



Vanguard

GLOBAL MONTHLY UPDATE

JULY 2026

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

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INDIAN OCEAN/ARABIAN SEA /PERSIAN GULF

OVERVIEW, JULY 2026

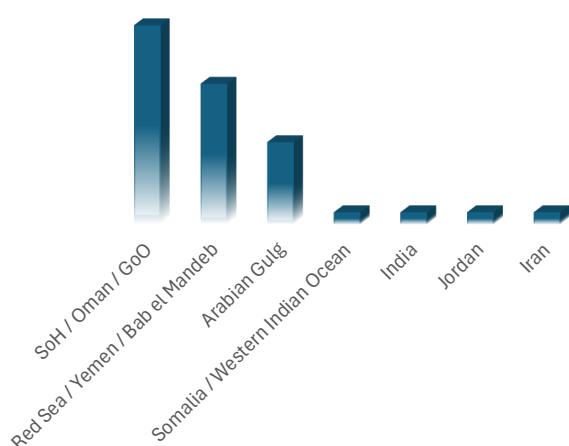
Maritime security across the Persian Gulf and wider Indian Ocean deteriorated significantly during July, with the US-Iran conflict continuing to drive the regional threat environment. The Strait of Hormuz and its approaches off Oman remained the principal flashpoint, with repeated projectile and missile attacks against merchant vessels. Several vessels sustained engine-room or structural damage, fires and loss of propulsion, while the attacks against MOMBASA B and AL BAHYAH resulted in one crew fatality and multiple injuries. Other incidents involving GFS GALAXY, AL REKAYYAT, ACHELOOS and GASLOG SHANGHAI demonstrate the sustained exposure of commercial vessels transiting the area.

The threat increasingly became two-directional, with commercial shipping exposed to both Iranian military activity and US enforcement measures. US forces conducted further strikes against Iranian coastal military infrastructure and resumed enforcement of the naval blockade against Iranian ports, including intercepting or disabling vessels assessed to be supporting Iranian trade. Iran responded with further regional attacks, while continuing to assert greater control over navigation through Hormuz, including warnings regarding Iranian-designated transit routes. This creates an increasingly complex operating environment in which cargo, ownership, previous port calls, sanctions exposure and perceived political affiliation may all influence a vessel's risk profile.

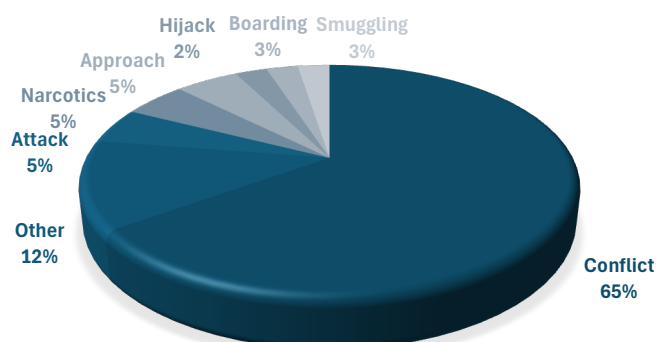
The conflict also expanded beyond Hormuz into regional energy and maritime infrastructure. Iranian attacks affected facilities in Kuwait and Iraq, including an offshore drilling platform and oil-sector infrastructure, while port and oil-loading operations were temporarily disrupted in Iraq. At the same time, the Houthis announced a maritime embargo against Saudi Arabia and subsequently claimed attacks against Saudi vessels and energy infrastructure. Several commercial vessels subsequently reversed course or altered voyages associated with Saudi ports, demonstrating that the threat was already influencing operator behaviour rather than remaining purely rhetorical. This development is particularly significant because pressure on Saudi Red Sea shipping creates an additional threat axis alongside disruption in Hormuz. Operators seeking to reduce exposure to the Gulf may therefore face heightened risk around alternative Red Sea routes and Saudi export infrastructure.

Conventional maritime security threats also remained present, including armed small-craft approaches off Yemen and the hijacking of ASANA, which was subsequently taken into Somali territorial waters. The July picture is therefore one of a widening and increasingly interconnected maritime conflict, stretching from the Persian Gulf and Strait of Hormuz through the Gulf of Oman to the Bab el-Mandeb and Red Sea, with commercial shipping exposed to direct attack, military interception, forced diversion and significant short-notice operational disruption.

