

STRENGTHENING MARITIME SECURITY IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA



Strengthening Maritime Security in West and Central Africa:

Integrated Coast Guard Function Network

With assistance from the Maritime Organization for West and Central Africa (MOWCA)¹, IMO developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Establishment of a Sub-regional Integrated Coast Guard Network (the Network) in West and Central Africa which was adopted in Senegal in July 2008. To date, the MoU has been signed by 15 of MOWCA's 20 coastal member States and provides a framework to promote regional maritime cooperation and a stable maritime environment as well as the peace, good order and prosperity of West and Central Africa.

The goal of the Network is to initiate joint efforts to safeguard human life, enforce laws and improve the security, safety and protection of the marine environment, otherwise referred to as 'coastguard functions'. Being responsible for implementing these coastguard functions, national agencies need to co-ordinate their efforts effectively in order to reinforce law enforcement activities such as the suppression of piracy and armed robbery against ships, the prevention of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and countering the trafficking of drugs, weapons and people. It has since become apparent that to achieve this end, a phased approach to capacity building is required to foster co-operation within and amongst States.

The *Code of Conduct concerning the prevention of piracy, armed robbery against ships and illicit maritime activity in West and Central Africa*, which was signed in June 2013, aims to promote cooperation in the maritime domain at the regional level (see below).

Table top exercises

PURPOSE

As part of a phased approach focusing on working at the national level, the IMO programme of table top exercises have given Member States in West and Central Africa a valuable opportunity to identify gaps and inconsistencies in their prevailing maritime strategies.

OBJECTIVE

- Promote a multi-agency, whole of government approach to maritime security and maritime law enforcement issues
- Highlight the need for an integrated approach to maritime law enforcement, including the suppression of piracy and armed robbery against ships
- Stimulate discussions and demonstrate the need for co-operation amongst government departments as well as other agencies and stakeholders
- Identify how IMO or other development partners can best support a Member State's efforts to enhance its coast guard function capabilities for improved maritime security, safety and environmental responses

WHO IS THE EXERCISE AIMED AT?

Senior level personnel with decision-making authority from relevant Government departments, including, but not limited to, the national Maritime Administration, Port Authorities, Search and Rescue, Foreign Affairs, Finance, Office of the

Attorney General, Defence, Intelligence, Police, Navy, Customs and Border Agencies, Immigration, Aviation, Fisheries and Environment.



Participants with the IMO team at the table top exercise in Monrovia, Liberia



Table top exercise in Banjul, The Gambia

METHODOLOGY

The table top exercises present a range of evolving scenarios to determine respective roles, responsibilities, processes and procedures, and how these may develop, both with respect to routine business, and during an incident. The scenarios vary in complexity and the aim is to enable appropriate senior officials, acting as a national maritime security committee, to develop their collective decision-making abilities, from basic challenges to complex multi-agency involvement. At the end of each of the two day exercises there has been global agreement that better communication, coordination and collaboration amongst Government Departments and Agencies across the board are necessary for the countries to be able to respond robustly in times of crisis.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS

- Develop a national maritime strategy
- Develop a national maritime security strategy
- Revive or create a national maritime security and facilitation committee
- Develop national maritime security plans and procedures

SUMMARY OF THE TABLE TOP EXERCISES

To date, IMO has conducted table top exercises in the following countries:

2012

- Ghana
- Liberia
- The Gambia
- Sierra Leone

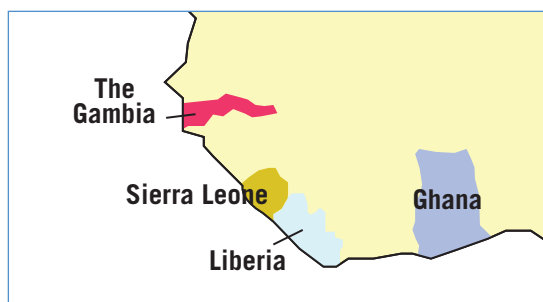


Table top exercises in Anglophone States



Above Left - Table top exercise in Dakar, Senegal.
 Above Right - Table top exercise in Pointe-Noire, the Republic of Congo
 Far Right Picture - Representatives from the Equatorial Guinea Government together with IMO and participants at the table top exercise in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea

2013

Funding from the Government of Norway has enabled IMO to expand the project to include:

- Congo (the Republic of)
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)
- Equatorial Guinea
- Senegal
- Gabon

Senior officials from multiple Government departments were represented at the table top exercises in these host countries. Following the highly successful pilot table top in Accra in July 2012, Ghana has revived its National Maritime Security Committee and Liberia also recently established a National Maritime Security Committee.



