



# REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR

Marine Guideline

No. 2-11-14

Rev. Apr/2020

**TO: ALL SHIPOWNERS, OPERATORS, MASTERS AND OFFICERS OF MERCHANT SHIPS, AND RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS**

**SUBJECT: Maritime Security off the Coast of West Africa, including the Gulf of Guinea**

- References:
- (a) IMO Circular [MSC.1/Circ.1601](#), *Revised Industry Counter Piracy Guidance*, issued 08 December 2018
  - (b) RMI Maritime Regulations ([MI-108](#))
  - (c) RMI Marine Notice [2-011-39](#), *Piracy, Armed Robbery, and the Use of Armed Security*
  - (d) [BMP West Africa](#), *Best Management Practices to Deter Piracy and Enhance Maritime Security off the Coast of West Africa including the Gulf of Guinea*, (2020)

## PURPOSE

This Guideline provides information to Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI)-registered vessels operating in the waters off West Africa, particularly the Gulf of Guinea (GoG), to mitigate the risk of piracy, kidnapping, and armed robbery in this region.

This revision supersedes Rev. Jan/2020, and now includes an updated reference to [BMP West Africa](#).

## APPLICABILITY

This Guideline should be taken into consideration by all RMI-flagged vessels operating in or near West Africa and the GoG.

## GUIDANCE

- 1.0 The Maritime Domain Awareness for Trade in the Gulf of Guinea ([MDAT-GoG](#)) voluntary reporting area (VRA) is shown in the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office (UKHO) Maritime Security Chart for West Africa including the Gulf of Guinea ([Q6114](#)).

1.1 Coordinates of the MDAT-GoG VRA chart are:

- 21°N - African coastline (proximity of Cape Blanc, Western Sahara)
- 21°N - 029°W
- 14°N - 029°W
- 17°S - 008°E
- 17°S - African coastline (proximity of the Angola-Namibia border)

Coordinates have been rounded to the nearest whole degree of latitude or longitude.

- 2.0** The MDAT-GoG is a virtual reporting mechanism supporting the interregional architecture defined by the Yaoundé Code of Conduct. The British and French Navies run the program with staff in Portsmouth, United Kingdom and Brest, France. MDAT-GoG replicates the same functions of the former Maritime Trade and Information Sharing Centre – Gulf of Guinea (MTISC-GoG). The MDAT-GoG VRA exists to improve security, provides valuable support to mariners and maintains the freedom of navigation for all vessels in the waters off Africa's western seaboard.
- 3.0** The British Navy team also brings expertise from managing the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) VRA in the Indian Ocean. The information supplied by vessels will be treated as commercially confidential. MDAT-GoG's output contributes to maritime situational awareness in Central and Western Africa and supports the safety and security of mariners.
- 4.0** The Navtex receivers on ships should be programed to receive navigation warnings from all appropriate Navtex stations. In Navigational Areas (NAVAREAs), Masters of vessels inside the West Africa VRA should ensure that they receive all relevant navigational warnings. Inmarsat C terminals should be set to receive navigational warnings from both NAVAREA II (France) and NAVAREA VII (South Africa).
- 5.0** It is **strongly recommended** that all RMI-registered vessels transiting the West Africa VRA maintain a setting of **Security Level II** (or equivalent security measures). For a current and comprehensive list of areas with a required or recommended setting of Security Level II, refer to the Administrator's [Security Level webpage](#).

## 6.0 Reporting a GoG Piracy or Armed Robbery Incident

6.1 In accordance with the provisions of RMI Maritime Regulations, MI-108, §6.35.7 and §6.36, in the event of a GoG piracy or armed robbery incident, the [Administrator](#) must be informed of the incident by submitting form [MI-109-2](#). This report must be delivered by the fastest means possible to:

**Email:** [shipsecurity@register-iri.com](mailto:shipsecurity@register-iri.com)  
[dutyofficer@register-iri.com](mailto:dutyofficer@register-iri.com)

**Fax:** +1 703 860 2284; or

**Tel:** +1 571 441 1885

6.2 The [International Maritime Bureau Piracy Reporting Centre \(IMB PRC\)](#) should be emailed to submit a [Piracy & Armed Robbery Attack Report](#).