LOCATION



INCIDENT TYPE



MARITIME INCIDENTS, JULY 2026

31-07-26	OMAN	CONFLICT	Bermuda-flagged tanker GASLOG SHANGHAI (IMO: 9600528) was struck by an unknown projectile approximately 11nm northeast of Limah, Oman, while transiting eastbound through the Strait of Hormuz at 23:30 UTC. The CSO stated that the projectile struck the port-side engine room, causing a fire that was subsequently extinguished. The vessel experienced a blackout and currently has no propulsion. All crew were reported safe, while the Omani Coast Guard has been informed to provide assistance.
31-07-26	OMAN	CONFLICT	Liberia-flagged tanker reported an unidentified projectile landing in the water approximately five metres from the vessel's starboard quarter while transiting westbound through the Strait of Hormuz, approximately 21nm northeast of Khasab, Oman, at 22:06 UTC. The Master stated that the crew heard an explosion and observed flames on the water. The vessel was not struck, and all crew were reported safe.
29-07-26	SAUDI ARABIA	CONFLICT	Port operations at Rabigh were temporarily suspended due to suspected air activity. According to reports from a vessel in port, Port Control instructed vessels to suspend operations as a precaution. No confirmed attack or damage has been reported.
27-07-26	SOUTHERN RED SEA	CONFLICT	The Houthis claimed to have targeted the Saudi-flagged oil tanker NCC GHAZAL (IMO:9685205) with multiple ballistic missiles while transiting the southern Red Sea. According to Houthi military spokesperson Brigadier General Yahya Saree, the vessel was targeted for violating the group's announced maritime embargo against Saudi Arabia and was forced to alter course.
26-07-26	STRAIT OF HORMUZ	CONFLICT	Iranian state media reported that an oil tanker struck a naval mine after allegedly deviating from the Iranian-designated navigation route in the Strait of Hormuz. No information regarding the vessel's identity, casualties or damage has been released. The claims have not been independently verified.
25-07-26	SAUDI ARABIA	CONFLICT	Saudi Arabia's ELDYSA reportedly intercepted two ballistic missiles launched from Yemen targeting a refinery in Yanbu. According to the Hellenic National Defence General Staff, both missiles were destroyed by a Patriot air defence battery without reported casualties or damage.
25-07-26	SAUDI ARABIA	CONFLICT	Houthi forces conducted a ballistic missile and UAV attack against the Saudi Aramco refinery in Jizan. According to satellite imagery, multiple thermal anomalies consistent with active fires were identified within the refinery complex. Saudi authorities have not confirmed the refinery was struck or reported any casualties or damage.
24-07-26	RED SEA	CONFLICT	US forces reportedly disabled the engine room of an Iran-linked merchant vessel after it allegedly attempted to breach the US-imposed maritime blockade on Iranian ports. According to US Central Command (CENTCOM), the vessel failed to comply with repeated warnings before US forces opened fire. No information regarding casualties or the vessel's condition has been released.
24-07-26	YEMEN	CONFLICT	Explosions were reported in Hodeidah Governorate, including near Hodeidah Port. According to the Saudi-led coalition, the strikes targeted Houthi military infrastructure linked to threats against commercial shipping in the Red Sea, while Houthi-affiliated media reported that telecommunications facilities in Hodeidah and Kamaran Island were struck. Coalition authorities stated that Hodeidah, Ras Isa and Al Salif ports were not targeted and remain open to maritime navigation.
23-07-26	SAUDI ARABIA	ATTACK	The Saudi-flagged tanker ENCELIA was struck by an unknown projectile starboardside approximately 70nm southwest of Al Shuqaiq, Saudi Arabia, at 20:00 UTC. The Master reported that the impact caused a fire onboard, which the crew were actively fighting. No casualties or environmental impact have been reported at present. The Houthis have reportedly claimed the attack, and also that they hit a second vessel LAYLA, which has been disproven.
22-07-26	RED SEA / ARABIAN SEA	OTHER	Merchant vessels that appear to have altered their routes following the Houthi maritime embargo against Saudi Arabia and subsequent HOCC implementation guidance. Although the reasons for each course alteration cannot be independently verified and may reflect commercial or operational considerations, the timing is consistent with the embargo announcement and suggests that additional operators may be reassessing Red Sea transits involving Saudi ports. The following vessels have recently appeared to alter their planned voyages: Marshall Islands-flagged pure car carrier LIU JIANG KOU (IMO: 9991795) Russia-flagged tanker TRUST (IMO: 9382798) Singapore-flagged tanker NAVIG8 EXPRESS (IMO: 9976874) Liberia-flagged tanker MICA (IMO: 9399935) Malta-flagged tanker AGIOS GERASIMOS (IMO: 9693056) Liberia-flagged tanker AMAZON (IMO: 9476654)
21-07-26	RED SEA / ARABIAN SEA	OTHER	Singapore-flagged tanker XIN LONG YANG (IMO: 9761463) and Liberia-flagged tanker RODOS (IMO: 1024948) both reversed course in the Red Sea after loading Saudi crude at Yanbu, following the Houthi maritime embargo against Saudi Arabia. In addition, the Hong Kong-flagged tanker NEW PRIME (IMO: 9799123) has reportedly turned back off Oman before arriving at Yanbu to load cargo. AIS data indicates the vessels have abandoned their intended voyages linked to Saudi crude exports. The course alterations follow formal guidance issued by the Houthi Humanitarian Operations Coordination Center (HOCC) warning that vessels loading or discharging cargo at Saudi ports may be targeted "in any

			location" within the operational reach of Houthi forces. The developments represent the first confirmed changes to commercial tanker routing following the embargo and are likely to increase disruption to Saudi crude exports and regional shipping patterns.
20-07-26	INDIA	NARCOTICS	Indian authorities seized approximately 30 tonnes of pharmaceutical hydrochloride tablets at Kochi Port. According to the authorities, the consignment was suspected to be intended for smuggling to a foreign country by sea. The operation resulted in the apprehension of three suspects. The seized pharmaceuticals have an estimated value of approximately USD 1.24 million, while investigations into the attempted maritime smuggling operation remain ongoing.
20-07-26	OMAN	CONFLICT	A tanker reportedly broadcast over VHF Channel 16 that it had been struck by an unknown projectile approximately 8nm northeast of Limah, Oman, in the Strait of Hormuz at 20:10 UTC. The report was relayed by multiple vessels monitoring VHF Channel 16.
20-07-26	RED SEA / SAUDI ARABIA	OTHER	Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Saree announced the immediate implementation of a maritime embargo against Saudi Arabia, describing the measure as part of a "blockade for blockade" strategy. The statement, published through Saree's official Telegram channel, stated that the embargo would take effect immediately but did not specify the geographic area of application or the operational measures through which it would be enforced. Although no further implementation guidance has been issued at current, the announcement is likely to be interpreted as applying to Saudi-flagged, Saudi-owned, Saudi-managed, or Saudi-affiliated vessels, as well as vessels calling at or bound for Saudi ports.
19-07-26	17NM OFF THE OMANI COAST	CONFLICT	Panama-flagged tanker ACHELOOS (IMO: 1087524) reported being struck by an unknown projectile, approximately 17nm off the Omani coast, at 2230 UTC. The projectile reportedly impacted the vessel's steering gear, forcing the crew to switch to manual steering before safely departing the area. According to an update provided to the UK Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) at 1500 UTC on 20 July, the vessel anchored off Khor Fakkan Port. All crew are safe, no injuries have been reported, and despite the vessel being fully laden, there has been no reported pollution.
19-07-26	JORDAN	OTHER	Jordanian authorities have confirmed that Aqaba Port remains open and operating normally, despite reports from the US Embassy of a credible security threat that prompted advice against travel to the port and airport. Jordan's government stated that no evacuation orders had been issued and that no immediate threats had been identified by the relevant authorities. The reassurance follows Iranian claims that ballistic missiles targeted military aircraft at Aqaba Airport as part of a wider strike against US assets in the region, while Israeli military officials reported observing Iranian rocket fire directed towards Aqaba. The Jordan Armed Forces confirmed intercepting three Iranian missiles later on the same day, while one projectile landed in a remote, uninhabited area in the south. Although no disruption to maritime operations has been reported, the incident is the first reported towards Aqaba since late March.
18-07-26	SOMALI TERRITORIAL WATERS	HIJACK	Tanzania-flagged tanker ASANA remains under pirate control and is reportedly transiting within Somali territorial waters with her AIS switched off, following its boarding the previous day about 60nm southwest of Mukalla, Yemen. The vessel is being closely monitored by two naval warships, one from the Indian Navy and one operating under the EU Naval Force's Operation Atalanta mission, while maintaining a safe distance. At this stage, a special forces intervention is assessed to be unlikely. ASANA is instead expected to anchor within Somali territorial waters, where the hijacking is likely to transition into a prolonged ransom negotiation phase. The vessel's movements continue to be monitored by international naval forces.
18-07-26	KUWAIT	CONFLICT	Vanguard is aware that the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) claimed to have conducted missile and drone strikes against the fuel terminal at the Port of Al Ahmadi, alleging that the facility supports US naval operations in the Gulf. Separately, the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) confirmed that one of its vital oil sector facilities was struck in repeated Iranian attacks, resulting in multiple injuries and significant material damage. The extent of operational disruption at the port remains unclear.
17-07-26	YEMEN	BOARDING	Tanzania-flagged tanker ASANA was boarded by an unknown number of intruders approximately 60nm southwest of Mukalla, Yemen. The vessel reportedly has a freeboard of approximately 2.1 metres and had declared Bosaso, Somalia, as its destination. Details regarding the number of assailants, the circumstances of the boarding, and the status of the vessel and crew remain unclear. Authorities are monitoring the situation, and vessels operating in the area are advised to maintain a heightened lookout and report any suspicious activity.
16-07-26	GULF OF OMAN	CONFLICT	Marshall Islands-flagged tanker was struck by an unknown projectile while transiting the Gulf of Oman in the late evening. The impact reportedly caused minor structural damage to the port quarter, with crew reporting smoke, fumes and the smell of gunpowder on the bridge. No fire was reported. Subsequent assessment confirmed the vessel sustained minor structural damage to the port side. All crew were reported safe and accounted for, with no environmental pollution resulting from the incident.
16-07-26	IRAQ	CONFLICT	A drone reportedly struck an oil tanker alongside a terminal at Umm Qasr Port, Iraq, causing no reported damage to the vessel and no fire. Following the incident, crude oil

