

Joint Maritime Information Center

Update 098 to JMIC Advisory Note:

01 March – 20 September 2026

Regional Tension - Impact on Maritime Security

Area of Concern:

Middle East Maritime Region

JMIC# 001-26

ICOD: 201500 UTC

Regional Threat Level: SEVERE

1. Confirmed Maritime Security Incidents List since last report

Date	Vessel	Vessel Type	Event Type	Location	Narrative
17 Sep 2026, UKMTO 136-26	Name withheld UFN	Tanker	Suspicious activity	Transiting westbound through the Gulf of Aden.	At 171453 UTC: A tanker off Aden, in pos 1307N 04618E , was pursued by a suspicious skiff attempting interception. The vessel refused to stop. At 171608 UTC: The Master reported all well onboard and continued to monitor the skiff, whose location was unknown. Further contact with the vessel could not be established.
17 Sep 2026, UKMTO 137-26	MT TREND	Tanker	Attack	Strait of Hormuz, in TTW, 3NM from the coast of Oman.	At 171500 UTC: MT TREND was involved in a security incident in the Strait of Hormuz and subsequently anchored in position 26° 25.60N 056° 24.00E, approximately 2.6 NM northeast of Ras Makhbuq. USNCAGS confirmed the incident. All crew are safe.
18 Sep 2026, UKMTO 138-26	STI STEADFAST	Tanker	Attack	Transiting outbound through the Strait of Hormuz.	At 180600 UTC UKMTO have received a report from the CSO of the vessel that at 0040 UTC while transiting outbound through the Strait of Hormuz the vessel was hit by an unknown projectile breaching the hull and causing a fire. The fire has been extinguished, and all crew were reported safe.
18 Sep 2026, UKMTO 139-26	Name withheld UFN	Tanker	Attack	Transiting outbound through the Strait of Hormuz.	Late report. On 16 Sep 2026 (time unconfirmed): The tanker was struck by an unidentified projectile. Communications with the vessel and CSO could not be established. Crew status, damage, and environmental impact remain unconfirmed. The vessel reportedly continued transit.



2. Operational Summary – Last 72 Hours

2A. Arabian Gulf (No change)

No confirmed attacks or disruptions were reported in this period. Recent attacks on ships in anchorage areas pose risk for adjacent ships due to explosions and environmental damage. Mariners should monitor relevant VHF channels and coordinate all movements with the appropriate port authorities.

Traffic flows remained stable, with anchorage congestion unchanged across the region.

Navigational system interference and wider regional military activity continued to warrant caution, and recurring GNSS interference remained consistent with prior reporting.

2B. Strait of Hormuz

Three attacks were reported in this period (UKMTO 137-26, 138-26, 139-26). UKMTO 137-26 (17 Sep): security incident in Omani TTW, 2.6 NM northeast of Ras Makhbuq; crew safe. It is also sent as a NAVAREA IX Warning 324-26. UKMTO 138-26 (18 Sep): tanker struck by an unknown projectile while outbound; hull breached and fire extinguished; crew safe. UKMTO 139-26: time-late report of a tanker struck by an unidentified projectile on 16 Sep (time unconfirmed); crew, damage, and environmental impact unconfirmed; vessel continued transit.

IRGC attacks, attempted attacks, and/or harassment activity persisted including UAV overflight, targeted surveillance of merchant shipping, and occasional VHF hailing. These actions continue to demonstrate Iran's intent to assert presence along key transit lanes and maintain pressure on transiting vessels.

Commercial traffic through the Strait of Hormuz remained at reduced levels compared to the 2025 baseline. Independent tracking data indicated suppression with single-digit numbers transiting in both directions, while US NCAGS data indicated traffic flows averaging over 30 vessel transits per day for the last 72 hours. Open tracking still shows single-digit commodity crossings on some days; US NCAGS facilitated flows remain far higher (last report average near 30/day).

2C. Gulf of Oman

No confirmed attacks or disruptions were reported in this period. Traffic flows in the Gulf of Oman remained stable, with vessels maintaining heightened awareness amid ongoing naval activity.

