



# THE BAHAMAS MARITIME AUTHORITY

## BMA INFORMATION BULLETIN No. 78

### Maritime Security Threat

Guidance for Shipowners, Managers, Masters, Bahamas Recognised Organisations, Bahamas Recognised Security Organisations and Bahamas Approved Inspectors

This bulletin provides general information on threats to ships

*NOTE: This bulletin supplements the BMA Bulletins on the ISPS Codes (all available on the BMA website: [www.bahamasmaritime.com](http://www.bahamasmaritime.com)) and should be read in conjunction with IMO MSC Circulars 622 rev.1 and 623 rev.3, the IMO MSC Circulars on the ISPS Code and IMO Assembly Resolutions A. 917 (22) and A. 956(23).*

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#### **1. General**

- 1.1 In light of the recent events off the coast of Somalia, The Bahamas Maritime Authority (BMA) is mindful of the maritime security threat posed in various geographical locations and equally that such threats may extend beyond the territorial waters of any country.
- 1.2 The Authority draws the attention of all parties to the Regulations and guidance developed by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO and other international and industry bodies, which are aimed at enhancing maritime security.
- 1.3 Owners and Masters shall take into consideration any security advice received from this Authority as well as any other additional maritime security information from other sources such as International Maritime Bureau Piracy Reporting Center (<http://www.icc-ccs.org/prc/overview.php>), coastal States, etc., when undertaking the operational and commercial planning process for a voyage. The shipboard security measures should reflect the outcome of the ship's assessment of this information.

## 2. Reporting

- 2.1 The BMA requires notification of a major security threat or incident without delay. A major security incident or threat is defined as a hijack, terrorist attack, piracy, any incident involving the use of firearms, any bomb threat, any use or threat of use of force. This notification shall be made to the Duty Officer on the emergency telephone number (+44 7977 471 220).
- 2.2 During a security incident, it is recognised that the Master and crew are unable to determine either the intent of the attack or the level of threat. The Authority accepts that in the initial stages of an incident, we may be advised, by the Owner/Manager, of a security threat and that more detailed information will be communicated at a later stage.

It is further recognised that the activation of the Ship Security Alert (SSA) System is the required onboard means to notify external parties of a threat to a ship that is required to comply with the SOLAS 1974, as amended, Chapter XI-2.

The Bahamas has designated the Company<sup>1</sup> as the Competent Authority with respect to the receipt of the SSA for its managed ships. The Company shall, on receipt of a SSA, notify The Bahamas Maritime Authority (BMA) of the alert.

- 2.3 Following any security incident, a written report shall be submitted to the Authority using the Authority's Casualty Report Form (CRP-1) which is available on our website.
- 2.4 The Authority recognises that some ships are required to be fitted with an Automatic Identification System (AIS) in accordance with SOLAS 1974, as amended, Regulation V/19.2.4.

If such ship is operating in an area of high maritime security risk, The Master shall consider if the continual operation of the AIS compromises the safety or security of the ship. If based on this assessment or if the Master or Company<sup>1</sup> receives information that a security incident is imminent, the Master may switch off the AIS. In such cases, the Master shall record this action, and the reason for doing so, in the ship's Official Log Book. In addition, provided that there will be no compromise to safety or security and if the ship is operating in a mandatory ship reporting system, the Master shall report this action and the reason for doing so to the competent authority responsible for the ship reporting system.

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<sup>1</sup> "Company" is the entity responsible for the management of the ship in accordance with the ISM Code. For ships which the ISM Code is not applicable, Company is the Managing Owner in accordance with Section 52 of the Bahamas Merchant Shipping Act.

**3. Areas of high maritime security risk**

The Authority draws the attention of all parties to the weekly piracy reports of International Maritime Bureau Piracy Reporting Center (<http://www.icc-ccs.org/prc/piracyreport.php>). The areas, which are identified in the report, are considered as areas of high maritime security risk and Owners/Masters should ensure that shipboard security measures are enhanced to reflect this risk.

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