			loading operations were reportedly temporarily suspended across all Iraqi oil loading terminals as a precautionary measure. The incident occurred one day after a separate drone crashed within the container yard at Grand Faw Port, also in Basra province, causing no casualties or disruption to port operations.
16-07-26	OMAN	CONFLICT	The former Curaçao-flagged tanker WEN YAO (IMO: 9288095) was intercepted and boarded by US military forces approximately 100nm east of Duqm, Oman, as part of the ongoing enforcement of the US naval blockade against Iran. The merchant vessel was subject to interaction with military forces during ongoing regional military activity. Open-source reporting indicates the vessel changed its name to AZHIN and reflagged to Iran while underway shortly before the boarding. The tanker was reportedly fully laden with Iranian fuel oil and has been under US sanctions since October 2024.
16-07-26	BAB EL-MANDEB STRAIT	SMUGGLING	Yemeni government forces announced the interception of a vessel in the Bab el-Mandeb Strait that was allegedly transporting equipment intended to support Houthi weapons production. According to the authorities, the vessel was intercepted following an intelligence-led operation, with the crew detained and the cargo seized for further examination. Initial assessments reportedly indicate the shipment contained components used in the manufacture of drones and missiles. The Houthis have not commented on the reported interception, and the claims have not been independently verified.
15-07-26	IRAQ	CONFLICT	A UAV crashed in an open area of the container yard at Grand Faw Port, Iraq. Port authorities reported no casualties or material damage, adding that the incident had not affected port operations, which continue as normal.
15-07-26	ARABIAN GULF	CONFLICT	US Central Command (CENTCOM) reported that US forces disabled the Curaçao-flagged oil tanker BELMA after the vessel allegedly attempted to transit towards Kharg Island, Iran, in violation of the US naval blockade. According to CENTCOM, the tanker ignored multiple warnings before a US aircraft fired Hellfire missiles into the vessel's smokestack, rendering it unable to continue its voyage. CENTCOM further stated that, during the first 24 hours of the resumed blockade, two commercial vessels were redirected, while BELMA was the first vessel reportedly disabled for non-compliance.
14-07-26	OMANI TERRITORIAL WATERS	CONFLICT	UAE Ministry of Defence reported that the Liberia-flagged crude oil tanker MOMBASA B (IMO: 9739501) and the Liberia-flagged tanker AL BAHYAH (IMO: 9937799) were struck by Iranian cruise missiles while transiting the southern approach to the Strait of Hormuz in Omani territorial waters. According to the Ministry, the attack resulted in the death of one Indian crew member aboard MOMBASA B, while eight additional crew members (six Indian and two Ukrainian nationals) were injured, including four seriously. Fires broke out onboard both vessels, causing material damage, but were subsequently brought under control.
13-07-26	OMAN	CONFLICT	A tanker was struck by an unknown projectile approximately 40nm northeast of Qalhat, Oman, at about 2105 LT, sustaining damage to the starboard-side engine room. All crew evacuated and reported safe and accounted for, with no environmental pollution resulting from the incident.
13-07-26	YEMEN	APPROACH	A tanker transiting eastbound within the Internationally Recommended Transit Corridor (IRTC) was approached by six small boats approximately 50nm south of Aden, Yemen, at 10:19 UTC. The Master reported that one of the small boats closed to within five cables of the vessel, prompting the onboard Armed Security Team (AST) to fire warning shots. The remaining five small boats stayed at a distance of approximately 1nm.
12-07-26	OFFSHORE KUWAIT	CONFLICT	Kuwaiti authorities reported that an offshore drilling platform operated by Kuwait Oil Company in the country's territorial waters was struck by a hostile UAV, resulting in material damage and injuries to one worker, who is receiving medical treatment. Kuwait also reported attacks against three northern land border posts and stated that its armed forces intercepted additional hostile aerial targets. The Kuwaiti government condemned the attacks, attributing them to Iran, and reaffirmed that its armed forces remain on full operational alert.
12-07-26	STRAIT OF HORMUZ	CONFLICT	Vanguard is aware that the Cyprus-flagged container ship GFS GALAXY (IMO 9401271) was struck by an unknown projectile whilst transiting southbound through the Strait of Hormuz, approximately 9nm off the coast of Oman (26°12'N 056°39'E). The projectile reportedly impacted the aft section of the vessel, causing a fire and possible damage to the engine room. The crew commenced firefighting operations, with one crew member initially reported unaccounted for. The vessel's Company Security Officer (CSO) subsequently confirmed that the vessel had been attacked and that the engine room had sustained damage.
08-07-26	STRAIT OF HORMUZ & SOUTHERN IRAN	CONFLICT	US forces commenced a new wave of strikes against Iran, stating that the operation is intended to further degrade Iran's capability to threaten freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz. Iranian media subsequently reported multiple explosions and air defence activity across several strategic coastal locations, including Bandar Abbas, Abu Musa Island, and Sirik. The extent of any damage to maritime infrastructure has not been confirmed.
07-07-26	STRAIT OF HORMUZ &	CONFLICT	The United States conducted strikes against more than 80 Iranian military targets, stating the operation was launched in response to reported Iranian attacks against three civilian-crewed commercial vessels transiting the Strait of Hormuz. Targets reportedly included air