6.3 Masters should call MDAT-GoG on the Live Emergency Line (+33 (0) 2 98 22 88 88) at the time any incident occurs. This phone number is monitored around the clock (24/7). Masters should contact MDAT-GoG as soon as possible to facilitate quick actions by the MDAT-GoG and their regional contacts. Masters or Company security officers (CSOs) may also report incident details by using the MDAT-GoG Incident Report form and submitting via email to [MDAT-GoG](#):

**Email:** [watchkeepers@mdat-gog.org](mailto:watchkeepers@mdat-gog.org)

**Tel:** +33 (0) 2 98 22 88 88 (**emergency**)

**Tel:** +33 (0) 2 98 22 13 02 (**exercise**)

A copy of this report should also be emailed to the [RMI Ship Security Department](#) using the contact information listed above in §6.1.

## 7.0 Company Security Exercises

7.1 MDAT-GOG invites Companies or CSOs to include them in Company-led security exercises. Please do not hesitate to contact the MDAT-GOG in advance of the exercise. The exercise telephone number is **+33 (0) 2 98 22 13 02**. This dedicated exercise telephone number helps to keep the Live Emergency Line free.

## 8.0 Voluntary Reporting within the MDAT-GoG VRA

- 8.1 While operating within the MDAT-GoG VRA, merchant vessels are **strongly encouraged** to report to MDAT-GoG by email or telephone at the times indicated in the table below. The four MDAT-GoG reporting forms are hyperlinked.

TYPE OF REPORT	WHEN TO SUBMIT
<a href="#">MDAT-GoG Initial Report</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Entering the VRA</li><li>• Leaving a Port within the VRA</li></ul>
<a href="#">MDAT-GoG Daily Position Report</a> (at 1200 UTC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Underway with in the VRA</li></ul>
<a href="#">MDAT-GoG Final Report</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arriving at a Port within the VRA</li><li>• Exiting the VRA</li></ul>
<a href="#">MDAT-GoG Incident Report</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arriving at a Port within the VRA</li><li>• Exiting the VRA</li></ul>

- 8.2 All information reported to MDAT-GoG is treated in strict commercial confidence. **It is not necessary to copy the Administrator when voluntarily reporting to the MDAT-GoG while operating in the VRA.**

## 9.0 Risk Assessment Checklist

- 9.1 The following table is a risk assessment checklist that may be used as guidance to prepare for operating within the MDAT-GoG VRA:

RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS	
Automatic Identification System (AIS) to be left on through VRA?	Extra Lookouts
Anti-threat measures in place?	Fire Pump Ready
Crew Briefing	Locked Doors
Fire Hoses Rigged	Outboard Ladders Stowed
Barbed or Razor Wire	Dummies Posted
External Communication Plan	Manned Engine Room
Citadel	Crew Drills Completed
Night Vision Optics	Armed Security Team on board?
Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV)	Doctor on board?
Unarmed Security Team on board	Weapons held on board?

<b>RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS</b>	
Helicopter Winch Area? Helicopter Landing Area? Additional Measures	Any other information which may assist authorities?

## 10.0 Additional Information Sources

- [Maritime Global Security](#)
- [IMB Live Piracy Reports](#)
- [Interregional Coordination Centre For the Implementation of Regional Strategy for Maritime Safety and Security in Central and West Africa](#)
- [Naval Oceanic and Hydrographic Service \(SHOM\)](#)
- [United Kingdom Hydrographic Office \(UKHO\)](#)

Please direct any questions or concerns to [shipsecurity@register-iri.com](mailto:shipsecurity@register-iri.com).