



Merchant Marine **Notice**

Panama Maritime Authority
General Directorate of Merchant Marine
Control and Compliance Department

F-34
(DCCM)
V.04

VESSEL TRANSIT NEAR IRANIAN TERRITORIAL WATERS

No: **MMN-05/2026**

1. The purpose of this Marine Notice is to inform all Panamanian-flagged vessels operating near Iran, Israel, the Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman and Strait of Hormuz of the security risk due to the recent increase of tensions within the Middle East, which could have a direct impact on vessels and crew.
2. On February 28th, 2026 the United States and Israel have launched from air, land and sea an attack on Iran. In response, Iran has launched attacks throughout the Middle East. The International news reported Iranian attacks in Dubai, Doha, Bahrain, Kuwait - places with US military bases, or that are allied to the US.
3. This Marine Notice is addressed to all Panamanian seafarers on board the M/V Cypres, IMO 9907445 and M/V Captain Michael, IMO 9531480, currently navigating in the Persian Gulf through the Strait of Hormuz.
4. The Panama Maritime Administration strongly recommends all Panamanian-flagged vessels to take all security measures and avoid transiting through the above areas.
5. This Administration reminds all Masters and operators that the IMO Hormuz Evacuation Scheme remains suspended pending reconfirmation of the necessary safety conditions. Vessels should not commence or plan any transit on the assumption that the scheme remains in effect. Operators are strongly advised to verify the latest operational guidance with the relevant authorities before proceeding.
6. Based on the latest information, the following operational conditions currently apply:
 - Two navigation corridors remain available in the Strait of Hormuz: a northern corridor under Iranian control and a southern corridor located within the territorial waters of the Sultanate of Oman, as outlined in JMIC Advisory Notice 009-26.
7. All Panamanian vessels in Iranian waters and/or Iranian ports must comply with the specific precautionary measures imposed by the Government of Iran.
8. The Panama Maritime Administration recommend that captains/operators/ship security officer/Company Security Officer maintain close communication with local shipping agents for the latest information and updates and follow the specific navigation routes



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provided by the authorities on site.

9. This Administration urges all Masters and operators to refrain from responding to any communication related to transit authorizations, permits, or requests for payment for passage through the Strait of Hormuz. No payment should be made until guidance has been obtained from UKMTO, MSCIO, the Flag State Administration, the Company, and the vessel's insurers. Masters and operators are reminded that responding to such requests or making unauthorized payments may result in legal consequences and the imposition of international sanctions.

10. Due to the above, commercial traffic has been threatened in those areas of the Middle East, for which the Panama Maritime Administration strongly encourages to follow the recommendations listed below:
 - Elevate security levels following their Ship Security Plans and undertake a new ship- and voyage-specific threat risk assessment before entering any of the above-mentioned regions.
 - Review section 2 of BMP5, which outlines non-piracy threats and the Global Counter-Piracy Guidance.
 - Before transiting the Strait of Hormuz, coordinate with NAVCENT NCAGS and UKMTO to obtain the latest routing, operational, and security information.
 - Maintain a full and vigilant bridge watches. Note: at night, slow small boats with no wake are difficult to spot on radar.
 - Maintain a strict communication watch and establish communication with all vessels coming close. Do not allow small boats to approach or to come alongside. Use a searchlight for identification at night.
 - Ensure strict boarding controls in place.
 - Only lower accommodation gangways or ladders when necessary.
 - Rig outboard lighting where possible provided when they do not interfere with keeping a safe lookout, particularly over the stern and rig/use searchlights if available.
 - Report any incidents or suspicious activity immediately to both the port and UKMTO +442392222060, in accordance with Best Management Practices (BMP).
 - Monitor relevant VHF and other communication channels.
 - Check all fire-fighting equipment available for immediate use. Make sure the emergency fire pump is available if any maintenance is undertaken.

11. Additional measures have been established by the maritime industry through the Guidance for Vessel Transit through the Strait of Hormuz (<https://www.bimco.org/news-insights/bimco-news/2026/05/20-hormuz-guidance/>), developed by ICS, BIMCO, INTERCARGO, INTERTANKO, IMCA, and OCIMF. Accordingly, Panamanian-flagged vessels are urged to review and implement these guidelines in order to safeguard human life at sea and ensure the safe continuity of international maritime trade.