	PERSIAN GULF		defence systems, coastal radar sites, anti-ship missile capabilities, command facilities and more than 60 IRGC fast attack craft. Iranian media also reported explosions at Sirik, Qeshm Island, Bandar Abbas and Kharg Island, while Iran subsequently launched retaliatory strikes against US military facilities in Bahrain and Kuwait.
07-07-26	OFF OMANI COAST	CONFLICT	The Saudi-flagged crude oil tanker WEDYAN reportedly sustained damage following an explosion near the Strait of Hormuz, off the Omani coast. The reported incident followed earlier claims that a Qatari-flagged LNG tanker had also been struck in the same general area. The cause of the explosion, the extent of the damage and responsibility remain unconfirmed.
07-07-26	STRAIT OF HORMUZ	CONFLICT	The UAE-owned LPG tanker AL MARYAH was involved in an incident while transiting the Strait of Hormuz during the escalation between the United States and Iran. The circumstances surrounding the event, the extent of any damage and responsibility remain unconfirmed. No casualties or pollution were reported.
06-07-26	OMAN	CONFLICT	The Qatari LNG tanker AL REKAYYAT was struck by an unidentified projectile approximately 8nm east of Limah, Oman, while transiting southbound. The impact caused a fire on the vessel, which was subsequently brought under control. No casualties or pollution were reported, and the tanker was able to continue its voyage. The cause of the incident remains under investigation.
05-07-26	YEMEN	ATTACK	The Palau-flagged bulk carrier LADY NAEIMA came under attack at approximately 07:19 UTC while departing Hodeidah. Several suspicious skiffs reportedly approached to within 20 metres before opening fire approximately 13nm off Al-Durayhimi, an area under Houthi control. The vessel transmitted a distress alert and no injuries or significant damage were reported.
02-07-26	UAE	NARCOTICS	Dubai Customs, in coordination with Dubai Police, seized 278,850 Pregabalin pills weighing approximately 200 kg during a counter-narcotics operation targeting a shipment arriving from an Asian country. The operation began after customs authorities identified a suspicious shipment through risk analysis and intelligence systems, leading to the seizure of 150,600 pills at the Port of Jebel Ali. Follow-up investigations resulted in the arrest of four suspects and the recovery of a further 128,250 pills, bringing the total seizure to 278,850 pills.
01-07-26	STRAIT OF HORMUZ	INCIDENT	Iranian state media reported that a foreign containership ran aground in the Strait of Hormuz after allegedly transiting outside Iran's designated route. The vessel reportedly grounded in shallow water while carrying cargo after using a route south of Larak Island. Currently, there is no independent confirmation of the incident, which remains sourced to Iranian state media. Following examination of the footage released by Iranian media, it was uncovered that the reportedly grounded vessel is the Comoros-flagged ARISTA, which has been under US OFAC sanctions since the past summer and has been in the same location since March. Thus, the incident has been dismissed as false.
01-07-26	YEMEN	APPROACH	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines-flagged bulk carrier GOLDEN ARSENAL (IMO: 9493212) was approached by multiple small craft approximately 76nm south of Balhaf, Yemen, at 07:15 UTC. The CSO reported that the small craft were carrying several persons armed with small arms. The crew were mustered in the citadel and reported safe. The Master of a third-party vessel in the vicinity also reported hearing small arms fire over VHF Channel 16; however, this remains unconfirmed.

NORTH & WEST AFRICA

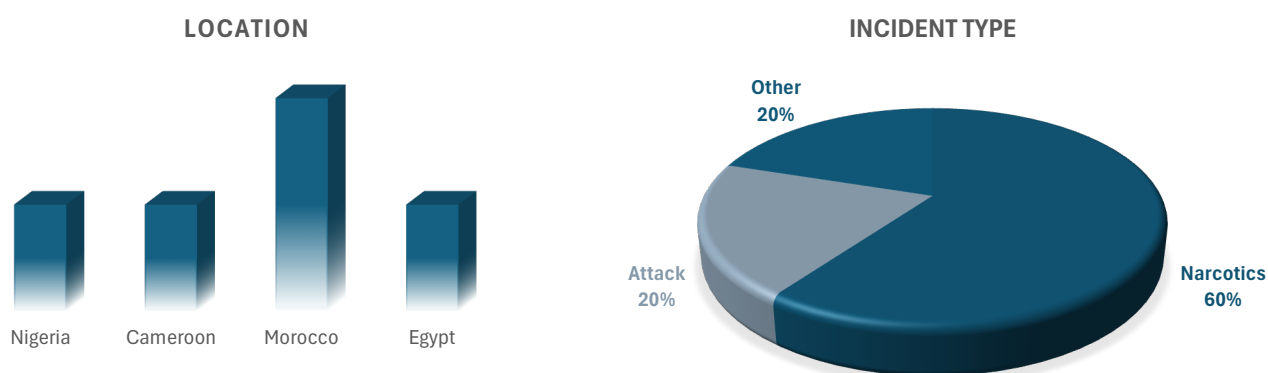
OVERVIEW, JULY 2026

Maritime security activity across North and West Africa during July was relatively limited, with reporting concentrated on narcotics trafficking, a significant port disruption in Cameroon, and a conflict-related attack against energy shipping in Egypt. Narcotics remained the most frequently reported issue, with major cocaine seizures in Morocco and a substantial cannabis seizure at Apapa Seaport in Nigeria.

Morocco recorded two notable cocaine incidents, including the seizure of more than three tonnes of cocaine off Tarfaya, where traffickers were reportedly transferring narcotics from a merchant vessel to inflatable boats for onward movement to the coast. Separately, approximately 45kg of cocaine was discovered concealed within containerised food cargo from Latin America in Casablanca. In Nigeria, authorities seized more than 4.1 tonnes of cannabis from a container arriving at Apapa Seaport from Canada, highlighting the continued exploitation of legitimate containerised supply chains for narcotics trafficking.

Separately, operational disruption was recorded at the Port of Douala, where the collision between SEA HONOR and BLACK RHINO significantly damaged both vessels and obstructed the navigation channel, resulting in the suspension of port navigation for two days. Although not security-related, the incident demonstrated the potential for individual marine casualties to generate significant disruption at key regional ports.

However, the most significant security development occurred at Damietta Port, Egypt, where an unidentified drone struck the US-owned FSRU ENERGOS WINTER, with the resulting fire reportedly spreading to the LNG carrier GASLOG SALEM. The incident represents a notable extension of conflict-related maritime risk into the eastern Mediterranean/North African operating environment and demonstrates the potential for the wider regional conflict to affect commercial vessels and strategic energy infrastructure beyond the principal Persian Gulf and Red Sea theatres.