Table top exercises in Equatorial Guinea and Francophone States



Table top exercise in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

Funding permitting, IMO would like to organize table top exercises in other Member States in the region as well as follow up capacity building activities in the countries previously visited.

PORT AND MARITIME SECURITY

To reinforce the key messages of the table top exercises at port level, IMO and the Port Management Association of West and Central Africa (PMAWCA), organized a joint regional seminar on maritime and port security which was held in Benin in July 2013. Experts from the UN Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) as well as national experts from France, the United States Coast Guard, Interpol and the European Union's Critical Maritime Routes in the Gulf of Guinea programme (EU/CRIMGO) project also spoke at the seminar.



Table top exercise in Freetown, Sierra Leone



UNHCR giving a presentation at the Maritime and Port Security seminar in Cotonou, Benin



Workshop session with delegates from Benin

More than 60 participants from PMAWCA's 20 coastal Member Statesⁱⁱ were present at the seminar which is part of IMO's continuing technical cooperation in the region. The seminar is also an example of the spirit of cooperation outlined in the recently-signed *Code of Conduct concerning the prevention of piracy, armed robbery against ships and illicit maritime activity in West and Central Africa*.



DID YOU KNOW?

Key facts about the *Code of Conduct concerning the prevention of piracy, armed robbery against ships and illicit maritime activity in West and Central Africa*:

- Adopted by senior Government officials of West and Central African countriesⁱⁱⁱ in June in Cameroon;
- Based on the successful Djibouti Code of Conduct;
- Developed by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Gulf of Guinea Commission, in response to UN Security Council resolutions 2018(2011) and 2039(2012), expressing concern about the threat that piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea poses to international navigation, security and the economic development of states in the region;
- Signatories to the Code intend to co-operate to prevent and repress:
 - piracy and armed robbery against ships;
 - transnational organized maritime crime;
 - maritime terrorism; and
 - IUU fishing and other illegal activities at sea;
- Recognizes the principles of sovereign equality and territorial integrity;
- Successful implementation of the Code of Conduct will stimulate economic development in member states, develop sustainable fisheries and develop the maritime sector.

COOPERATION WITH UN AGENCIES IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

IMO is collaborating closely with senior officials from the UN Office for West Africa (UNOWA) and UNOCA to bolster inter-agency cooperation within the UN family and has urged both Agencies to exert their political leverage in advancing IMO's wider maritime strategy to sovereign Governments in West and Central Africa.

COOPERATION WITH OTHER DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

IMO is working with the G8++ and other development partners including France, US Africa Command (US Africom) and the European Union (EU).

EU/CRIMGO and IMO have been working closely to support measures to improve maritime security, safety and, in the longer term, maritime governance, in the Gulf of Guinea.

WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA MARITIME SECURITY TRUST FUND

At the 92nd session of the IMO Maritime Safety Committee in June 2013, the Committee expressed strong support for the on-going efforts of the IMO Secretariat to build capacity in Member States in the region. The Secretary-General urged Member States as well as industry and other stakeholders to contribute to the newly launched West and Central Africa Maritime Security Trust Fund. The United Kingdom Government was one of the first contributors to the Trust Fund. For details on the Fund and how to make a contribution, please contact Chris Trelawny at the Secretariat.

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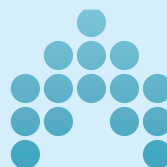
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ⁱ MOWCA member States: Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Cape Verde, the Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Liberia, Mauritania, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

ⁱⁱ PMAWCA Member States: Angola, Benin, Cape Verde, Cameroon, the Republic of Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mauritania, Nigeria, Sao Tome & Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

ⁱⁱⁱ 22 signatory States: Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, the Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.





The International Maritime Organization (IMO) is a United Nations specialized agency, which aims to promote safe, secure, environmentally sound, efficient and sustainable shipping through the adoption of the highest practicable standards of maritime safety and security, efficiency of navigation and prevention and control of pollution from ships. It also considers related legal matters and encourages the effective implementation of IMO's instruments, with a view to their universal and uniform application.



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