

# Joint Maritime Information Center

## Update 002 - JMIC Advisory

### Regional Tension - Impact on Maritime Security <sub>C</sub>

#### Area of Concern:

Subject: Strait of Hormuz (SoH) Transit status

JMIC# 001-26

Regional Threat Level: CRITICAL

### 1. Regional Risk Level Assessment

Overall Maritime Risk Level: ● CRITICAL

JMIC Threat Scale: ● Low | ● Moderate | ● Substantial | ● Severe | ● Critical

**CRITICAL indicates an attack is almost certain.**

Confirmed missile and drone attacks against multiple commercial vessels within the Gulf of Oman, Musandam approaches, and UAE coastal waters have shifted the regional maritime security posture from Severe to **CRITICAL**. While no formal legal closure of the Strait of Hormuz (SoH) has been declared, the operational environment reflects active kinetic hazard conditions in this area.

### 2. Confirmed known Vessel Incidents – Approximately Past 24 Hours

- SKYLIGHT (IMO 9330020) – Attacked 5NM north of Khasab, Oman, while at anchor. The vessel caught fire, and four of the 20 crew members (15 Indian nationals and 5 Iranians) were injured. The entire crew was later evacuated.
- MKD VYOM – Crude Oil Tanker (IMO 9284386) – Hit about 44 nautical miles northwest of Muscat, Oman. Projectile strike above waterline by unknown projectile which caused an explosion and a subsequent fire in the engine room. One crew member who was in the engine room at the time of the strike was confirmed dead. No other injuries have been reported among the remaining crew. As of March 2, the fire has been reported as under control. The vessel remains afloat, and plans are being coordinated to tow it to a safe location
- HERCULES STAR – Oil tanker (IMO 9295531) Was targeted and struck by a projectile on March 1 while transiting approximately 17 nautical miles northwest of Mina Saqr, UAE. The strike caused a fire on board, no injuries. Following the damage assessment and the fire being put out, the vessel elected to continue its voyage under its own power.
- OCEAN ELECTRA – Panamax Bulk carrier, (IMO 9591466) On March 1, 2026, the vessel experienced a "near-miss" incident in the Persian Gulf, approximately 35 nautical miles west of Sharjah, UAE. No physical damage was sustained by the hull, and there were no injuries to the crew.
- STENA IMPERATIVE - Chemical/Oil Products Tanker, (IMO 9666077). March 2, the US-flagged tanker was struck by multiple projectiles while berthed in the Port of Bahrain within the Salman Industrial City/HIDD area. The vessel was struck by two projectiles (reported as Iranian-origin drones or missiles) during the early morning hours (approx. 02:57 GMT). Casualties: One



shipyard worker was killed due to debris from the impact/interception. Two additional workers sustained serious injuries. The ship's crew were reported safe and evacuated. The strikes caused a fire on board, which was later extinguished by local emergency services and the vessel's fire suppression systems.

JMIC has found no clear or obvious operational or political association that would make non US or Israeli vessels viable candidates for targeting and attack. These incidents highlight continued stand-off missile and drone threats in Gulf of Oman waters and the Strait of Hormuz and approaches. There is no confirmed sea mine deployment or detonation at this time.

### **3. Confirmed known Marine infrastructure attacks – Approximately Past 24 Hours**

Jebel Ali Port UAE Operations resumed at 18:00, March 1 with enhanced security following Aerial Interception causing a fire.

Duqm Port Oman Operational following two UAV strikes Attack; 1 worker injured.

Ras Tanura Refinery Saudi Arabia reported closed following a Drone Attack, and subsequent a fire at the plant.

Port Operational Status Matrix as of 2<sup>nd</sup> March

- Bahrain: All port operations (including KBSP) remain temporarily suspended; pilotage services are halted.
- UAE: Jebel Ali has resumed limited activity; Fujairah and Khor Fakkan remain open and at full capacity.
- Oman: Khasab is heavily restricted; Duqm is operational but on high alert.
- Qatar: Ras Laffan and Mesaieed report significant GPS signal degradation; vessels are advised to navigate with extreme caution.

### **4. Port & Anchorage Congestion Risk**

Increased vessel clustering is expected near UAE coastal ports, Omani approaches, and SoH anchorages as operators delay discretionary transits pending further clarity. Elevated congestion may create secondary navigation risks including restricted maneuvering space, anchor dragging, and collision exposure. Enhanced bridge resource management and disciplined VHF/AIS reporting is advised.

U.S. and Israeli-affiliated or flagged vessels are advised to minimize time spent pier-side or at anchor within high-risk zones to reduce vulnerability of targeting. Maintaining movement and avoiding predictable patterns remains critical for mitigating the risk of targeted strikes or collateral damage.



## 5. Strait of Hormuz Traffic Assessment

Historical Average Daily Transit: ~138 vessels per 24-hour period.