MARITIME INCIDENTS, JULY 2026

29-07-26	EGYPT	ATTACK	An unidentified drone struck the US-owned, Marshall Islands-flagged floating storage and regasification unit (FSRU) ENERGOS WINTER (IMO: 9256614) while alongside at Damietta Port. According to reports, the resulting fire spread to the Bermuda-flagged LNG carrier GASLOG SALEM (IMO: 9638915).
27-07-26	MOROCCO	NARCOTICS	Moroccan authorities seized more than three tonnes of cocaine during a counter-narcotics operation off the coast of Tarfaya. According to the authorities, the shipment had been transferred from a merchant vessel to inflatable boats for onward smuggling to the Moroccan coast as part of an international trafficking network.
12-07-26	CAMEROON	INCIDENT	Tuvalu-flagged cargo vessel SEA HONOR collided with the Cyprus-flagged cargo vessel BLACK RHINO near Buoy No. 20 in the Douala-Bonaberi port channel, temporarily obstructing the navigation channel and disrupting maritime traffic. Both vessels sustained significant damage, while all 15 crew members onboard BLACK RHINO were safely evacuated. SEA HONOR was subsequently cleared from the channel and towed to the anchorage, while BLACK RHINO was deliberately grounded to facilitate clearance operations. Navigation through the Port of Douala was suspended for two days until 14 July.
10-07-26	NIGERIA	NARCOTICS	Nigerian authorities seized 4,143.5kg of cannabis during the examination of the container FANU1933352 at the Enforcement Unit within Apapa Seaport, Lagos. The container had arrived from Montreal, Canada, and was manifested with three used vehicles. Officers recovered 162 bags containing 8,287 individually wrapped 500-gram parcels. Four bags were concealed inside a red 2015 Nissan Micra, while the remaining 158 bags were placed across the container floor and in spaces between the vehicles. No arrests were reported.
08-07-26	MOROCCO	NARCOTICS	Moroccan police launched an investigation after approximately 45kg of cocaine was discovered concealed within a shipping container carrying food products from Latin America at an import company in Casablanca. Authorities recovered 41 packages of cocaine and a GPS tracking device hidden amongst the cargo. Investigations are ongoing to identify those involved in the trafficking network.

EUROPE/BLACK SEA

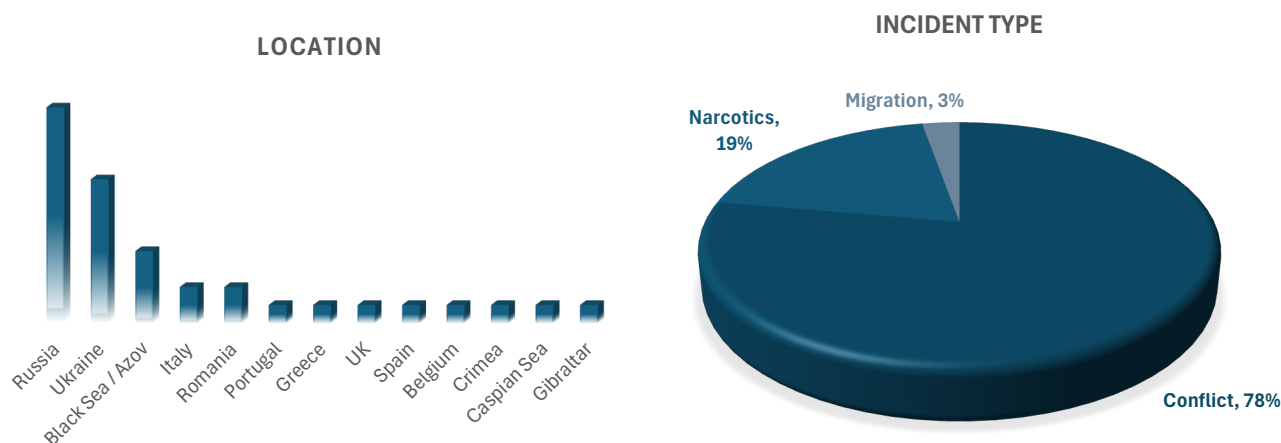
OVERVIEW, JULY 2026

Maritime security across Europe during July was dominated by a major escalation in the Russia-Ukraine maritime conflict, particularly across the Black Sea, Sea of Azov and approaches to key Russian and Ukrainian ports. Both sides increasingly targeted merchant vessels and maritime infrastructure, substantially increasing direct and collateral exposure for commercial shipping. Ukrainian operations extended against Russia-linked tankers, bulk carriers, tugboats and other vessels, while Russian strikes repeatedly affected merchant shipping and port infrastructure around Odesa, Chornomorsk and Mykolaiv.

The Caspian Pipeline Consortium terminal near Novorossiysk emerged as a particular hotspot. A succession of tankers, including YASA POLARIS, ASIA, NISSOS IOS, NELSA and NISSOS SIFNOS, were reportedly attacked while approaching or loading at the terminal. The repeated strikes forced temporary suspensions of crude loading and contributed to vessels altering voyages, demonstrating the growing operational consequences for commercial energy exports.

Commercial shipping serving Ukraine also faced significant exposure. Multiple civilian vessels were struck, including GOLDEN LEO, where ten fatalities were reported following a Russian rocket attack after departing Odesa, while other attacks resulted in fires, casualties and damage to merchant vessels and port facilities. The geographical spread of activity also widened, with incidents reported near Romanian waters, in the Caspian Sea and against Russian Baltic ports, highlighting the expansion of maritime targeting beyond the immediate Ukrainian coastline.

Away from the conflict, narcotics trafficking remained the principal criminal maritime threat, with significant seizures recorded in Portugal, the UK, Spain, Italy, Belgium and around the Strait of Gibraltar. Cocaine continued to be moved through containerised cargo and concealed aboard commercial vessels, while European ports remained important entry and transit points for international trafficking networks. Migration activity was comparatively limited, with merchant vessels primarily involved in rescuing migrants in distress in the Mediterranean.



MARITIME INCIDENTS, JULY 2026

30-07-26

PORTUGAL

NARCOTICS

Portuguese authorities seized approximately 197kg of cocaine concealed within the sea chest of a Panama-flagged reefer vessel following its arrival at the Port of Setúbal. According to the Polícia Judiciária, the narcotics were recovered by the Maritime Police's forensic diving unit during an internationally coordinated investigation. AIS data indicates the vessel had recently called at Puerto Moín, Costa Rica, before arriving in Europe.

