

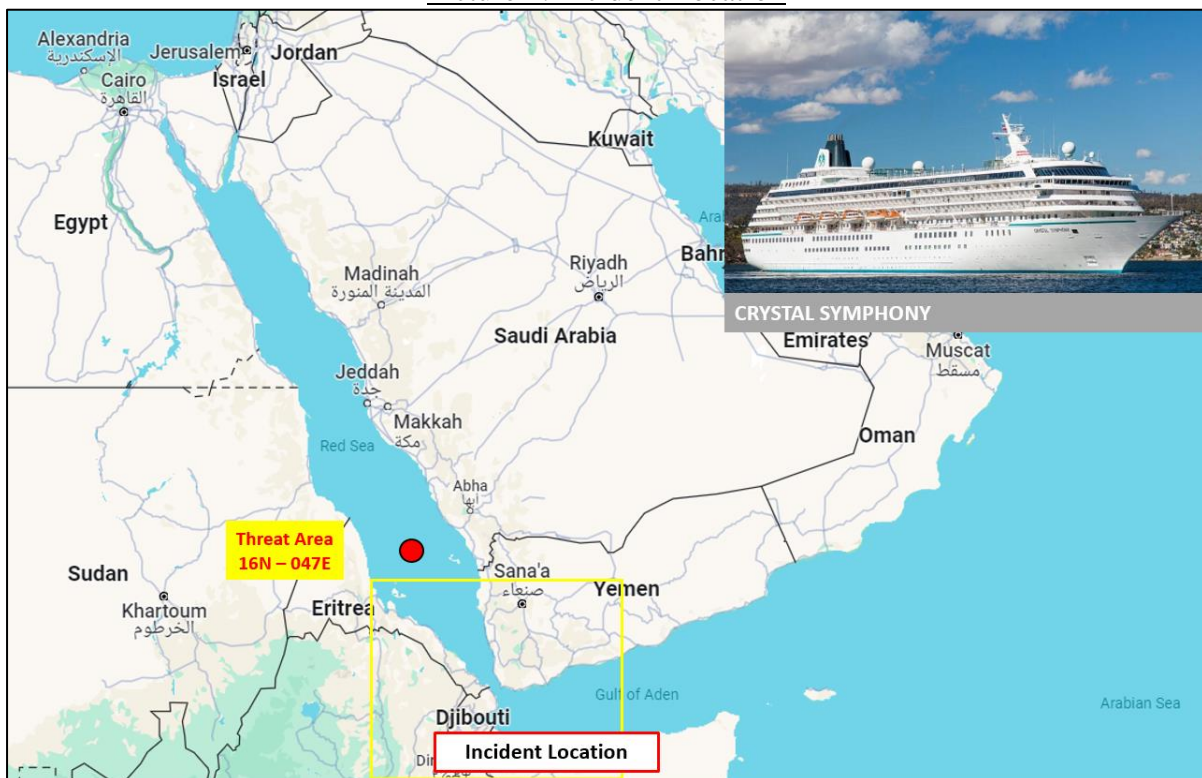


**JMIC INFONOTE 01APR\_01 – COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGE INVOLVING BAHAMA-FLAGGED PASSENGER VESSEL, CRYSTAL SYMPHONY, 150NM NW OF AL HUDAYDAH, YEMEN**

**INCIDENT REPORT**

1. There was a reported communications challenge on a Bahama-flagged Passenger Vessel, CRYSTAL SYMPHONY (IMO: 9066667), while the vessel was transiting the Red Sea at approximately 150nm NW of Al Hudaydah, Yemen on 01 Apr 24 at 19:56 (UTC). Reference UKMTO Incident Warning 059. (See **Picture 1** for incident location).

Picture 1: Incident Location



2. The JMIC has confirmed CRYSTAL SYMPHONY was targeted by a communications challenge. The vessel reported that after transiting the Bab al Mandeb Strait, transiting with AIS turned off, was challenged on VHF by an organization claiming to be the Yemeni Navy demanding that the vessel turn on the AIS. The vessel had transited the Threat Area with AIS off following JMIC guidance. Not long after, a crew member reported a loud bang and discovered a



cracked cabin window on the port side. Vessel crew continue to investigate to determine the likely cause of the broken glass and if the act of an external factor. The vessel and all crew on board reported safe (no injuries), and the vessel was proceeding to next port of call.

3. Based on sources, CRYSTAL SYMPHONY was likely “targeted” due to having US affiliation. *[Note: Houthi spokesperson stated previously in Jan 24 that its attacks were in response to the US-UK military actions in the region.]*

### JMIC GUIDANCE

4. Freedom of navigation and the free flow of maritime commerce continue as a top priority while the southern Red Sea and Gulf of Aden from 16N to 047E remain a threat area based on the Houthis ability to attack vessels with various capabilities.

- a. The current threat assessment identifies vessels with an Israeli, United States or United Kingdom association at highest risk

5. **Vessels** intending to transit the threat area are recommended to:

- a. Exercise caution
- b. Conduct a risk assessment prior to entering the area
- c. Review security measures/incorporate appropriate vessel hardening measures into their security plans
- d. Ensure AIS is transmitting, consistent with provisions of the International Convention for Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS)
  - i. Except when believed that continuing to operate AIS might compromise safety and security of the vessel
  - ii. If AIS is turned off, alter course and speed to minimize tracking by DR
  - iii. Do not loiter
- e. If contacted on VHF by “Yemeni Navy”:
  - i. Ignore the VHF call and continue passage if safe to do so
  - ii. Describe incident in movement reporting to UKMTO and NAVCENT NCAGS.
- f. Share instances of suspicious activity with UKMTO



- i. UAV sightings
- ii. Communications challenges

6. **Shipping Companies** are recommended to:

- a. Conduct threat & risk assessment of all their vessels and especially those that may have previous US, UK or Israel ownership or associations
- b. If an association is made, shipping companies are recommended to provide the information to UKMTO prior to transiting the threat area
- c. Ensure their managed vessels receive and follow the guidance for vessels
- d. Review digital footprint

**Additional Resources on Incident:**

UKMTO Reporting Visit: <https://www.ukmto.org>

Email: [watchkeepers@ukmto.org](mailto:watchkeepers@ukmto.org)

Emergency Tel: +44 (0)2392 222060

**Additional Resources on Industry Guidance:**

BMP 5 – Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea:

<https://www.ics-shipping.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/bmp5-hi-res-min.pdf>

ATP – 02.1 NCAGS Guide to Owners, Operators, Masters and Officers:

[https://shipping.nato.int/systems/file\\_download.ashx?pg=692&ver=2](https://shipping.nato.int/systems/file_download.ashx?pg=692&ver=2)