Naval presence remained elevated due to blockade enforcement activity. Latest available official CENTCOM figure (18 September), 105 commercial vessels had been redirected, three disabled because of blockade enforcement, and two boarded for compliance verification.

Vessels were expected to respond promptly to military queries and maintain AIS-on unless constrained by security threats. Operators continued to exercise caution due to regional strike activity, and ongoing IRGC monitoring of shipping in adjacent waters.

2D. Arabian Sea (No change)

No confirmed attacks or disruptions were reported in this period. Naval forces continued routine patrols, and commercial traffic was transiting without disruption. The broader operating environment remained influenced by regional tensions.

2E. Gulf of Aden

No completed attack or boarding was reported. UKMTO 136-26: a westbound tanker 75 NM east of Aden reported a skiff that pursued and attempted to intercept. Authorities investigating.

Commercial traffic remained relatively steady in the Gulf of Aden.



2F. Southern Red Sea & Bab el Mandeb (No change)

No confirmed attacks or disruptions were reported in this period

Houthi forces remain in control of the Yemeni coast and islands commanding the eastern approaches and both Bab el-Mandeb channels (Mocha, Dhubab, Mayun/Perim, Zuqar, Hanish), following the 10–12 September seizures. Commercial traffic continues at reduced levels after the 20 July embargo declaration and those territorial gains.

2G. Somali Coast and Somali Basin (No change)

No confirmed attacks or disruption were reported in this period.

Four merchant vessels remain hijacked at the reporting date:

- MT HONOUR 25, Palau-flagged product tanker: Hijacked 21 April 2026 off the northern Somali coast while en route to Mogadishu with oil products.
- MT EUREKA, Togo-flagged product tanker: Hijacked 2 May 2026 while anchored off Qana Port, Shabwa, Yemen with oil products.
- MT ASANA, Tanzania-flagged product/chemical tanker: Hijacked 17 July 2026 approximately 65 NM southwest of Mukalla, Yemen with oil products.
- MT SEAMULL (SIBU 1), Eritrea-flagged tanker. Hijacked 20 August 2026 off the coast of Somalia in the IRTC.

2H. Northern Red Sea & Suez Canal (No change)

No confirmed attack or incident was reported in this period.

The overall pattern in the Northern Red Sea traffic remains security-sensitive and reactive to threats, producing day-to-day fluctuations, while the Suez Canal continue operations with steady tanker flows and selective container vessel returns. Northern Red Sea approaches to the canal remain functional for northbound and southbound traffic at stable levels without systemic interruption or mass diversion.

2I. Eastern Mediterranean (No change)

No confirmed attacks or disruptions were reported in this period – consistent with persistent baseline.



3. Regional Threat overview

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

Region	Threat Level	Notes
Arabian Gulf	MODERATE	Navigation interference and residual kinetic risk persist; an attack is possible but not likely under current conditions.
Strait of Hormuz	SEVERE	Due to recent Iranian attacks, the threat level remains SEVERE, with deliberate hostile action considered as highly likely under current conditions. Navigation interference persists, and mariners are advised to remain vigilant for attempted mining activity within and adjacent to the TSS. IRGC attacks, hailing, and routing pressure continue, particularly for AIS-on vessels.
Gulf of Oman	MODERATE	The U.S. naval blockade remains enforced, with ongoing monitoring, hailing, and verification queries, particularly near approaches to Iranian ports. Enforcement activity poses no direct impact to neutral shipping transits in the Gulf of Oman. Electronic interference continues to present a credible concern for mariners.
Arabian Sea	MODERATE	Residual conflict-linked risk persists, but no attacks have been reported, and current indicators suggest no imminent change to the threat environment.
Gulf of Aden	SUBSTANTIAL	Due to piracy-related events and Houthi rhetoric and attacks, the threat level remains SUBSTANTIAL, with a strong possibility of a maritime security incident in coastal approaches, transit corridors, and established small-craft areas.
Bab el-Mandeb / Southern Red Sea	SUBSTANTIAL	Due to Houthi attacks on vessels and maritime infrastructure in the Southern Red Sea, the threat level remains SUBSTANTIAL. Based on the recent attacks, sustained intent, and maintained capability, additional attacks are a strong possibility
Somali Coast / Somali Basin	MODERATE	PAG activity remains possible; monsoon conditions restrict offshore skiffs, but coastal opportunism persists.
Northern Red Sea / Suez Canal	MODERATE	Suez Canal operations remain normal. Periodic Electro-magnetic Interference (EMI) remains possible.
Eastern Mediterranean	LOW	Due to a lack of security incidents, the threat level remains LOW. Localized EMI disruptions persist, and regional naval presence remains consistent.

