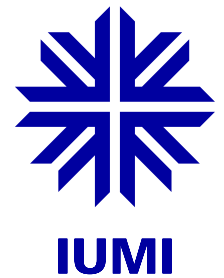# Waters near Somalia are removed from list of high-risk piracy areas

IUMI

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An area of the Indian Ocean near Somalia was taken off the shipping industry's list of high-risk areas on Monday August 22nd. Shipping industry groups International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), BIMCO, International Marine Contractors Association (IMCA), INTERCARGO, INTERTANKO and Oil Companies International Marine Forum (OCIMF) announced that they had informed the International Maritime Organization (IMO) that the Indian Ocean High Risk Area would be removed. This was a result of the significantly improved piracy situation in the region, which it said was largely due to concerted counter-piracy efforts by many regional and international stakeholders. Notification of the removal was submitted to the IMO for the next meeting of the Maritime Safety Committee which is scheduled to begin on October 31st.

The area being removed is the HRA as shown on UKHO Chart Q6099 and it will come into effect on January 1st 2023. The notice time will give charterers, shipowners and operators time to adapt to the changed perceived threat. The Voluntary Reporting Area (VRA) administered by UKMTO has not changed. Ships entering the VRA are encouraged to report to the UKMTO and register with the Maritime Security Centre for the Horn of Africa (MSCHOA) in accordance with industry Best Management Practices 5 (BMP5), which will continue to provide the necessary guidance for shipping. The co-submitters said that the announcement was "a testament to nearly 15 years of dedicated collaboration to reduce the threat of piracy in the Indian Ocean. Through a combination of efforts by military, political, civil society, and the shipping industry over the years, operators and seafarers are now able to operate with increased confidence in these waters."

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