



**IMPACTS ON SHIPPING AND SEAFARERS OF THE SITUATION IN THE ARABIAN SEA,
SEA OF OMAN, AND THE GULF REGION, PARTICULARLY IN AND AROUND THE
STRAIT OF HORMUZ**

Update on actions initiated by the IMO Secretariat

Note by the Secretariat

SUMMARY

Executive summary: This document provides a brief update on the work of the Secretariat to facilitate accurate information sharing amongst Member States, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to support seafarers impacted by the current situation and to enhance the safety and security of shipping in the region.

*Strategic direction,
if applicable:* 4, 5 and 6

Output: Not applicable

Action to be taken: Paragraph 9

Related document: MSC.1/Circ.1601/Rev.2

Introduction and background

1 At the outset of the current situation in the region, international shipping was impacted immediately with four confirmed attacks on vessels on 1 March 2026, resulting in the fatalities of at least two seafarers and one port worker. As of 13 March 2026, attacks on merchant vessels have continued with rising seafarer fatalities and serious injuries.

2 The ongoing risk to the safety and security of merchant vessels as well as the risk of environmental pollution in the region have resulted in an inability to safely transit the Strait of Hormuz.

3 Around 3,200 vessels are confined west of the Strait of Hormuz, with around 20,000 seafarers impacted.

IMO information exchange support

4 In response to the urgent situation, the Secretary-General issued a statement on 1 March 2026 condemning attacks on innocent seafarers and civilian shipping, providing condolences and support to those impacted and calling on all parties to respect the rights and freedoms of navigation in the region. A further statement by the Secretary-General was issued

on 6 March 2026, following a rapid escalation of violence in the region and the deaths of more seafarers, calling on all parties to work towards de-escalation and to respect the safety of innocent seafarers.

5 The Secretariat published on the IMO website updates on the impact of this conflict on vessels and seafarers, including numbers of verified incidents and links to available resources. This website is regularly updated and available here:

<https://www.imo.org/en/mediacentre/hottopics/pages/middle-east-strait-of-hormuz.aspx>

6 On 10 March 2026, the Secretary-General visited the International Labour Organization where, during a bilateral meeting with the Director-General of ILO, he reiterated a need for tighter cooperation and coordination between the two Organizations with respect to preserving the rights of seafarers.

7 The Secretary-General initiated discussion with shipowners' and seafarers' non-governmental organizations to exchange views about the impact on seafarers and shipping related to the security situation in the region and the urgent need for support to seafarers currently stranded on board vessels. At this meeting, it was agreed that the Secretariat would establish an information exchange mechanism with relevant non-governmental organizations on the current situation relating to seafarers and shipping.

8 On 12 March 2026, the Secretary-General convened a meeting with Member States to provide an update on the impact on seafarers and shipping due to the security situation. The Secretary-General reiterated his call for de-escalation, requesting that both flag and coastal States prioritize support for seafarers in need, and requested their continued support for reliable information about incidents, stranded ships and seafarers to be passed to the Secretariat. The Secretary-General highlighted the urgent need for support to seafarers' mental health, communication capabilities and provisioning of critical supplies for affected ships. Member States were advised to ensure that applicable SOLAS and ISPS requirements were being maintained. Reflecting the heightened security situation in the region, Member States were encouraged to take into consideration Best Management Practices Maritime Security (BMP MS), contained in MSC.1/Circ.1601/Rev.2. The Secretary-General also encouraged safe repatriation of seafarers, whenever possible.

Action requested of the Council

9 The Council is invited to note the information contained in this document.