AIS review indicates transits may have fallen to as low as ~28 vessels (80% reduction)

While this reflects a measurable reduction, the decrease may represent a temporary reactionary pause or surge displacement rather than a sustained structural decline in volume. Continued monitoring is required to determine if reductions stabilize or accelerate.

### CARGO VESSELS TRANSITS COMPARISON 28 FEB AND MARCH 1, 2026

Date	28 Feb	1 Mar	2 Mar	3 Mar	4 Mar
SoH E	55	12			
SoH W	43	6			
BAM NW	7	10			
BAM SE	9	7			

Data based on cargo carrying vessels 1000 GT and above transmitting AIS

### TANKERS (ALL TYPES) VESSELS TRANSITS COMPARISON 28 FEB AND MARCH 1, 2026

Date	28 Feb	1 Mar	2 Mar	3 Mar	4 Mar
SoH E	30	2			
SoH W	20	1			
BAM NW	4	2			
BAM SE	7	2			

Data based on cargo carrying vessels 1000 GT and above transmitting AIS

## 6. GNSS / GPS Interference Environment

Significant GNSS interference continues across the Strait of Hormuz approaches, Gulf of Oman, and the Arabian Gulf. Observed impacts include positional offsets, AIS anomalies, and intermittent signal degradation.

Under current aerial threat and added navigational challenges due to congestion, degraded positional integrity acts as a risk amplifier, increasing probability of navigational incident or miscalculation.

### Recommended Measures:

- Cross-check GPS position with radar ranges and visual bearings.
- Validate ECDIS with secondary navigation systems.
- Increase bridge manning in constrained waters.
- Treat anomalous VHF communications cautiously and verify identity.
- Include offshore activities and port operations in all threat and risk assessments.



## 7. War Risk Insurance Status – Market Escalation

Open-source market reporting indicates additional P&I clubs are reviewing or issuing comparable war risk cancellation notices for Gulf and Iran-adjacent waters, with some effective dates extending into 3–5 March 2026. Reinsurance appetite is tightening and additional premium requirements are increasing significantly.

Insurance availability may now act as a primary gating factor for transit decisions independent of formal navigational closure.

Insurance market posture aligns with the JMIC elevation of the regional maritime risk level to **CRITICAL**.

## 8. Outlook (24–48 Hours)

- The aerial threat from missiles and drones is expected to remain elevated.
- The risk of collateral damage remains HIGH
- All merchant vessels regardless of Flag or nationality are at risk.
- No recognized authority has declared formal closure of the Strait of Hormuz.
- Mining activity remains a primary escalation variable.

The security situation across the Strait of Hormuz, Bab-el-Mandeb, and the Arabian Sea is expected to remain highly volatile over the next 24 to 48 hours. Continued military posturing and the potential for retaliatory strikes pose a direct threat to commercial navigation, with a high likelihood of further GPS interference and communication disruptions. Mariners should anticipate sudden changes in transit permissions and potential "shadowing" by naval vessels in the Gulf of Oman. Shipping companies are strongly advised to review emergency protocols and maintain frequent contact with UKMTO, as the risk of escalation remains critical.

### A. Strait of Hormuz

The maritime security situation in the Strait of Hormuz has escalated significantly following recent regional kinetic activity. While no official legal closure has been confirmed via NAVAREA or IMO channels, multiple reports indicate Iranian forces are issuing VHF hails claiming the waterway is restricted. Mariners are reporting severe GNSS/GPS interference and disruptions to AIS and communication systems. The risk of misidentification or collateral damage near military units is high, and several major commercial carriers have already suspended transits. Vessels currently in the area should consider seeking shelter while maintaining appropriate distance from Naval units.

### B. Strait of Bab-el-Mandeb

Threat posture remains elevated by Houthi forces targeting commercial shipping. High-profile international carriers have halted transits through the Red Sea and Suez Canal, rerouting vessels around the Cape of Good Hope. Electronic interference is intermittent but present, affecting safe navigation in



these confined waters. Risk of missile or drone attacks remain for vessels with perceived western or regional affiliations. Strict adherence to BMP5 and established transit corridors is essential for any vessel remaining in the high-risk area.

### C. Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea

The maritime security environment in the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea has deteriorated following increased kinetic activity and reported interference with commercial shipping. Incidents of drone sightings, and persistent GPS spoofing have been reported, particularly near the Iranian coast and along major transit lanes.

Vessels are advised to maintain a high state of vigilance, as the risk of misidentification or being caught in cross-border tensions is elevated. Increased naval patrols from international task forces are present. There are no confirmed reports of sea mine deployment. Limpet-style underwater attacks remain a historical risk pattern.

JMIC will continue monitoring and issue updates as the situation warrants. The next JMIC updates will be on 03 March.

#### JMIC Regional Threat Levels

Threat Level	Definition
Low	An attack is highly unlikely
Moderate	An attack is possible but not likely
Substantial	An attack is a strong possibility
Severe	An attack is highly likely
Critical	An attack is almost certain

**Issued by:** Joint Maritime Information Center (JMIC) in consultation with UKMTO & MSCIO