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



4. Maritime Incidents & Traffic Assessment

4A. Confirmed Vessel Incidents (Since 01 March)

Total of 116 incidents since 01 March. (UKMTO 136-26 is included as a vessel security incident, not a completed attack.)

4B. Infrastructure Incidents (Last 72 Hours)

The overall risk remains MODERATE driven by the potential for an increase in kinetic activity and ongoing uncertainty along Iranian, Yemeni, and Saudi coastal areas. Caution is warranted due to the escalating conflict between Houthi forces and Saudi Arabia that have resulted in missile exchanges with targets hit on both sides of the border.

Oil infrastructure in Saudi Arabia, including East–West pipeline pumping stations, was struck by drones on 10 Sep, causing injuries and damage. No group has claimed official responsibility. The pipeline remains offline as the report ICOD. Industry reporting indicates a possible partial bypass restart within days and full repair in about six weeks; this is not a Saudi official timeline. Yanbu loadings remain largely suspended, with only limited inventory liftings reported.

4C. Traffic Trends

- Strait of Hormuz:
 - Historical average: ~138 vessels/day (2025 baseline)
 - U.S. – facilitated SoH transits 17 – 19 September (past 72 hours): 97

** Metrics are drawn from two separate sources: U.S. NCAGS data reflecting U.S.-facilitated Strait of Hormuz transits only, and S&P Maritime/SeaVision data reflecting non-facilitated vessel traffic for cargo carrying vessels above 1,000 deadweight tons, excluding vessels calling Iranian ports adjacent to the Strait of Hormuz.*

- Bab el-Mandeb:
 - Historical average: ~61 vessels/day (2023 baseline)
 - Vessel transits 17 – 19 September (past 72 hours): 102

** Metrics are drawn from S&P Maritime for cargo carrying vessels above 1,000 deadweight tons.*

4D. Port & Anchorage Congestion (no change)

High vessel density persists across Arabian Gulf and Omani anchorages, still reports of a large number of AIS-off vessels IVO Kharg Island with overall congestion remaining stable.

Periodic repositioning within anchorages remains advisable to avoid long-term predictability and to maintain safe separation in congested areas.

4E. GNSS / AIS Interference

GNSS interference remains consistent across the Strait of Hormuz approaches, the Gulf of Oman, and the Arabian Gulf. Persistent mixed jamming/spoofing remains the baseline across the northern AOO (Arabian Gulf–Gulf of Oman). Southern corridor (Aden–Northern Red Sea) remains at a residual level of lower intensity.

GNSS/EMI hazard across the Red Sea corridor continues to persist. Broad-spectrum GNSS spoofing and false AIS transponder manipulation remain saturated across the Hodeidah littoral and southern Red Sea approach lanes. Elevated electronic interference and AIS-off operations persist in the vicinity of Yanbu. Intensity in the Red Sea remains lower and more intermittent than concurrent activity in the Strait of Hormuz and the Arabian Gulf. Geographic concentrations are unchanged: Red Sea, Gulf of Oman, and Arabian Gulf, with the highest reported density in the southern and



eastern Arabian Gulf. Anomalous AIS positions and speeds continue to correlate with the same areas.

No new specific UKMTO, MARAD, NAVCENT, or NAVAREA IX GNSS/EMI notices were issued 17-20 September. Baseline advisories remain in force.

