



WEEKLY REPORT



15/05/19

Maritime Security | Underwater Services | Operations Support | Agency Services

London | Lomé | Cotonou | Lagos



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Africa Risk Compliance

Headquartered in London, UK and with branch offices in Lomé, Togo, Cotonou, Benin and Lagos, Nigeria, Africa Risk Compliance Limited (ARC) was established to bring together a team of Africa experts to address challenges faced by those operating in Africa. With roots in the security sector, our key service offering is the management and arrangement of security in the complex jurisdictions of the nations around the Gulf of Guinea.

ARC's range of services in West Africa include Security, Underwater Services, Operational Support and Agency Services, acting on behalf of our clients to advise and guide on the options available, allowing improved and informed decision making. Our depth of knowledge and experience in West Africa has resulted in the development of our business offerings that go far beyond basic security, meaning that our clients can rest assured that their assets and people are safe when ARC are engaged. We take pride in the fact that on so many occasions and with any range of problems encountered, from maritime security to immigration, from hull cleaning to marine equipment procurement, we have always been positioned to support our clients need.

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Maritime Security Incidents - Bonny River



Reports

On 11 May 2019, there were 5 successive attacks on local craft on the Bonny River, Nigeria:

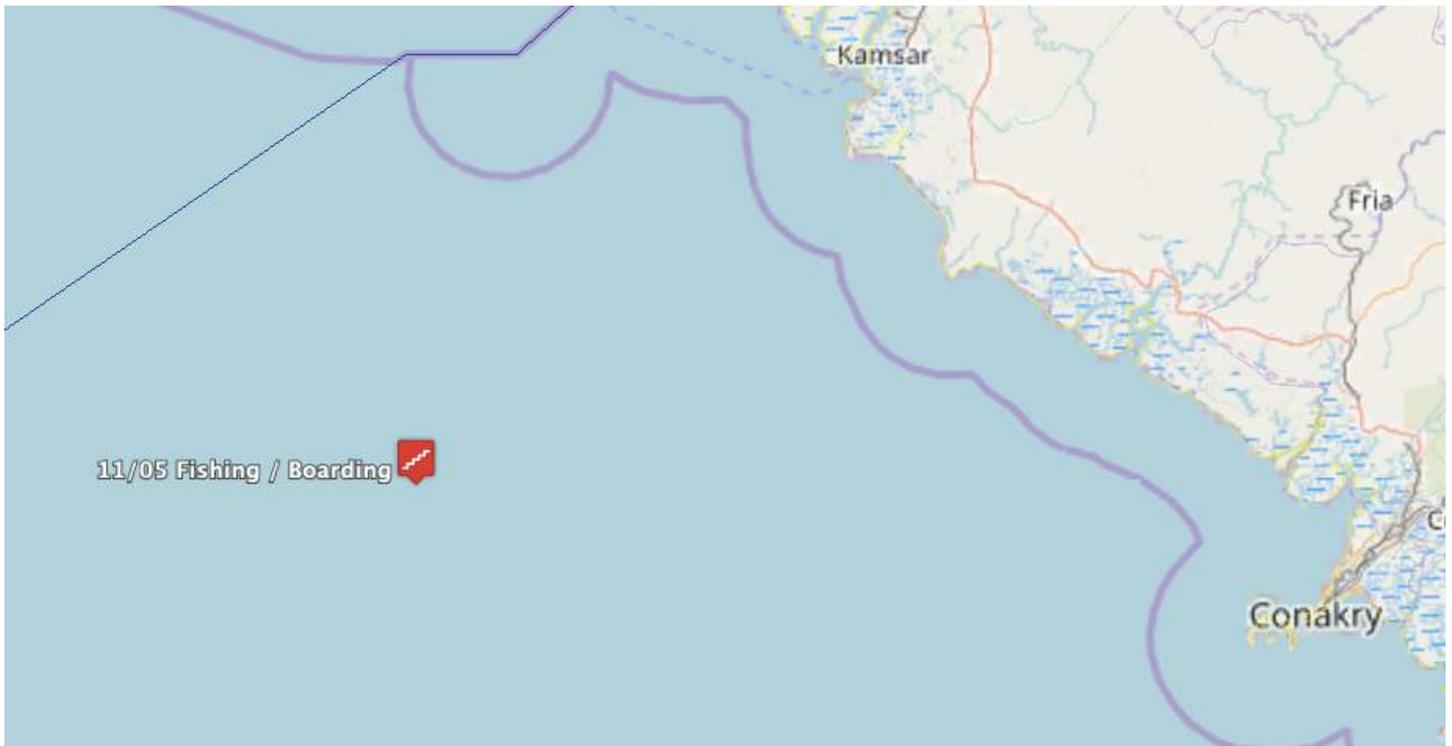
- **Armed Robbery (successful). Bonny River, Nigeria.** Speedboat with 2 passengers and carrying 10 drums of fuel from PHC to Bonny was attacked and robbed.
- **0930hrs local. Armed Robbery (successful). Bonny River, Nigeria.** A commercial speedboat sailing from Bonny to PHC carrying 10 passengers was attacked by pirates in military camo and face masks. They stole valuables and the boat engine and left the passengers in a mangrove.
- **Armed Robbery (successful). Bonny River, Nigeria.** Passengers on two local passenger boats had their phones, money, and valuables stolen. Pirates were in the process of stealing the outboard engines when Bonny Marine Police arrived due to distress call and pirates fled.
- **Armed Robbery/Attack on Security Forces, Bonny River, Nigeria.** After Bonny Marine Police responded to the attack on the two passenger boats and caused the pirates to flee, they found a speed boat with the body of a Mobile Police inspector. According to reports, he was shot and beheaded by pirates on Bonny River near Onne Federal Ocean Terminal. His weapon and outboard engines were stolen.

