Aris 13 first successful Somali hi-jack since 2012

By Insurance Marine News, 15th March 2017

Pirates have hijacked Aris 13, an 1,800dwt oil tanker with eight Sri Lankan crew onboard. It is the first successful hi-jacking of a commercial ship by Somali pirates since 2012.
Aris 13 sent a distress call on Monday, turned off its tracking system and altered course for the Somali port town of Alula, according to Oceans Beyond Piracy. It had reported being followed by two skiffs. Alula district commissioner Mohamud Ahmed Eynab told Reuters that "the pirates hijacked the oil tanker and they brought it near Alula". Pirates in the town confirmed they were expecting the ship.

US Navy / Wikipedia

Aris 13 made a sharp turn just after it passed the Horn of Africa en route from Djibouti to Mogadishu. The tanker is owned by Panama company Armi Shipping and managed by Aurora Ship Management in the UAE. Graeme Gibbon-Brooks, the head of private maritime security company Dryad Maritime Intelligence, told Reuters that the vessel was an easy target because it was low, slow and close to the coast. After years of heightened awareness of the danger crews had begun to relax their vigilance after a few years of inactivity on the part of the pirates.

In 2011, Somali pirates launched 237 attacks off the coast of Somalia and held hundreds of hostages. But shipowners began employing armed defenders, and vessels stayed further away from the Somali coast. A major fear now is that Aris 13 could be used as a "mother ship" for more attacks on other vessels further from shore.

Story supplied by Insurance Marine News. If you would like a complimentary trial to the daily Insurance Marine News e-bulletin please email: grant.attwell@insurancemarinenews.com