5. Outlook (24–48 Hours)

5A. Arabian Gulf (No change)

The threat level remains MODERATE, with continued navigational system interference and residual kinetic risk. An attack is possible but not likely under current conditions. However, escalating tension between the U.S. and Iran should be monitored closely. Rapid, short-notice actions near Iranian coastal waters and anchorages remains possible.

Vessels stationary for extended periods, or maintaining AIS-on while static, may still face elevated targeting risk.

5B. Strait of Hormuz (No change)

The threat level remains SEVERE, with deliberate attacks considered highly likely under current conditions. Attack frequency against commercial shipping in the Strait has remained consistent over the reporting period, including unknown-projectile strikes on both inbound and outbound transiting vessels, and the environment reflects an established post-MOU status quo. Vessels transiting with AIS-on can expect elevated projectile risk and receive directed hails instructing them to divert toward the northern Iranian-controlled route.

Maritime traffic through the Strait of Hormuz is expected to remain at reduced levels, compared to the 2025 baseline, across both the northern Iranian-controlled route and the southern Omani corridor. Operator caution should continue, driven by a series of vessel attacks, ongoing U.S. blockade enforcement, and elevated regional tension.

The U.S. blockade of Iranian ports continues to be enforced. Unauthorized entry or departure may result in interception or force. Neutral transit is permitted, but vessels should expect visit-and-search checks, strong U.S. naval presence, persistent IRGC monitoring, and increased VHF hails. A 30 NM standoff from U.S. units is advised to reduce misidentification risk.

A vetted humanitarian-cargo exemption remains in place but requires submission to NAVCENT NCAGS. Approved vessels may transit to Iranian ports but remain subject to inspection and may not load cargo in Iran beyond fuel and stores.

Navigation interference persists, and mariners are encouraged to remain vigilant for mining activity in the area.

Industry Guidance for Safe Management of Vessel Transit through the Strait of Hormuz:

<https://www.maritimelobalsecurity.org/media/vkaa3pjr/2026-05-20-guidance-strait-of-hormuz.pdf>

5C. Gulf of Oman (No change)

The threat level remains MODERATE. Vessels can expect persistent IRGC monitoring and routing pressure in that sector; however, further east/south within Gulf of Oman, attacks are considered possible but not likely. Residual risk diminishes with distance from the primary concentration of IRGC activity and with distance from Musandam / Jask.

A U.S. naval blockade remains enforced, with ongoing monitoring, hailing, and verification queries, particularly near approaches to Iranian ports. Unauthorized entry or departure may result in



interception or force. Neutral transit is permitted, but vessels should expect visit-and-search checks, strong U.S. naval presence, persistent IRGC monitoring, and occasional hails. A 30 NM standoff from U.S. units is advised, as well as ensuring continuous monitoring of VHF Channel 16, to reduce misidentification risk.

Electronic interference continues to present a credible concern. The operating environment requires heightened situational awareness throughout all approaches.

5D. Arabian Sea (No change)

The threat level remains MODERATE. The regional posture remains stable, with no confirmed maritime attacks reported. Residual risk persists due to broader regional tensions; an attack is possible but not likely, and current indicators do not suggest any shift toward increased threat levels in the near term.

5E. Gulf of Aden (No change)

The threat level remains SUBSTANTIAL. Attacks and piracy-related activity remain a strong possibility in the Gulf of Aden and IRTC. Small-craft groups retain close-approach capability, and Pirate Action Groups can still board and divert merchant vessels as monsoon restrictions ease.

5F. Southern Red Sea / Bab el Mandeb

The threat level remains SUBSTANTIAL. Houthi messaging still frames the 20 July maritime blockade as selective against assets considered as Israeli-, Saudi-, or Yemeni internationally recognized government-linked. Recent statements from both the U.S. administration and Houthi leadership support the existing threat level and indicate an intent not to broaden the conflict. Additional attacks in the wider area remain a strong possibility. Expansion into indiscriminate targeting of all commercial shipping is possible but not the declared policy in this period.