Analysis

Bonny River, and creeks and small rivers across the Niger Delta regularly see incidents against local passenger and commercial craft. According to one report on the above incidents, one of the robbers was overheard stating that they were aiming to steal 6 outboard engines in total from local boats. Vessels carrying fuel are also likely to be attacked for their small but useful and easily stolen cargo. The robbers made no attempt to kidnap passengers but used a high level of violence with firearms and knives to reach their "goal".

Current Threat Level: HIGH

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Reports

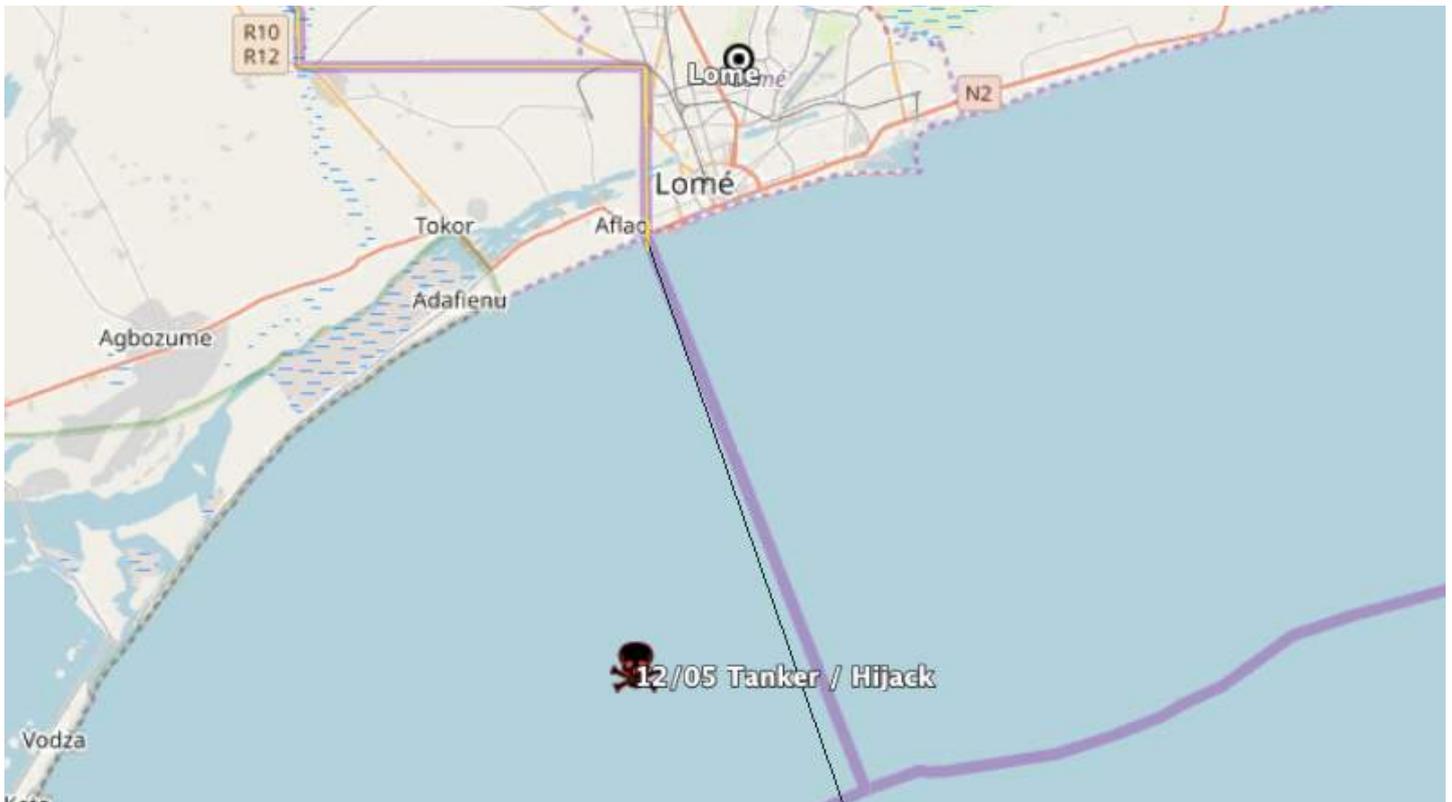
- **11 May 2019. Illegal Boarding. 110nm NW of Conakry, Guinea.** Fishing vessel was boarded by pirates. Crew members took back control and "arrested" 3 pirates according to reports.
- **14 May 2019, 0142hrs local . Theft (successful). Conakry Anchorage, Guinea.** A bulk carrier anchored at Conakry anchorage was boarded by robbers using a ladder. They stole crew's personal belongings and then left.

