

Circular 282/ 2023

To: Vessel Owners, Managers, Masters, Officers, Deputy Registrars, Surveyors and Other Interested Parties

Subject: Additional Security Measures consequent to the security situation and the risk of collateral damage in the waters outside of Israel and the Gaza Strip.

Date: 30th October 2023

Summary

Due to the deteriorating security situation and the risk of collateral damage in the waters outside of Israel and the Gaza Strip, the Cook Islands Flag Administration raises the maritime security level, the MARSEC/ISPS level, for Cook Islands flagged ships that are planning to enter these areas. Israeli territorial waters in the Gulf of Aqaba are also included in the evaluation.

RAISED SECURITY LEVEL:

- Territorial waters outside of Gaza and further north, including Tel Aviv, are at **MARSEC/ISPS level 3**.
- Territorial waters north of Tel Aviv and towards the border between Israel and Lebanon are maintained at **MARSEC/ISPS level 2**. Please note, however, that the situation in the affected areas may change rapidly and result in a further increase in the maritime security level.
- Israeli territorial waters in the Gulf of Aqaba will have **MARSEC/ISPS level 2**.

Maritime Cook Islands guidance for vessels making calls in the above areas (with the exclusion of MARSEC 3 areas):

- Undertake a new ship- and voyage-specific threat risk assessment before entering any region where there has been an incident, or the threat has changed.
- After the risk assessment, review the Ship's Security Plan.
- Maintain a full and vigilant bridge watch for vessels at anchor.
- Vessels anchored outside these areas must assess the risk of collateral damage and take necessary precautions.
- Implement deck patrols.
- Implement a waterborne security patrol.
- Maintain a strict communications watch and establish communication with all vessels coming close.
- Ensure strict boarding controls are in place.
- Only lower accommodation gangways or ladders when necessary.
- Rig outboard lighting where possible, particularly over the stern and rig/use searchlights if available.
- Report any suspicious activity immediately to the port
- Monitor relevant VHF and other communication channels.
- Check all fire-fighting equipment is available for immediate use. Make sure the emergency fire pump is available if any maintenance is being undertaken.
- **Keep the Automatic Information System (AIS) on.** There is no need to complete the field stating the last or next port of call.

CSO and SSO are encouraged to follow developments closely, using reliable sources.

The raised security level will be valid until 31st December 2023. Necessary updates will be published on our website.

For further information or clarification please contact the Technical Department
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