30-07-26	RUSSIA	CONFLICT	Marshall Islands-flagged tanker NISSOS SIFNOS (IMO: 9884045) was reportedly struck while loading crude oil at the CPC Marine Terminal, resulting in a fire that was extinguished with assistance from support vessels. Separately, Malta-flagged tanker MARATHI (IMO: 9772357) was reportedly attacked while transiting Russian territorial waters en route to the terminal. According to the Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC), oil loading operations have been suspended while damage assessments continue.
29-07-26	GREECE	MIGRATION	Liberia-flagged general cargo vessel SAFI LION (IMO: 9616096) reportedly rescued a group of migrants from a small boat in distress south of Crete, Greece, following reports that the vessel had experienced engine failure and was taking on water. According to subsequent reports, SAFI LION initially remained at sea while coordinating with the relevant authorities regarding a place of disembarkation. The rescued migrants were later safely disembarked in Lavrio, Greece.
28-07-26	UKRAINE	CONFLICT	A Liberia-flagged civilian vessel was reportedly struck while at anchor off Odesa. According to Ukrainian authorities, the vessel was anchored without crew or cargo and had previously been damaged in two separate Russian attacks. Separately, the Russian Ministry of Defence claimed UAV strikes against two dry cargo vessels transporting military cargo to Odesa and Chornomorsk.
27-07-26	UKRAINE	CONFLICT	The Russian Ministry of Defence (MoD) claimed that attack UAVs struck two dry cargo vessels unloading military cargo at the Port of Mykolaiv. No vessel identities, damage assessments or casualty information have been released.
27-07-26	UNITED KINGDOM	NARCOTICS	UK authorities seized approximately 477kg of cocaine concealed aboard the container ship MAERSK BENGUELA following its arrival at Southampton Port. According to reports, the narcotics were loaded at Santa Marta, Colombia, before the vessel departed for Europe. The UK's National Crime Agency (NCA) has launched an investigation to identify those responsible for dispatching and receiving the shipment.
26-07-26	NORTHEAST OF SULINA	CONFLICT	Romanian armed forces shot down a suspected Russian UAV approximately 6–7nm northeast of Sulina after it reportedly violated Romanian airspace during a wider wave of Russian attacks against Ukraine. Romanian authorities stated this was the third Russian UAV intercepted in three days.
25-07-26	UKRAINE	CONFLICT	The Russian Ministry of Defence (MoD) claimed overnight strikes against port infrastructure and merchant vessels at the Ports of Odesa, Chornomorsk and Mykolaiv. According to the MoD, the operation targeted military cargo storage facilities, a dry cargo vessel, a Ukrainian Navy landing craft and additional merchant vessels transporting military cargo.
25-07-26	UKRAINE	CONFLICT	A Palau-flagged merchant vessel carrying approximately 2,800 tonnes of maize was reportedly struck twice by Russian UAVs while departing a port in Odesa Region. According to Ukrainian authorities, the strikes caused a fire onboard. Seven crew members and a Ukrainian pilot were rescued, while search and rescue operations continued for two missing seafarers.
24-07-26	UKRAINE	CONFLICT	The Russian Ministry of Defence (MoD) claims Russian armed forces conducted overnight strikes against military-related infrastructure at the Ports of Odesa, Izmail, and Mykolaiv. According to the MoD, the attacks destroyed fuel storage facilities supporting the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) at Odesa. At Izmail, the MoD claimed Russian forces struck military logistics facilities, three depots containing unmanned surface vessels (USVs), including a Magura USV, and a floating dock used to store and launch unmanned underwater vehicles. The MoD further claimed that a dry cargo vessel delivering military supplies was struck while unloading at the Port of Mykolaiv. The Russian claims have not been independently verified.
24-07-26	CASPIAN SEA	CONFLICT	Ukraine's Security Service (SBU) claimed to have struck the Russia-flagged general cargo vessels PORT OLYA 2 (IMO: 9481881) and BEGEY (IMO: 8943210) during a long-range UAV operation in the Caspian Sea. According to the SBU, both vessels were transporting military cargo between Iran and Russia.
23-07-26	ROMANIAN EEZ	CONFLICT	Liberia-flagged bulk carrier CHRISTINA B. (IMO: 9304162) sustained damage approximately 22nm southeast of Sfântu Gheorghe, within Romania's EEZ. According to the Romanian Department for Emergency Situations (DSU), the vessel was transporting coal after departing Norfolk, US, and was operating on a voyage to Ukraine when it reported damage to cargo hold No. 6 and requested assistance. However, AIS data showed the vessel's declared destination as Sulina, Romania, despite its reported 14.3 m draft exceeding Sulina's maximum permissible draft, suggesting the AIS destination may not have reflected the vessel's final intended port. Romanian authorities subsequently confirmed there were no injuries, the crew no longer required evacuation, and the vessel was able to proceed towards shore for inspection and repairs. According to the DSU, preliminary assessments suggest the damage may have resulted from either the impact of a maritime drone or the explosion of a drifting sea mine, although the exact circumstances remain under investigation.
23-07-26	SPAIN	NARCOTICS	Spanish authorities have dismantled an organised drug trafficking network that allegedly exploited regular ferry services through the Port of Palma to transport