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12. All Panamanian-flagged vessels operating in the waters of Iran, Israel, the Persian Gulf, the Gulf of Oman, and the Strait of Hormuz are advised to exercise extreme caution, maintain the highest level of vigilance, and enhance security measures in accordance with the Ship Security Plan (SSP). Masters and Company Security Officers (CSOs) should ensure that all appropriate protective measures are implemented for the safety and security of the vessel and its crew. In addition, the following guidance should be observed:

Strait of Hormuz

- Do not assume that the IMO evacuation plan remains in effect.
- Use only the routes recommended by the competent authorities.
- Maintain continuous communication with NAVCENT NCAGS and UKMTO during both the planning and execution of the transit.

Gulf of Oman and Persian Gulf

- Obtain the latest routing information from NAVCENT NCAGS before departure.
- Maintain enhanced vigilance while at anchor and during navigation.
- Immediately report any suspicious activity or approach to UKMTO and MSCIO.
- If sheltering in the Persian Gulf, await instructions from the competent authorities before departing, as the mine threat remains present.

Ras Laffan Port (Qatar)

- Verify the applicable AIS operating requirements with local agents and QatarEnergy prior to arrival.
- Reinforce bridge watchkeeping procedures and collision avoidance measures.
- Confirm the operational status of the port with local agents prior to arrival.

Eastern Mediterranean

- For Ro-Ro vessels calling at the Port of Ashdod, confirm the availability of vehicle storage space prior to arrival.
- Comply with the temporary security zones established by the Israeli Navy.
- Maintain communication with the competent authorities when approaching Israeli ports.



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Red Sea and Gulf of Aden

- Fully implement the latest Best Management Practices (BMP MS).
 - Register all transits with UKMTO and MSCIO.
 - Avoid prolonged stays in the approaches to the Bab el-Mandeb Strait.
13. For safety, the Automatic Identification System (AIS) and the Long-Range Identification and Tracking system (LRIT) must be always turned on, except in those cases where the captain considers that the security of the vessel could be compromised or when a security incident is imminent. In accordance with the provisions of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), in the same way, VHF Channel 16 must be monitored, and communication must be always maintained with local authorities and with the Panama Maritime Administration.
14. It is reaffirmed to avoid any transit or operation near Iran, Israel, the Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman and Strait of Hormuz.
15. This Maritime Administration is committed to the well-being of our seafarers, and we encourage you to reach out to the aforementioned contacts without hesitation.
16. Urge IMO Member States to strengthen international cooperation and effective coordination in conjunction with shipping companies and seafarers, in order to ensure the implementation of the Safe Passage Framework IMO Safe Evacuation Framework, as essential measures for the protection of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz (<https://www.imo.org/en/mediacentre/hottopics/pages/middle-east-strait-of-hormuz.aspx>).
17. Any inquiries or incident reports should be directed to the Fleet Control and Monitoring Section from Maritime Ships Security Department at E-mail: compliance@amp.gob.pa or phone: (507) 501-5016 and to Labor Maritime Department at Email: mimoreno@amp.gob.pa, labormar@amp.gob.pa.

UKMTO

watchkeepers@ukmto.org

Emergency numbers: +44 (0) 239 222 2060 / +971 50 552 2315

United States Naval Forces Central Command (USNAVCENT) Naval Co-operation and Guidance for Shipping (NCAGS)

cusnc.ncags_bw@me.navy.mil

+973 3904 9583 / +973 1785 1023 / 1024 / 2983 / 0084

USNAVCENT Maritime Operations Center (NAVCENT MOC)

+973 1785 3879 / +973 1785 4577 (fleet watch)



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June, 2026 – Modification in paragraphs 5, 8, 9 and 11.

May, 2026 – Modification in paragraph 8 and 13.

February, 2026 – New.

Inquiries concerning the subject of this Merchant Marine Notice or any other request should be forward to:

Fleet Control and Monitoring Section
Maritime Ships Security Department
General Directorate of Merchant Marine
Panama Maritime Authority

Phone: (507) 501-5016

E-mail: compliance@amp.gob.pa

Website: <https://panamashipregistry.com/marine-category/marine-notices/>