



ZANZIBAR MARITIME AUTHORITY

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Marine Safety Advisory No. 03/2026

To: Ship Owners/ Operators, Masters, and Other Interested Parties of Tanzania Zanzibar Registered Vessels

Subject IMO Council Extraordinary Session, Decisions and Updated Operational Guidance “Strait of Hormuz”.

Purpose: This Marine Safety Advisory (MSA No. 03/2026) is issued as a further update to MSA No. 01/2026 (2 March 2026) and MSA No. 02/2026 (12 March 2026). Both remain in force and shall be read in conjunction with this advisory. MSA No. 03/2026 incorporates the decisions of the IMO Council 36th Extraordinary Session (C/ES.36/D, 19 March 2026) and the IMO Secretary-General’s briefing to Member States of 10 April 2026 and provides updated operational guidance for all TZIRS-registered vessels.

Scope and Applicability: This Advisory applies to all vessels registered under TZIRS intending transit and/or port calls within the Strait of Hormuz, Arabian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, and adjacent waters.

Date: 13 April 2026

1. Situation Overview

The security and humanitarian situation in the Strait of Hormuz, Arabian Gulf, Sea of Oman, and adjacent waters remains critical. The IMO Secretary-General confirmed on 10 April 2026 that the Strait of Hormuz is not yet open for normal maritime transit and that no confirmed arrangements for its safe reopening have been established. The guidance to defer transit, issued under MSA No. 01/2026 and MSA No. 02/2026, therefore remains in full force.

The following cumulative figures apply as at the date of this advisory, based on IMO-confirmed reporting:

- Merchant vessels attacked since 28 February 2026: at least 21
- Confirmed seafarer fatalities: at least 8; confirmed missing: 4
- Confirmed injured personnel: at least 10, of whom 5 severely
- Seafarers currently stranded aboard vessels in the Persian Gulf: approximately 20,000



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- Commercial vessel traffic through the Strait of Hormuz: reduced to near zero (historical average: approximately 138 transits per day)
- GNSS jamming and AIS signal manipulation: ongoing and widespread throughout the region

No TZIRS-registered vessel has been confirmed as directly involved in any of the reported attacks.

2. IMO Council – 36th Extraordinary Session (C/ES.36/D, 19 March 2026)

The IMO Council convened its 36th Extraordinary Session on 18–19 March 2026, chaired by Mr. Victor Jiménez of Spain. The Council adopted a Declaration (C/ES.36/D) incorporating the following key decisions:

- Condemnation of attacks and interference with navigation.** The Council strongly condemned the attacks against merchant and commercial vessels and the purported closure of the Strait of Hormuz as contrary to the IMO Convention and as a grave danger to human life and safety of navigation. It recalled UN Security Council Resolution 2817 (2026), which affirmed that any attempt to impede lawful transit passage constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security, and demanded the immediate cessation of all such actions.
- Freedom of navigation reaffirmed.** The Council reaffirmed that the navigational rights and freedoms of merchant and commercial vessels under international law must be respected, and underscored the importance of preserving international shipping, maritime supply chains, and energy and humanitarian routes.
- Protection and welfare of seafarers.** The Council urged the immediate halt of all attacks on innocent civilian seafarers and called upon Member States to secure adequate supplies of water, food and fuel to vessels unable to leave the region. Member States were encouraged to facilitate crew change operations in accordance with international standards, taking into account crew fatigue, the master's overriding authority, and the risks posed by GNSS jamming and spoofing.
- Safe maritime corridor.** The Council encouraged the establishment, as a provisional and urgent measure, of a voluntary safe maritime corridor to facilitate the safe evacuation of stranded merchant ships from high-risk areas. The Secretary-General was invited to collaborate with relevant parties and take immediate action to initiate this framework. TZIRS-flagged operators with vessels stranded in the region must maintain close contact with TZIRS and monitor further guidance from the IMO Secretariat.
- Directions to IMO organs.** IMO Committees were urged to consider the implications of the crisis for the implementation of IMO instruments and to report back to the Council. The Secretariat was directed to keep Member States regularly informed. The proposal to convene an extraordinary session of the IMO Assembly was deferred to the next regular



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Council session in July 2026.

3. IMO Secretary-General Briefing to Member States (10 April 2026)

On 10 April 2026, the IMO Secretary-General convened an informal briefing for Member States at IMO Headquarters, providing an update on the ongoing situation in the Persian Gulf. The following key points are communicated to all TZIRS-registered stakeholders for operational guidance:

- a) **Strait of Hormuz not open for normal transit.** The Secretary-General confirmed that the Strait of Hormuz remains operationally unsafe for normal commercial shipping. No confirmed arrangements exist for its safe reopening. Operators must not act on any assumption that the waterway is safe or operationally available.
- b) **Humanitarian emergency: approximately 20,000 seafarers stranded.** The Secretary-General highlighted a serious humanitarian emergency. Approximately 20,000 seafarers remain aboard stranded vessels in the Persian Gulf with limited or no possibility of safe departure. Supplies of food, water and fuel are increasingly constrained. Mental health, fatigue and safety risks are escalating. Crew change operations remain extremely difficult due to security and access constraints. The Secretary-General emphasized that seafarers are innocent victims of the conflict and that their welfare, dignity, and safe repatriation require immediate attention.
- c) **IMO evacuation framework under development.** The IMO is developing an evacuation framework for vessels, prioritizing ships on the basis of urgency, including supply levels, crew conditions, and cargo type. The framework is voluntary and humanitarian in nature, focused exclusively on seafarer welfare. It is based on existing IMO-recognized traffic separation schemes and is dependent on security assurances from the relevant parties. IMO is engaging with Iran and Oman as coastal States in the Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) of the Strait of Hormuz and is consulting the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) to gather real-time data on vessels and crew conditions. TZIRS-flagged operators with stranded vessels must contact TZIRS immediately at technical@zma.go.tz to ensure their vessel is included in relevant coordination efforts.
- d) **Legal position: no tolls or passage charges.** The Secretary-General reiterated that the existing IMO-adopted navigation routes remain the only recognized and safe channels and confirmed that there is no legal basis under international law for imposing tolls or charges on transit through the Strait of Hormuz. Any new navigation arrangements must comply with UNCLOS, in particular the right of transit passage and freedom of navigation. TZIRS-registered operators are reminded that no payment or compliance with passage conditions imposed by any coastal State is required or recognized under international law.
- e) **Guidance on information sources.** The Secretary-General cautioned Member States against unverified reports, including claims of alternative shipping routes and media



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speculation not supported by verified data. TZIRS advises all operators and masters to rely exclusively on authoritative sources: IMO Secretariat communications, UKMTO advisories, JMIC reports, and official TZIRS guidance.

4. Mandatory and Recommended Actions for TZIRS-Flagged Vessels

All actions set out in MSA No. 01/2026 and MSA No. 02/2026 remain in full effect. The following guidance is reinforced and updated:

4.1 Transit Deferral

The Strait of Hormuz and adjacent waters remain operationally unsafe for commercial transit. Shipowners and Masters are strongly advised to defer all transits and port calls in the affected area until the IMO confirms that safe navigation arrangements are in place. No commercial or operational pressure shall override this guidance.

4.2 Voyage Risk Assessment

A comprehensive and documented voyage-specific security risk assessment shall be conducted prior to any entry into or transit of the affected area, in accordance with the ISM Code and SOLAS Regulation V/34-1. Masters retain overriding authority under SOLAS XI-2/8 and shall not be constrained by any company, charterer or other person in exercising this authority.

4.3 Crew Safety, Welfare and Crew Change

Operators of vessels stranded in the region must take all practicable measures to maintain adequate supplies of water, food and fuel on board, ensure seafarer access to communication with families, and actively monitor crew fatigue and mental health, in accordance with MLC 2006 Regulation 4.3 and STCW requirements. The right to decline unsafe voyages must be upheld. Requests for crew change coordination should be directed to TZIRS at technical@zma.go.tz.

4.4 GNSS/GPS Degradation Preparedness

Extensive GNSS jamming and AIS signal manipulation remain active throughout the region. Masters and officers of the watch must be prepared to navigate using non-electronic alternative means and must not place sole reliance on electronic positioning systems. LRIT systems must be fully operational per SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 19-1.



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4.5 ISPS Code and Security Reporting

Ship Security Plans (SSP) shall be implemented at a minimum of Security Level 2 for all transit and port operations within the affected area, with Security Level 3 activated upon direction from TZIRS or the relevant Contracting Government. Masters must remain registered with UKMTO (www.ukmto.org) and MSCHOA and comply with BMP5 reporting procedures. The Ship Security Alert System (SSAS) must be activated without delay in the event of an attack, per SOLAS XI-2/5.

4.6 War Risk Insurance

No vessel shall enter or remain in the affected area without confirmed valid war risk insurance coverage. Operators must liaise directly with their P&I Clubs and war risk underwriters to confirm cover status prior to any transit, noting that cancellation notices have previously been issued with limited notice periods.

4.7 Incident Reporting to TZIRS

Any attack, near-miss, suspicious approach, or navigation disruption must be reported immediately to UKMTO, the Company Security Officer (CSO), and the TZIRS Technical Department at technical@zma.go.tz within 24 hours. Reports shall also be submitted to MSCHOA in accordance with BMP5 Annex D procedures.

5. TZIRS Status and Flag State Responsibilities.

As of the date of this advisory, no TZIRS-registered vessel has been publicly confirmed as directly involved in any of the reported attacks. TZIRS continues to actively monitor the situation, remains in contact with Recognized Organizations and relevant maritime authorities, and is engaging with IMO coordination mechanisms in support of affected seafarers and vessels. TZIRS is discharging its flag State duties under SOLAS, MARPOL and MLC 2006 and will continue to provide updated guidance as the situation develops.



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6. Effectiveness

This Advisory is effective immediately upon issuance on **14 April 2026**. MSA No. 01/2026 and MSA No. 02/2026 remain in force. All three advisories shall remain in effect until formally updated or withdrawn by TZIRS. Further guidance will be issued as developments require.

For additional enquiries on this circular, please contact to:

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