			narcotics from Catalonia to Mallorca. According to the Guardia Civil, the investigation began after officers intercepted a vehicle arriving by ferry at the port carrying 44kg of cocaine concealed within a false compartment, leading investigators to uncover a wider trafficking network using commercial passenger ferries to move illicit cargo concealed inside vehicles. The operation resulted in the arrest of 21 individuals, while authorities seized 303kg of cocaine, 20kg of hashish, approximately €400,000 in cash, 22 luxury vehicles, and three firearms.
22-07-26	UKRAINE	CONFLICT	The Russian MoD claimed its forces conducted strikes against port infrastructure and merchant vessels in Odesa and Chornomorsk. According to the ministry, the strikes targeted a dry cargo vessel unloading at Chornomorsk Port, loading and storage facilities at Odesa Port, fuel and lubricant storage tanks, and a further dry cargo vessel and a bulk carrier allegedly transporting military cargo to Odesa. The claims have not been independently verified.
22-07-26	NORTHERN BLACK SEA	CONFLICT	Russia and Ukraine have both claimed strikes against merchant vessels and port infrastructure in the Black Sea between 21-22 July. According to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Ukrainian forces struck one tanker and four cargo vessels associated with Russia's shadow fleet in the Black Sea and Sea of Azov. Separately, the Russian Ministry of Defence claimed its forces targeted at least one bulk carrier and two dry cargo vessels supporting the Ukrainian Armed Forces, including two vessels near Odesa, one vessel in Mykolaiv Port, and port infrastructure in Odesa, Chornomorsk, and Mykolaiv. Neither side has provided independently verifiable evidence confirming the reported impacts.
21-07-26	RUSSIA	CONFLICT	The Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC) has reportedly ceased accepting crude deliveries after suspending tanker loading operations at its Black Sea terminal near Novorossiysk, with industry sources indicating that onshore storage has reached capacity. The disruption follows a series of attacks on tankers at the terminal, while at least two crude tankers awaiting cargo have reportedly altered their voyages. The reported suspension is likely to prolong disruption to commercial tanker traffic at the CPC terminal following attacks on the NORDIC ZENITH, ASIA, NISSOS IOS, and NELSA between 17-20 July. Although no production cuts have been announced, vessels scheduled to load at the terminal are likely to face continued delays or voyage amendments until loading operations resume.
21-07-26	ITALY	NARCOTICS	Italian authorities seized more than 770kg of pure cocaine concealed within a refrigerated container at the Port of Vado Ligure. The operation was conducted by the Guardia di Finanza, in cooperation with the Customs and Monopolies Agency (ADM), after officers discovered 650 packages of cocaine hidden amongst pallets of bananas in a container that had arrived from Ecuador. According to the authorities, the seizure represents one of the largest narcotics interceptions at the Port of Vado Ligure in recent years. The cocaine has an estimated street value of approximately EUR 250 million, while investigations are ongoing to identify those responsible for the attempted importation.
20-07-26	BLACK SEA	CONFLICT	Liberia-flagged LPG carrier GAS LISBON was struck late evening while transiting the Black Sea, approximately 20nm off the Romanian coast, while en route from Alexandria, Egypt, to Reni, Ukraine. The vessel was carrying 3,790 tonnes of propane when the incident caused significant damage and a fire in the superstructure. All 17 crew members were evacuated by Romanian search and rescue assets, while three injured crew members were hospitalised. Romanian President Nicușor Dan stated that the incident was "most likely" linked to Russia's ongoing war against Ukraine, although the circumstances remain under investigation. A tug has been deployed to prevent the vessel from drifting and posing a hazard to navigation.
20-07-26	RUSSIA	CONFLICT	Cameroon-flagged tanker NELSA (IMO: 9408205) was struck by a Ukrainian drone while loading at a single-point mooring at the CPC terminal near Novorossiysk. The strike caused a fire on the vessel's starboard side, which was extinguished by the crew and emergency teams. The 22-member crew was evacuated, except for the captain and chief officer, while the vessel remained afloat. No oil spill was reported. Following the attack, the CPC again suspended oil loading operations after only briefly resuming them following the tanker attacks on 19 July.
20-07-26	BLACK SEA / SEA OF AZOV	CONFLICT	Ukraine claimed to have targeted seven Russian-linked shadow fleet vessels overnight, comprising three tankers and four dry cargo vessels operating in the Black Sea and Sea of Azov. No vessel identities or damage assessments have been released at this time. Ukraine further claimed that 183 shadow fleet vessels have been targeted since 1 July, including 119 in the Sea of Azov and 64 in the Black Sea. Ukrainian authorities also assessed that repeated strikes have reduced the operational capacity of the Kerch ferry crossing by approximately 75%.
19-07-26	UKRAINE	CONFLICT	Guinea-Bissau-flagged general cargo vessel GOLDEN LEO (IMO: 9181833) suffered a Russian rocket attack after departing Odesa, Ukraine, having loaded a cargo of corn. According to Ukrainian authorities, the vessel was carrying 17 Syrian and Indian nationals and one Ukrainian pilot. A large fire subsequently broke out on board.

			Ukrainian naval forces rescued eight crew members, including two injured personnel who were hospitalised in Odesa. Authorities reported 10 fatalities following the attack.
19-07-26	RUSSIA	CONFLICT	Liberia-flagged tankers ASIA and NISSOS IOS were reportedly attacked by drones while conducting loading operations at the CPC marine terminal off Novorossiysk, Russia. According to the CPC, both tankers were loading crude oil transported from Kazakhstan via the CPC pipeline and were struck during loading operations. A fire subsequently broke out aboard ASIA, which was later extinguished. Both vessels reportedly remain afloat, with no injuries, fatalities or pollution reported. Following the attack, the CPC suspended all oil loading operations at the terminal. The consortium has not attributed responsibility for the incident.
16-07-26	BLACK SEA & SEA OF AZOV	CONFLICT	Ukrainian maritime drones struck 11 Russian vessels overnight, comprising five oil tankers, one LNG tanker, three bulk carriers and two tugboats operating in the Black Sea and Sea of Azov. Brovdi stated that the operation forms part of Ukraine's wider campaign to disrupt Russian maritime logistics, adding that 147 vessels have reportedly been struck since 6 July, including 117 in the Sea of Azov and 30 in the Black Sea. The extent of damage to the targeted vessels has not been independently verified. The reported operation forms part of a broader maritime escalation in the Black Sea. Over recent days, Russian forces have intensified strikes against Ukraine's port infrastructure, including attacks on Odesa that damaged multiple civilian merchant vessels and port facilities. These included the Tanzania-flagged general cargo vessel ATLAS BEY (IMO: 8302404) on 14 July, whose Azerbaijani master was killed, a Togo-flagged cargo vessel struck while unloading mineral fertilisers with several casualties on 13 July, and a Marshall Islands-flagged civilian vessel, which sustained damage to its superstructure after being hit by a UAV on 14 July. Russia has also claimed strikes against Chornomorsk, targeting port infrastructure used for military cargo handling on 12 July.
15-07-26	UKRAINE	CONFLICT	Port infrastructure in the Odesa region was targeted during an overnight combined missile and UAV attack, according to Odesa Governor Oleh Kiper, marking the fifth consecutive day of reported strikes across the region. The extent of damage to port infrastructure and any impact on maritime operations remain unclear at this time. The wider attack also damaged residential, industrial and energy infrastructure. Three people were killed and at least three others injured, while emergency and utility services are responding to the aftermath of the strikes.
14-07-26	RUSSIA	CONFLICT	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines-flagged containership INTER SYDNEY (IMO: 9169500) was approached by an unmanned surface vessel (USV) while manoeuvring off Novorossiysk, Russia. According to the Master, the vessel altered course towards the coast while notifying Novorossiysk Port Control, which instructed the ship to continue manoeuvring to distract the USV. The Master further reported that a Russian military aircraft subsequently engaged and destroyed the unmanned craft. No casualties or damage were reported, and the vessel remains safe while continuing to monitor the situation.
11-07-26	RUSSIA	CONFLICT	Four vessels of various types were attacked by Ukrainian UAVs in Taganrog Bay overnight, according to Russian regional officials. One crew member aboard a support vessel was killed during the attack. Russian authorities also stated that air defence units intercepted more than 15 UAVs over Taganrog, as well as the Azov and Neklinovsky districts. The identities of the affected vessels and the extent of any damage or disruption to maritime operations have not been disclosed.
09-07-26	RUSSIA	CONFLICT	Two tankers in Taganrog Bay were struck by Ukrainian UAVs overnight between 8-9 July, resulting in mechanical damage and onboard fires, according to Yuri Slyusar, Governor of the Rostov Region. According to Slyusar, the crews were evacuated, and no injuries were reported. Preliminary information indicates the fire aboard one tanker had been extinguished, while firefighting efforts were continuing on the second vessel. Slyusar also stated that Russian air defences intercepted more than 20 UAVs across Rostov Oblast during the attack. The full extent of the damage to the vessels and any impact on maritime operations remains under assessment.
09-07-26	ITALY	NARCOTICS	Italian authorities seized approximately 113kg of cocaine concealed within a containerised shipment of plastic pellets from Latin America during an inspection at the Port of Gioia Tauro. The operation, conducted by the Guardia di Finanza and Customs officials with the support of scanning equipment and canine units, reportedly prevented drugs with an estimated street value of EUR 20 million from reaching the illicit market. Investigations into the trafficking network are ongoing.
08-07-26	RUSSIA	CONFLICT	The Turkish-owned Marshall Islands-flagged tanker YASA POLARIS was reportedly struck by a Ukrainian drone while approaching the Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC) terminal off Novorossiysk to load crude oil, as was reported by the managing company. The drone reportedly impacted the vessel's superstructure. The tanker, which was in ballast, sustained no critical damage, with no injuries or pollution reported, and subsequently continued under its own power. Chevron, which had