The geographic posture changed from 10–12 September. After taking Mocha, Houthi forces seized Dhubab, and landed on Mayun / Perim. Internationally Recognized Government officials report Zuqar and Greater and Lesser Hanish are also under Houthi control together with the remainder of Yemen's Red Sea coast. Mayun sits in the strait and splits the two traffic channels. This additional Houthi-controlled territory shortens engagement ranges and improves observation of both lanes. The practical effect for mariners is an improved Houthi firing and surveillance capability, but no increase in weapons range.

The Saudi-led Multinational Maritime Defense Coalition remains at Initial Operational Capability, not Full Operational Capability. Jeddah-based command and staff integration continue. Surface tasking remains sovereign opt-in. Combined battle group, common ROE, automated COP, standing escorts and basing outside Saudi facilities are not confirmed as of 20 September.

An increasing, conflict-driven flow of refugees from Yemen to north Djibouti is still reported, using small boats and fishing vessels often without AIS or radar reflectors. Fuel shortages have left some of these craft drifting. Mariners are advised to keep a sharp lookout.

Mariners should maintain heightened security postures, implement speed and timing mitigation, minimize predictable AIS behavior in the narrows, and prepare for short-notice navigational directives. GNSS interference and electromagnetic degradation remain active from the central Red Sea through the southern approaches.

5G. Somali Coast and Somali Basin

The threat level remains MODERATE as PAG activity persists across the Somali Coast and Somali Basin. Southwest monsoon conditions are approaching a seasonal end. Offshore sea state remains elevated and continues to restrict extended-range skiff operations, while coastal waters stay comparatively sheltered. Residual opportunistic piracy risk persists in nearshore Somali waters and



the Gulf of Aden, where small-boat activity remains feasible. Pirate Action Groups retain the capability to board and divert merchant vessels along the Somali coast, IRTC approaches, and adjacent Gulf of Aden lanes as monsoon restrictions begin to lift.

5H. Northern Red Sea / Suez (No change)

The threat level remains MODERATE. The Houthi statement on 05 August indicated an expanded risk area in the northern Red Sea. The messaging framed the escalation as a response to alleged Saudi northward rerouting and suggested an intent to close or contest additional access points. The stated emphasis extends beyond the southern approaches and Bab el-Mandeb, broadening the area of concern into the northern Red Sea. East–West pipeline is still offline; Yanbu loadings reported suspended and estimated time back online varies.

Periodic EMI and GNSS disruptions are likely to continue in the area. AIS-off operations at Yanbu berths, waiting areas and approaches are highly likely to remain elevated. The pattern since late July shows no open-source indication of reversal. Suez Canal transits remain functional in both directions, with steady tanker flows, selective container vessel returns, and no systemic interruption.

5I. Eastern Mediterranean (No change)

The threat level remains LOW for security risks to merchant shipping, with localized EMI/GNSS as the principal published hazard.

Periodic electronic and navigational interference may still be encountered near Cyprus and the Levant. Naval presence remains, and vessels should maintain prudent separation from military units. No Change – consistent with persistent baseline.



