



# **MSCIO ATALANTA WEEKLY REPORT**

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**21 March – 27 March**

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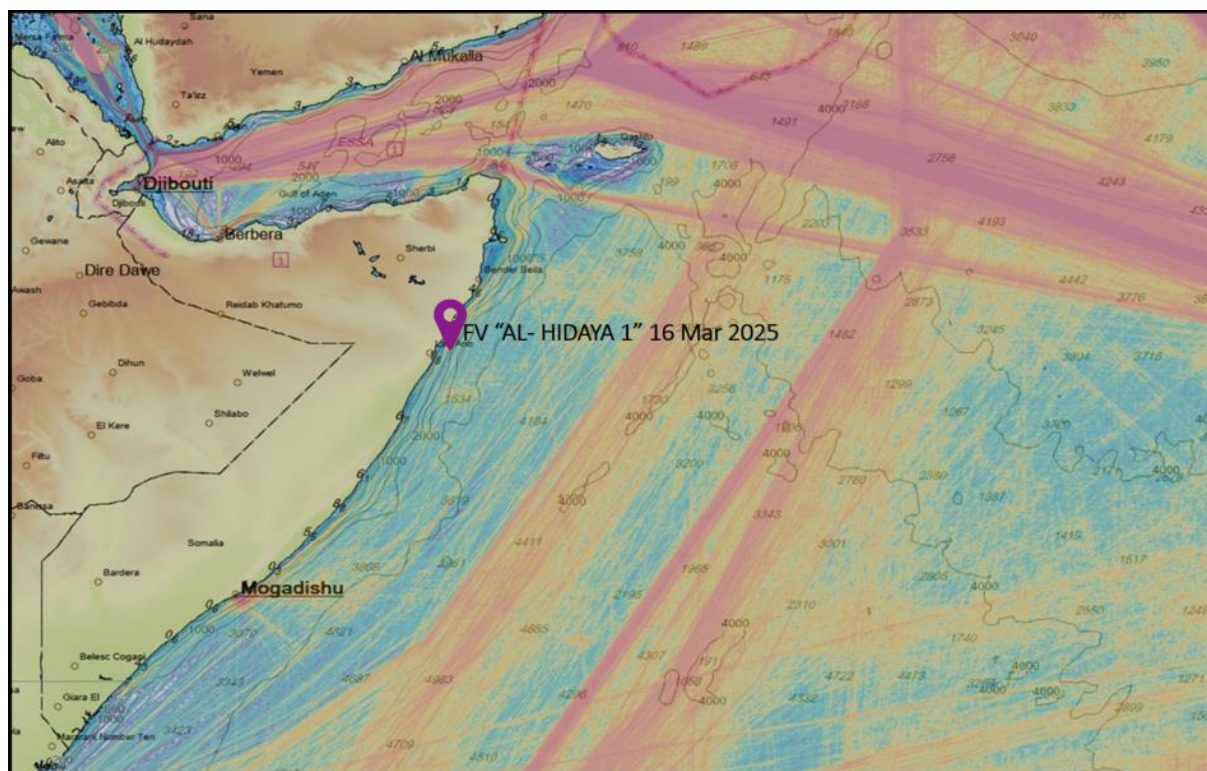
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# OVERVIEW OF INCIDENTS IN THE VOLUNTARY REPORTING AREA (VRA)



CATEGORY	No.	Page Ref.
 <b>Armed Robbery</b>	1	2
 <b>Attack</b>	Nil	NSTR
 <b>Attempted Boarding</b>	Nil	NSTR
 <b>Boarding</b>	Nil	NSTR
 <b>Hijack</b>	Nil	NSTR
 <b>Kidnap</b>	Nil	NSTR
 <b>Piracy</b>	Nil	NSTR
 <b>Suspicious Activity</b>	Nil	NSTR
 <b>Other Maritime Crimes</b>	Nil	NSTR
<b>Total Incidents</b>	1	