Analysis

Out of all the countries on the far west seaboard of the African continent, Guinea experiences the highest amount of maritime security incidents. This is due to poorly-paid and -trained security forces, high levels of corruption and a poorly monitored coastline. There is a large amount of foreign (but legal) and also illegal fishing conducted in the region, putting pressure on local fishermen and fish stocks. Fishermen may therefore target foreign fishing vessels for other means of income and/or to intimidate foreign fishing fleets.

Current Threat Level: MEDIUM

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Reports

- **12 May 2019, 0100UTC. Hijack. Lomé Anchorage, Togo.** Tanker was hijacked by pirates with no alarm raised and attempted to leave the anchorage without informing the Navy. Navy tried to communicate with the vessel via VHF, but after no reply a patrol boat was sent to investigate which ordered the vessel to stop. Vessel stated it would return to anchorage but continued sailing away from the anchorage. A report from another vessel in anchorage stated that they had rescued a person from the water who was confirmed as the Master of the suspicious vessel who had jumped overboard. The Master confirmed the vessel had been taken by pirates. Togo Navy fired warning shots and took control of the tanker. All pirates arrested and vessel now at berth under investigation.

Analysis

Togo has seen an increase in the number of incidents near Lomé port and anchorage - this is the second major incident this year after 3 crew members were kidnapped in March from a tanker approaching Lomé (the attack actually took place the Ghanaian EEZ).

Most vessels calling at Lomé used to arrange Togo Navy guards to embark for additional security. However, the perceived lowering of the threat due to fewer security incidents at Lomé in recent years has led to more vessels going without additional security, despite Togo still being listed on the Lloyds Joint War Committee Listed Areas.

Regarding incidents against small product tankers in anchorages around the Gulf of Guinea, please see page 7

Current Threat Level: MEDIUM

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Port Security Statistics

Number of incidents in last 6 months

Lagos	9
Onne	6
Takoradi	3
Lomé	2
Conakry	1
Douala	1
Abidjan	1

Terminals and Anchorages with highest number of incidents in last 6 months

STS and Main Anchorage, Lagos	5
Secure Anchorage Area, Lagos	3
Takoradi Anchorage	3
Federal Ocean Terminal, Onne	3
Federal Lighter Terminal, Onne	2
Lomé Anchorage	2
Douala Anchorage	1

Stowaway Statistics - Number of Incidents

	Last 3 months	Last 6 months	Last 12 months
Lagos	0	2	4
Takoradi	0	1	1
Conakry	1	2	2
Abidjan	1	1	1
Cotonou	1	1	2
Dakar	0	0	1
Douala	0	0	1

Piracy Statistics

Vessels Attacked

This month (last 30 days)	20
Since start of 2019	65
Since start of 2018	226

Crew & Passengers Kidnapped

This month (last 30 days)	10
Since start of 2019	49
Since start of 2018	244

Incidents involving security forces and merchant vessels since start of 2018

Embarked Navy Guards	25
Armed Escort Vessel	7

Success rate since start of 2018 (no crew kidnapped and vessel not hijacked)

Embarked Navy Guards	100%
Armed Escort Vessel	85%

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Militant Activity

Statements & Threats

Nothing to report.