ANNEXES

Transit comparisons

CARGO VESSELS TRANSITS COMPARISON

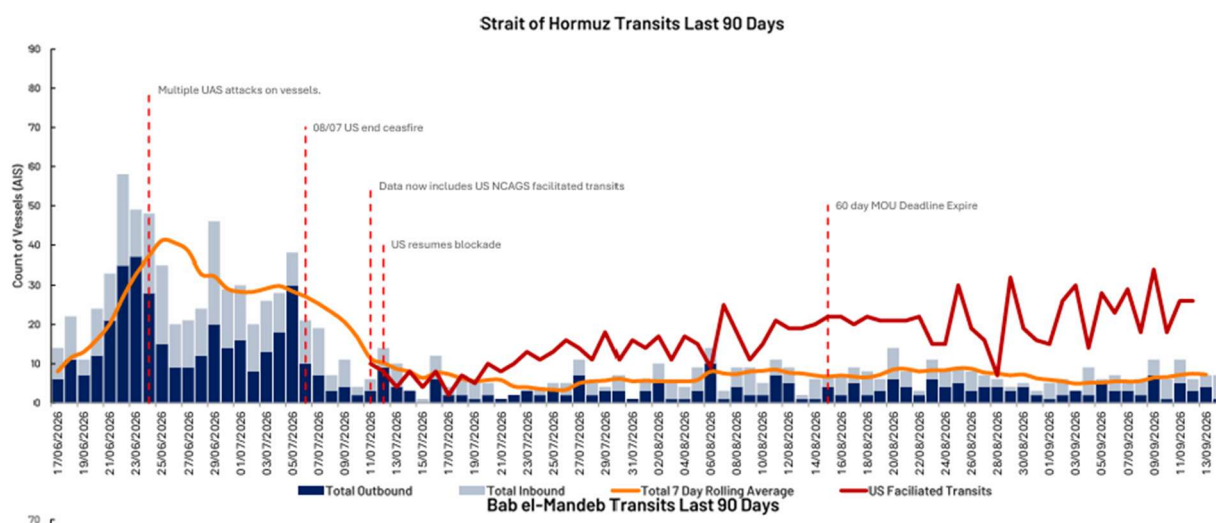
Date	13-Sept	14-Sept	15-Sept	16-Sept	17-Sept	18-Sept	19-Sept
SoH E	4	1	2	0	2	2	4
SoH W	3	1	0	1	1	2	2
SoH Total	7	2	2	1	3	4	6
BAM NW	17	13	6	9	14	8	12
BAM SE	11	9	7	4	13	15	11
BAM Total	28	22	13	13	27	23	23

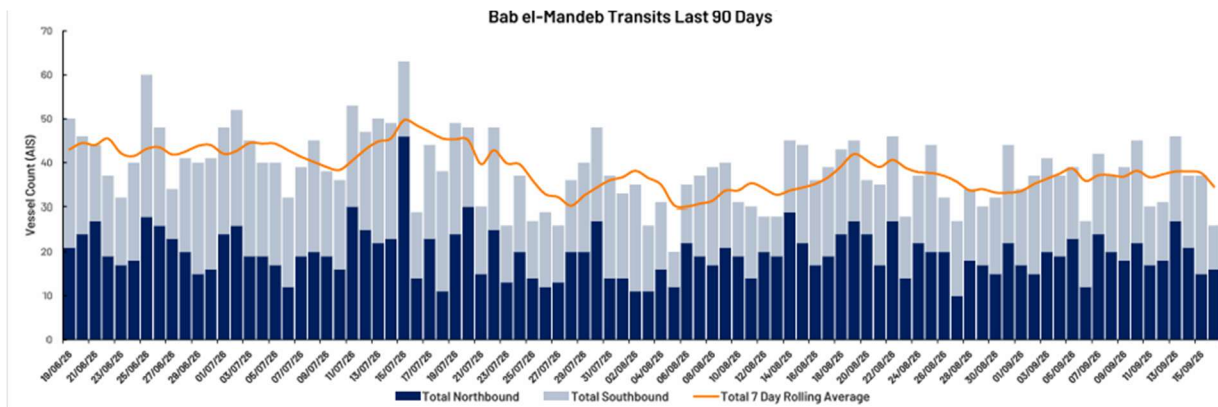
TANKERS (ALL TYPES) TRANSITS COMPARISON

Date	13-Sept	14-Sept	15-Sept	16-Sept	17-Sept	18-Sept	19-Sept
SoH E	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
SoH W	2	1	0	1	0	1	0
SoH Total	3	1	1	1	0	1	2
BAM NW	8	4	3	1	4	4	1
BAM SE	4	6	5	3	6	5	9
BAM Total	12	10	8	4	10	9	10

