



EMASoH in March: Latest News

- Boarding MSC Aries in the Gulf of Oman by IRGC-N on april 13th, prior to Iran strikes against Israël.
- Emergency discovered by Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA) Atlantique 2.
- The support given to EMASoH by assets MPA and French Naval Ship (FNS).
- EMASoH delegation attending Maritime Security Conference in Bahrein.
- Visit by the Chief of the Norwegian Fleet to EMASoH.
- Information about the EMASoH Voluntary Reporting Scheme (VRS).
- The VRS tool on the EMASoH website.

Boarding MSC Aries in the Gulf of Oman by IRGC-N

On Saturday, 13 April 2024, the Portuguese-flagged container carrier MSC Aries was boarded near the Strait of Hormuz. Armed personnel boarded the MSC Aries by helicopter by fast.

The boarding, in breach of international law, happened while the merchant vessel was sailing in international waters in the Gulf of Oman. The MSC Aries was at the time heading to India according to the destination transmitted by her Automatic Identification System (AIS).



Figure 1 – Boarding of the MSC Aries



Figure 2 – French Navy ship committed in the Strait of Hormuz

Immediately, France deployed a French Naval Ship (FNS) under AGENOR command in the Strait of Hormuz, to contribute to maritime security and freedom of navigation. The FNS has accompanied two ships, MSC OPERA and MSC BERANGERE in a single transit, during her brief period assigned to operation Agenor of the European initiative European-led Maritime Awareness in the Strait of Hormuz (EMASoH).

Information Bulletin April 2024

The countries participating in EMASoH Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, The Netherlands, Norway and Portugal, condemn the seizure of the MSC Aries. EMASoH aims to ensure safe passage, security, and freedom of navigation to reassure merchant shipping in the Strait of Hormuz and the Gulf region through a de-escalatory approach.

Therefore, it is of key importance that EMASoH documents any illegal activity in the Gulf region and Strait of Hormuz, which this case is. EMASoH Operation AGENOR continues to monitor the situation closely. As of today, the MSC Aries along with the previously boarded vessels TMO Advantage Sweet, TMO Noivi, and TMO St Nikolas remain anchored at Bandar Abbas.



Active link towards EMASoH nations Statement

Emergency discovered by MPA Atlantique 2

On Sunday, 27 April 2024, during a patrol flight over international waters, the EMASoH maritime patrol aircraft (MPA) discovered a ship on fire on the border of Iranian territorial waters. A rescue raft with people on board has been found in the vicinity.

EMASoH swiftly informed the Iranian authorities, who dispatched a rescue boat to start a Rescue operation. The Iranian authorities thanked EMASoH for our assistance and our aircraft resumed its patrol. Fortunately, the crew was rescued.



Figure 3- Dhow vessel photographed by the MPA



Figure 4- Fish boat of the type dhow, the type that was on fire during the emergency

It is a seaman's duty to help people in need at sea regardless of their nationality, status, or the circumstances in which people in distress are found at sea. This is in accordance with the applicable Maritime Law and Conventions, such as the 1979 SAR Convention. And beyond, EMASoH reaction underlines once again the de-escalatory DNA of our operation in the region.

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The support given to EMASoH by MPA & FNS

In April two assets were assigned to directly support EMASoH Operation AGENOR. These assets were the French Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA) the Atlantique 2 and a French Navy Light Frigate.



Figure 5 –MPA Atlantique 2 in the Strait of Hormuz

The MPA made 6 long duration flights to support EMASoH Operation Agenor. During these flights, the MPA conducted 38 EMMA (EMASoH Manoeuvres) calls to reassure merchant vessels by showing our presence.

The French Navy ship has accompanied two ships, MSC OPERA and MSC BERANGERE in a single transit, during her brief period assigned to operation Agenor of the European initiative European-led Maritime Awareness in the Strait of Hormuz (EMASoH).

EMASoH delegation visiting Maritime Security Conference

Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) hosted senior military leaders during a two-day maritime security conference held aboard Naval Support Activity Bahrain, April 16-17.

CMF member and partner nation delegates and naval leaders were among the guests attending the annual maritime security conference, hosted by the world's largest naval partnership.

During the conference, Operational Commander Vice Admiral Slaars briefed the audience about the achievements of EMASoH, elaborating on EMASoH's commitment and contributions to freedom of navigation and maritime security in the Gulf region.



Figure 7 – Group Photo Maritime Security Conference

Visit by the Chief of the Norwegian Fleet to EMASoH



Figure 8 – Commodore Gimmingrud receiving thanks of Force Commander Colmant

Force Commander Rear Admiral Colmant met Commodore Gimmingrud, Chief of the Norwegian Fleet, showing shared commitment to the freedom of navigation.

Both the Force Commander and the Commodore emphasised the contribution of EMASoH to a stable maritime situation in the Gulf. Pointing out the importance of the Gulf to the shipping industry and the domestic economies of the nations participating in EMASoH.

EMASoH Voluntary Reporting Scheme (VRS)

Merchant vessels are invited to take part in our Voluntary Reporting Scheme. Voluntary reporting improves the cooperation and guidance that EMASoH can provide to those ships. They will also be prioritised in the event of accompaniments and reassuring calls performed by both navy ships and aircrafts.

48 hours prior to entering the Voluntary Reporting Area (VRA), or as soon as possible:

- ✓ **inform** EMASoH about your estimated time of entry into and exit from the VRA;
- ✓ **confirm** your time 6 hours before entering and please keep us informed of any changes in your intentions;
- ✓ **report** any suspicious behaviour;

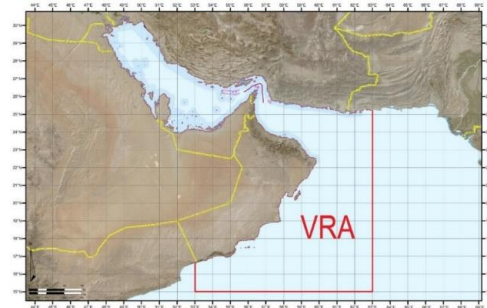


Figure 9 - EMASoH VRA

VRS reporting on EMASoH website

Voluntary Reporting Scheme - VRS

All ships entering the EMASOH Voluntary Reporting Area are invited to provide the following information 48 hours prior to entering the area or as soon as possible and report suspicious behaviour or unusual events.

The data sent through this form will only be used by EMASOH's Naval Cooperation and Guidance for Shipping

Ship name *	<input type="text"/>
IMO number *	<input type="text"/>
Flag state *	<input type="text"/>
Bridge / ship master phone number *	<input type="text"/>
telephone number	<input type="text"/>
Ship master email *	<input type="text"/>
email address	<input type="text"/>
Estimated Time of Arrival entering the Voluntary Reporting Area (VRA)	<input type="text"/>
ETA to the VRA	<input type="text"/>

Figure 10 - Voluntary Reporting Scheme Tool

To simplify the reporting process and make it more efficient a web-based reporting form has been developed.

This tool should guarantee the integrity of the data.

Ideally you would fill in our form online, but alternatively you can report by email.

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

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