Attacks

13 May 2019, 1500hrs. Nembe Creeks, 30km NE of Brass, Nigeria. Whilst inspecting an oil installation in Bayelsa, 3 staff of Integrated Data Services Limited (IDSL – a subsidiary of NNPC) were kidnapped along with the pilot of their speed boat.

Community Conflict

At a protest by Ugborodo youths against Chevron Nigeria Limited in Warri South West Council Area in Delta State, Nigeria, a surfer vessel used by the oil company almost ran over the protesters' boat, forcing its occupants to jump into the water. The protest is against the payments from Chevron Nigeria to the local community, with community leaders describing the sums received as a "meager amount".

Industrial Action

Nothing to report.

Current Militant Threat Level: MEDIUM

Current Community Threat Level: HIGH

Current Strike/Industrial Action Threat Level: MEDIUM

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Warning Regarding Hijacking of Tanker Vessels in the Gulf of Guinea.



Product and Chemical Tankers, particularly vessels between 5,000DWT and 15,000DWT.

Anchorage in the Gulf of Guinea, including but not limited to:

- Cotonou, Benin
- Douala and Kribi, Cameroon
- Libreville and Port Gentil, Gabon
- Lomé, Togo
- Tema and Takoradi, Ghana
- Pointe-Noire, Republic of the Congo
- Abidjan, Ivory Coast

Smaller tanker vessels may be targeted by pirate gangs whilst at anchorages in countries near Nigeria. The general *modus operandi* is to board and take control of a vessel before sailing towards Nigeria, where the pirates will demand a ransom and/or conduct cargo theft.

Background

The recent hijack of the tanker in Togo and her subsequent recovery by the Togo Navy is operationally similar to attacks on vessels in anchorages in 2018:

- MT Barrett. Hijacked at Cotonou Anchorage on 9 January 2018.
- MT Marine Express. Hijacked at Cotonou Anchorage on 1 February 2018.
- MT Sea Emperor. Boarded at Cotonou Anchorage on 17 February 2018.
- MT ST Marseille. Attacked and lost control of vessel to pirates at Cotonou Anchorage on 27 February 2018. As no cargo onboard, pirates attempted to kidnap two crew members but security forces intervened.
- MT Pantelena. Hijacked at Libreville Anchorage on 13 August 2018.
- MT Anuket Amber. Hijacked off Pointe Noire, Republic of Congo on 29 October 2018 after pirates used a tug hijacked near Pointe Noire anchorage to sail further offshore where MT Anuket Amber was conducting an STS operation with a larger tanker.
- MT G Dona 1. Hijacked at Lomé Anchorage on 12 May 2019. Rescued same day by Togo Navy.



Possible use of mother vessels

There have also been reports of tankers coming under attack in waters deep offshore Nigeria and outside the Nigerian EEZ with a larger vessel in the vicinity that may be acting as a mother vessel for the pirates, allowing them to operate further offshore and for longer periods of time. This is backed up by the arrest by a Spanish Navy frigate of a small tanker vessel that was being used as a mother ship according to the crew, and of the hijack and use of tugs to launch attacks on other vessels (e.g. incident against the heavy lift semi-submersible vessel MV Blue Marlin and the incident against the MT Anuker Amber).

Similarities between incidents

In all cases except the MT Marine Express, the targeted vessel is a small product/chemical tanker under 15,000DWT.

In at least 3 incidents, the pirates managed to board the tanker without the crew releasing any alert. This demonstrates a high level of skill and awareness amongst the pirates. It also demonstrates a high level of complacency amongst crews in anchorages outside of Nigerian waters where they believe themselves to be safe from piracy.

Analysis

Based on the information available on the above cases, ARC believes that pirates are using a new tactic to conduct attacks against merchant tanker vessels in the region:

1. Identify suitable, small target vessel with refined product cargo on board.
2. Board vessel in/near anchorage by using small local craft or fishing canoe and once onboard target vessel, immediately switch off AIS signal and take control of vessel communications to stop any alert being transmitted.
3. Sail vessel to Nigerian waters, where there is minimal/weak law enforcement deep offshore and in the Niger Delta.
4. Demand ransom from owners and managers, and/or profit from sale of refined product cargo on the black market.
5. Sail vessel into open water and release the vessel with AIS still switched off and depart, allowing crew to retake control.



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