the Horn of Africa and the Western Indian Ocean. Besides that, the EU operation is providing maritime security, disrupting drug and weapons trafficking, and protecting vulnerable vessels in their area of operations. The purpose of the meet between ATALANTA and AGENOR was to present our operation, its achievements and to discuss the latest developments. It was a valuable opportunity to exchange experience and knowledge, and to increase our shared awareness of the maritime security in the North Western Indian Ocean.



VTC with Greek authorities



Figure 1 - Force Commander PANEBIANCO and Greek Battlewatch Captain during VTC

On September 11th we met by VTC with several Greek authorities in the maritime domain. Included were Greece's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Joint Defence Staff and the Hellenic Coastguard. As the Greek merchant shipping community is one of the largest within the EMASOH ships of Interest group, we re-emphasized that it is



Figure 2 – Greece's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Joint Defence Staff and Hellenic Coastguard during the VTC

essential that these ships can navigate freely in the Strait of Hormuz and Gulf region. We continue to appreciate the efforts of the Greek authorities to provide us with valuable insights and information about the Greek merchant shipping community.

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FS Languedoc in Operation AGENOR



Figure 3 – FS Languedoc during accompaniment with merchant vessel

Languedoc provided a total of 19 accompaniments, in- and outbound of the Strait of Hormuz. **This raised the total number of EMASOH accompaniments performed this year to more than 160 and more than 120 since early june.**

During her port visits to ports in the United Arab Emirates and Oman, Languedoc continued to be of value to EMASOH. The French ship will operate in support of AGENOR in the next months.

The French frigate FS Languedoc joined Operation AGENOR in the beginning of September and has since then been contributing to our efforts. While being at sea she sailed through the Strait and the Gulf, to reassure the merchant vessels that transit through the area. We aim to provide reassurance to the merchant vessels firstly by being present in the Gulf and the Strait. Secondly, our assets at sea provide accompaniments and EMMA Calls (EMasoh MAnoeuvres) to be in contact with the merchant shipping community.



Figure 4 - Words of appreciation from accompanied merchant vessels

Meeting with delegation of CTF 151 in Abu Dhabi

To increase our situational awareness and exchange our knowledge we regularly interact with other maritime initiatives and taskforces that operate in neighbouring regions. We therefore welcomed CTF151 to Abu Dhabi on September 28th. The taskforce is being led by the newly appointed Philippine navy Captain Mateo Carido. Their operation takes place in the Gulf of Aden, Arabian Sea, Red Sea and the Strait of Hormuz.

During the meet we showed the fundamentals of EMASOH and how the military pillar Operation AGENOR is currently developing. While our operations are different and do not have the same posture, we still have mutual goals and purpose, such as the continuous effort to improve maritime security and promote the freedom of navigation at sea. We want to thank Captain Carido for the visit with his staff. It was an informative and fruitful occasion.



Figure 5 – Operation AGENOR Force Commander Rear Admiral Panebianco and CTF 151 commander Captain Carido

Interaction with stakeholders in maritime sector

In September we also spoke to the maritime security manager of Shell during a VTC. Shell, being one of the world's largest multinational energy and petrochemical companies, is an important stakeholder within the Gulf region. Many of the oil tankers that cross the Strait of Hormuz daily are directly or indirectly linked to the company.



Figure 6 - An LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas) carrier that operates for Shell

During the meeting one of the topics was the importance of the free flow of commerce through the region. We emphasized that, to accomplish this, it is essential to strive for and maintain freedom of navigation at sea. By exchanging our data and experience about merchant shipping in the area with relevant actors in the maritime sector, we can both benefit and cooperate better in the future.

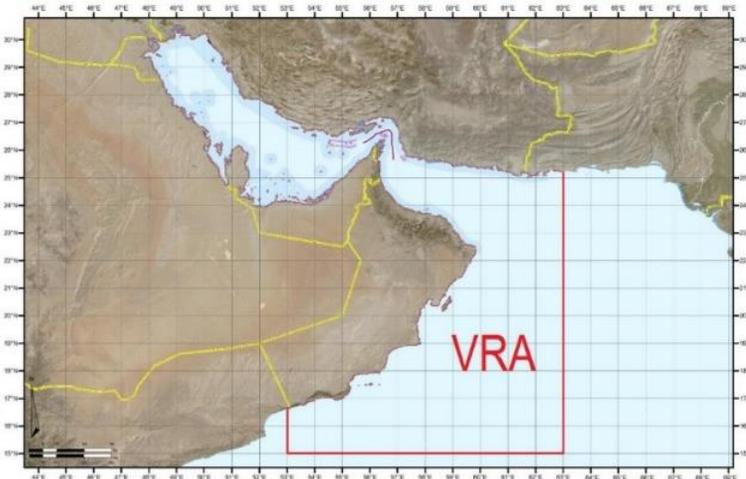
EMASoH Voluntary Reporting Scheme

Following the major increase of ships reporting to us using the Voluntary Reporting Scheme (the number grew from 300 to more than 650 in four months), we now have an average of 30 ships reporting each day to us in the EMASoH Voluntary Reporting Area.

Merchant vessels are invited to participate to our Voluntary Reporting Scheme. Voluntary reporting improves the cooperation and guidance that EMASoH can provide to those 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.



Voluntary reporting to EMASoH via ctf474-emasoh.vra.fct@def.gouv.fr

More information about the VRS <https://www.emasoh-agenor.org/voluntary-reporting-scheme>

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