



The Bahamas Maritime Authority

BMA INFORMATION BULLETIN No. 125

USE OF LRIT INFORMATION IN AREAS AT RISK OF PIRACY IN THE GULF OF ADEN AND WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN

**Guidance and Instructions for Ship-owners, Managers, Masters, Bahamas
Recognised Organisations and Bahamas Approved Nautical Inspectors**

Note: This bulletin should be read in conjunction with BMA Bulletin No. 119

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This bulletin provides information on measures implemented to assist naval forces in counter-piracy activities using the automated provision of LRIT information from Bahamas ships.
- 1.2. The objective of these measures is to identify any ships which are failing to implement the Recommended Best Management Practices (BMP) and, in particular, daily reporting to UKMTO and vessel registration with MSCHOA. Contact details for which are found in Bulletin 119.

2. Establishment of anti-piracy LRIT polygon

- 2.1. The BMA has, for some time, extracted position data from its LRIT system for Bahamas ships in the area at risk from piracy off the coast of Somalia. This information is sent to EUNAVFOR Operation Atalanta for comparison with their information on ships which have registered with MSCHOA and are providing daily reports to UKMTO.
- 2.2. In order to improve the exchange of information the BMA has established a LRIT polygon covering the Gulf of Aden and the western Indian Ocean to enable identification, position, course and speed data for Bahamas ships to be collated automatically and submitted to EUNAVFOR on a daily basis. The information provided by the BMA is used for the sole purpose of verification and is not retained by EUNAVFOR nor passed onto any other party.

- 2.3. Owners and managers are reminded that following the BMP in respect of vessel registration and reporting will assist the naval forces to efficiently target warning messages to ships and deploy their resources to provide the best possibility of protection against hijacking.
- 2.4. It should be noted that the UKMTO reporting regime requires more information about the ship and crew than can be provided by the LRIT system data. For this reason ships should continue to provide daily UKMTO reports as a critical part of the ship's anti-piracy strategy.

3. Extent of the anti-piracy LRIT polygon

- 3.1. The anti-piracy LRIT polygon set up by the Bahamas, in agreement with EUNAVFOR, is a simple rectangle based on the UKMTO reporting area, with boundaries as follows:

Latitude 23° N – Latitude 10° S

Longitude 38° E – Longitude 78° E

4. Actions required of Bahamas ships

- 4.1. Reporting to UKMTO

Two (2) days before entering the LRIT polygon Bahamas ships should make an initial report and commence sending daily reports to UKMTO. Daily reports should continue to be sent until the vessel leaves the LRIT polygon. If the vessel enters a port within the polygon then reporting should be discontinued until the vessel is to leave the port at which time a further initial report should be made and daily reporting resumed.

- 4.2. Registration with MSCHOA

Ships should continue to register with MSCHOA as set out on the MSCHOA website and in the Recommended BMP. It should be noted that the registration coordinates are found on the MSCHOA website and are not the same as the Bahamas LRIT polygon.

- 4.3. It is a requirement for Bahamas ships that LRIT systems must not be turned off unless strictly necessary. However, in cases where it does become necessary to deactivate the LRIT equipment, e.g. for maintenance or repair, the BMA must be informed by email (lrir@bahamasmaritime.com) at the earliest opportunity.