# ARMED ROBBERY

## 1. SIGNIFICANT RECENT INCIDENT

### 1.1 F/V AL HIDAYA Armed Robbery

**Date of Incident:** 16 March 2025

**Location of Incident:** In Vicinity Of (IVO) DURDURA, Somalia

**Vessel Type:** Yemeni-owned fishing dhow, crewed and chartered by Somali nationals

**Operating Area:** GARMAAL region, Somalia

#### 1.1.1 Incident Summary

- **Initial Event:** On 16 March 2025, a Pirate Action Group (PAG) consisting of five armed individuals from the GARMAAL area attacked and seized the Yemeni-owned fishing dhow F/V AL HIDAYA IVO DURDURA, Somalia. The vessel, typically operating in the GARMAAL fishing area, was crewed and chartered by Somali nationals. The attackers employed force to gain control of the dhow.
- **Operational Details:** The hijackers did not use GPS or satellite communications equipment onboard the AL HIDAYA, nor did they bring their own. The PAG directed the vessel toward areas associated with Iranian fishing vessels rather than the high seas or regions frequented by Chinese or other industrial fishing fleets. No skiff was observed accompanying the dhow during the incident.
- **Tactical Assessment:** Intelligence suggests the hijackers conducted a pre-attack survey, targeting the dhow for its fuel load. The limited number of hijackers (five) was deemed insufficient to control a larger motor vessel (M/V), indicating a localized and opportunistic operation. The vessel's master communicated exclusively with the businessman who rented the dhow, with no reported external coordination.
- **Outcome:** Multiple HUMINT sources indicate a ransom was likely paid, though specifics remain unverified. The incident is assessed as an armed robbery rather than a traditional piracy operation, given the absence of intent to pursue larger targets or extend operations beyond the immediate area.
- **Additional Context:** The event is not believed to be linked to prior hijackings of F/V AL NAJMA (07 Feb 2025, MARREYA port IVO Eyl) or F/V SAYTUUN-2 (15 Feb 2025, IVO Hafun), based on differing PAG characteristics and operational patterns.

#### 1.1.2 Intelligence Assessment

- **Threat Level:** This incident underscores a persistent risk of armed robbery targeting small fishing vessels in Somali coastal waters, particularly in the GARMAAL and DURDURA regions.
- **PAG Intent:** The focus on fuel-laden dhows suggests a tactical preference among small-scale PAGs, likely driven by resource theft for financial gain rather than strategic maritime disruption.
- **Operational Scope:** The lack of advanced navigation tools and limited personnel reinforce the localized nature of the threat, distinguishing it from broader piracy campaigns.





## PIRACY SITUATION (NOV 2023 – MAR 2025)



## PIRACY ASSESSMENT

(U) It is ALMOST CERTAIN that the PAG's tactics for conducting piracy on the high seas involve hijacking a dhow and using it as a mother ship. The pirates then blend in with the usual traffic and deploy skiffs from the mother ship to attack vessels. They are able to navigate up to 600 nautical miles or more off the East Somali coast.

(UE C) Nevertheless, from November 2024 it is becoming increasingly common for a group of people to organise themselves, identify a vulnerable ship close to the coast and use skiffs to carry out an attack. These attacks typically target Yemeni fishing dhows. While there is no confirmed information, it is **HIGHLY LIKELY** that ransoms would have been paid.

(UE C) On the other hand, that risk could be amplified if local fishermen turn into pirates as a consequence that no effective action is being taken from the authorities to safeguard Somali TTW from IUUE.

## PIRACY THREAT UPDATE

ATALANTA

### UPDATE ON THE PIRACY THREAT OFF THE COAST OF SOMALIA

27 FEB 2025

**Situation:** Most recently, on 17 FEB 2025, the Yemen-flagged fishing vessel SAYTUN-2 was hijacked at GARMAAL Camp located North of Eyl, within Somali territorial waters. The Pirate Action Group (PAG) was holding a Yemeni crew aboard. EUNAVFOR ATALANTA coordinated closely with Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) and with the Yemeni Coast Guard. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February a Spanish navy vessel from Atalanta confirmed with a friendly approach that the vessel and the crew are safe after the pirates abandoned the FV. This incident highlights the persistent threat to vessels in these waters, particularly within territorial limits, and demonstrates the critical importance of maintaining vigilance and following established security protocols.

**Pirates' modus operandi:** The typical pirate strategy involves the seizure and hijacking of a dhow, which is subsequently utilized as a mother ship. The pirates then blend in with the usual traffic and deploy skiffs from the mother ship to attack vessels, navigating as far as 600 Nautical Miles or more, off the East Somali coast. The possibility of Attacks in the Gulf of Aden (GOA) should not be ignored, especially in the Eastern side. After a vessel is seized, it is likely that this is taken to the Somali coast and held there whilst ransom negotiations are ongoing.

**Threat evaluation:** These recent armed robberies within Somali territorial waters demonstrate an active and evolving threat in the region. Despite routine patrols conducted by CMF, EUNAVFOR ATALANTA and other warships in these waters, pirates continue to demonstrate sophisticated operational capabilities. These incidents highlight the existence of well-established coastal support infrastructure and the ability to conduct coordinated operations. The successful execution of recent attacks indicates that pirate action groups maintain the capability and intent to target vessels in this region. This assessment is supported by their demonstrated ability to operate within territorial waters, utilize multiple coastal locations, and sustain extended operations



**Registration and reporting.** CSO's and masters must register their vessels with both MSCIO (<https://mscio.eu/reporting/vessel-registration/>) and UKMTO (<https://www.ukmto.org/reporting-formats/initial-report>) upon entering the UKMTO Voluntary Reporting Area and report all incidents to UKMTO in accordance with BMP. When safe to do so, vessels should document incidents and suspicious activity through logs, photographs, video, and radar footage. CSOs should gather information on Pattern of Life and Maritime Domain Awareness for their planned routes and ports of call to support risk assessments. These procedures enable effective monitoring and resource allocation by CMF and EUNAVFOR ATALANTA.

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