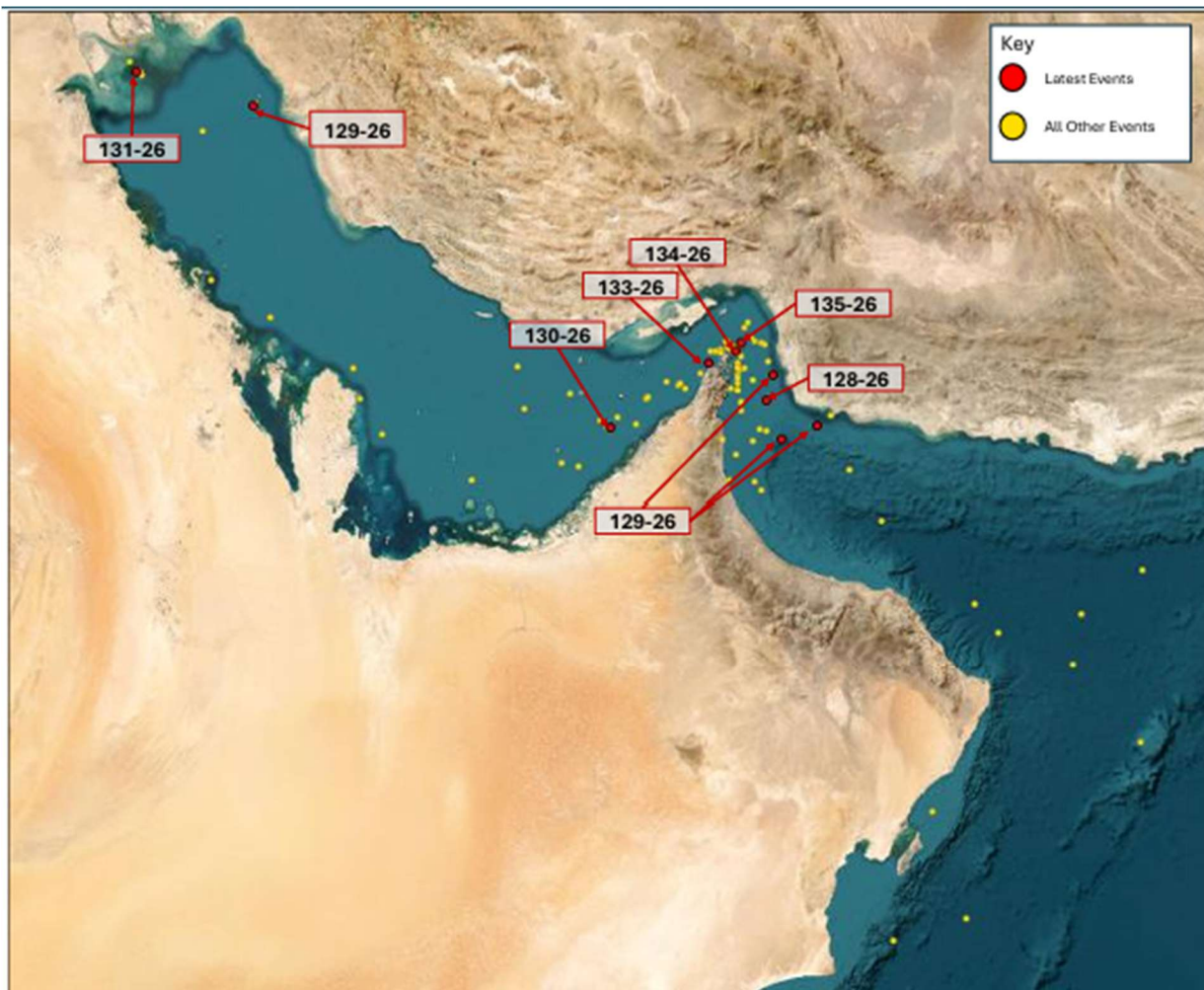
* Metrics are drawn from two separate sources: U.S. NCAGS data reflecting U.S.-facilitated Strait of Hormuz transits only, and S&P Maritime / SeaVision data reflecting non-facilitated vessel traffic above 1,000 deadweight tons, excluding vessels calling Iranian ports adjacent to the Strait of Hormuz.

UKMTO transits (Not updated since 17 Sep)





UKMTO Strait of Hormuz – Latest incidents (Not updated since 17 Sep)



UKMTO VRA AIS Anomalies (Not updated since 17 Sep)

