MEASURES TO ENHANCE MARITIME SECURITY

A brief summary of measures taken by Australia to enhance the security of Australian-related shipping against acts of piracy and armed robbery

Submitted by Australia

SUMMARY

Executive summary: This document provides a brief summary on Australia's review of the implications of acts of piracy and armed robbery on Australian-related shipping trade and the measures taken by Australia to enhance the security and safety of shipping

Strategic direction: 6.1

High-level action: 6.1.1

Planned output: -

Action to be taken: Paragraph 8

Related documents: None

Introduction

1. Australia acknowledges the significant contribution and efforts made by SOLAS Contracting Governments and international bodies to enhance the safety and security of seafarers and shipping business from acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships. To further strengthen Australia's maritime security regime, Australia has completed a review to broaden its understanding of the prevailing international piracy and armed robbery at sea environment and the potential implications for Australian-related shipping trade.

2. The Office of Transport Security, a division of the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, as the Designated Authority (DA) of Australia responsible for the security regulation of the Australian transport industry, has worked closely with the Inspector of Transport Security, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority and Australia's shipping industry, to take steps to enhance the security and safety planning arrangements for ships.
The implications for the Australian shipping trade

3 Access to the Suez Canal via the Gulf of Aden shipping lane is a frequented route for ship movements relating to Australian trade. In 2008-2009 an estimated 11 million tonnes of Australian imports and exports, representing AUD$8 billion in value, was transported via this lane.\(^1\) While Australian shipping trade has not experienced an act of piracy in shipping lanes and waters surrounding the Gulf of Aden and the Somali Coast, the increasing frequency and seriousness of attacks led the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government in February 2009 to direct the Inspector of Transport Security to inquire into international maritime piracy and its potential impact on maritime shipping and trade to and from Australia.

4 The inquiry focused on the threat of piracy to Australia, Australian shipping and crew and included an international benchmarking assessment of the global piracy and armed robbery at sea situation.

**Australian Shipping Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea Advisory Guidelines**

5 As part of the inquiry and at the request of the Australian shipping industry, the Inspector of Transport Security developed the Australian Shipping Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea Advisory Guidelines (the Guidelines) and a supportive information brochure to assist the Australian shipping industry in risk managing the piracy threat. The Guidelines are based on the United Nations Resolutions, the international shipping industry best management practices and the IMO Maritime Safety Committee Circulars. They outline the preventive security measures to assist commercial shipping operators to detect, deter and prevent piracy and robbery across the world’s oceans, seas and ports and in the territorial waters of a State. Advice is also provided for fishing vessels and pleasure craft transiting areas of high risk.

6 The supportive information brochure is suitable for quick reference and for wider distribution and provides a summary of guidance on preventive security measures to mitigate piracy and robbery at sea. The brochure has been translated in nine additional languages – Chinese, Filipino, Hindi, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Malay, Thai and Vietnamese, and distributed to a number of countries as requested.

**Measures taken to enhance ship security planning**

7 The DA considers that effective preventive security planning requires maritime industry participants to monitor changes and developments in the security environment and consider how appropriate and effective existing risk assessment and mitigation strategies are in addressing the potential threats to business operations. The DA has worked closely with the Office of the Inspector of Transport Security, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority and Australia’s shipping industry to implement the following measures to enhance ship safety and security:

1. the DA has written to all operators of Australian registered security regulated ships undertaking international voyages, requesting that the operator consider the coverage of the threats posed to the ship, crew, passengers and cargo, from acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships in their security risk assessment, and to ensure that the mitigation strategies and security measures contained in ship security plans are sufficient for the current security environment. In particular, any future ship

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\(^1\) Statistics provided by the Australian Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE).
security plans lodged with the DA (either new, revised or for re-approval) will need to include an acknowledgement that the *Australian Shipping and Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea Advisory Guidelines* have been taken into account;

.2 the DA has actively engaged in consultative forums, with representation from Australia’s maritime industry, peak industry bodies for Australian and international shipowners and operators, agency companies and operators involved in bulk, tanker, general cargo shipping, container, passenger and tramp trades, to consider the latest information on measures to mitigate piracy and armed robbery against ships;

.3 the Australian Maritime Safety Authority has issued a range of Marine Notices on piracy and armed robbery against ships. The recent *Marine Notice No.5/2010* advises shipowners, ship operators and managers, shipping companies and ship masters, of the *Australian Shipping Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery At Sea Advisory Guidelines and Brochure*. This Notice is in addition to *Marine Notice No.15/2009* advising shipping industry members who intend to operate in and around the Somali Coast or the Gulf of Aden, to consider the latest IMO guidance and the *Best Management Practices* to deter piracy in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia and other available guidance on this issue; and

.4 the DA has also developed and distributed *Maritime Security Notice No.2-08* to a range of maritime industry stakeholders to include offshore oil and gas operators, emphasizing the importance of robust protective security arrangements particularly whilst transiting through shipping lanes in high-risk locations.

**Action requested of the Committee**

8 The Committee is invited to note the information provided in this document and to comment as they deem appropriate.