			chartered the vessel, acknowledged an incident in the vicinity of the CPC loading facilities and stated that export operations were not disrupted.
08-07-26	UKRAINE	CONFLICT	Russian forces reportedly conducted a strike against the Port of Odesa, causing damage to port infrastructure, according to Serhiy Lysak, Head of the Odesa Regional Military Administration. Local authorities reported that the attack resulted in two fatalities and two injuries. At the time of reporting, the full extent of damage to port infrastructure, or any impact on commercial shipping operations has not been disclosed.
08-07-26	STRAIT OF GIBRALTAR	NARCOTICS	French Navy seized approximately 2.4 tonnes of cannabis resin following the interception of a go-fast vessel in the Atlantic Ocean near the Strait of Gibraltar. According to the Atlantic Maritime Prefecture, the French amphibious helicopter carrier Diksmuide detected the suspicious vessel and deployed an embarked Caiman helicopter to conduct an inspection. After the vessel failed to comply with orders to stop, the helicopter fired warning shots in accordance with the applicable legal framework. Although the go-fast escaped, its crew jettisoned 58 bales of cannabis resin into the sea before fleeing. French naval personnel subsequently recovered the narcotics and destroyed them onboard to prevent their retrieval by the traffickers.
07-07-26	SEA OF AZOV	CONFLICT	Ukraine's Unmanned Systems Forces (USF) claimed to have conducted a large-scale drone operation targeting eight tankers, one dry cargo vessel, and one ferry reportedly supporting Russian logistics in the Sea of Azov overnight. According to the USF, the operation targeted the tankers VENUS-3, SANAR-1, SANAR-17, KLYMENA, TETI, ALEXEI SAVRASOV, and PENELOPE, while the identity of an eighth tanker has not been disclosed. Ukrainian authorities stated that the vessels were transporting fuel to Russian-occupied Crimea and alleged that they formed part of Russia's so-called shadow fleet.
07-07-26	BELGIUM	NARCOTICS	Spanish and Dutch authorities dismantled an international drug trafficking network after seizing approximately 947kg of MDMA concealed within industrial machinery destined for shipment from the Port of Antwerp to Ghana. Investigators assessed that the narcotics were intended to transit through West Africa before being exchanged for cocaine in South America. The joint operation resulted in the arrest of 15 suspects and is regarded as the largest MDMA seizure in European history.
06-07-26	RUSSIA	CONFLICT	Ukrainian forces reportedly conducted drone strikes targeting the Baltic Sea ports of Ust-Luga and Vysotsk. Regional authorities reported that drones caused damage at both ports, while Russian air defences were activated during the attacks. The extent of the damage and any impact on port operations, oil export infrastructure or commercial shipping remain unconfirmed.
06-07-26	CRIMEA	CONFLICT	Ukrainian forces conducted a drone attack against Sevastopol, Crimea, resulting in a temporary power outage across parts of the city. Local authorities stated that electricity supplies were subsequently restored. Preliminary information from Russian sources indicated no damage to the Port of Sevastopol or Black Sea Fleet facilities; however, Ukrainian sources reported that maritime vessels in the Sea of Azov were targeted.
04-07-26	RUSSIA	CONFLICT	Ukrainian forces reportedly conducted a large-scale drone attack targeting the St Petersburg region overnight. Russian authorities confirmed that the city's oil terminal was struck and reported a separate drone strike in the vicinity of Vysotsk Port, a major Baltic Sea port handling oil, LNG, coal, and grain. No casualties were reported, while the extent of any damage to port infrastructure or disruption to maritime operations remains unconfirmed.

AMERICAS

OVERVIEW, JULY 2026

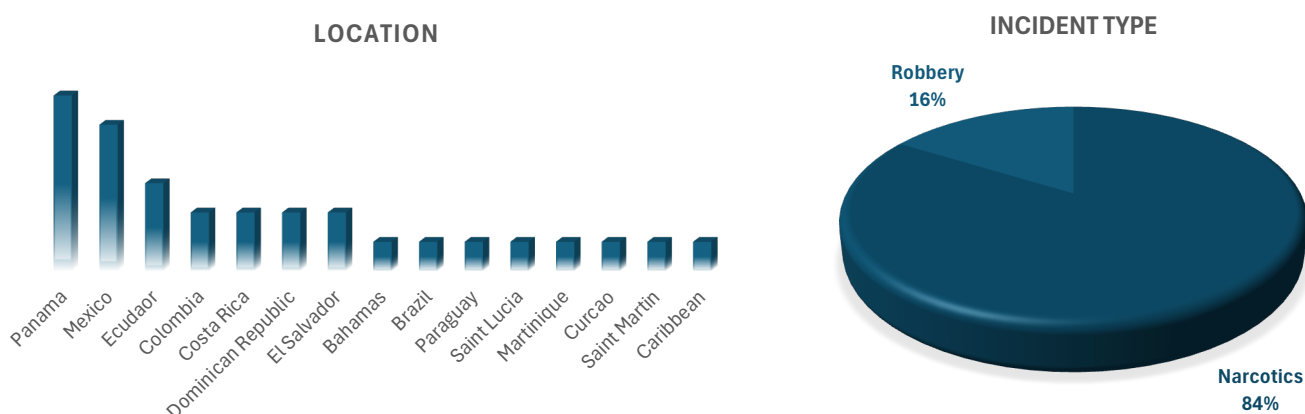
Maritime security reporting across the Americas during July was overwhelmingly dominated by narcotics trafficking, particularly large-scale cocaine movements through the Eastern Pacific, Caribbean and major container ports. Significant interdictions were recorded across Mexico, Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic, frequently involving multi-tonne shipments transported aboard go-fast vessels or concealed within legitimate containerised trade.

The Eastern Pacific remained the principal trafficking corridor, with repeated maritime seizures off Mexico, Colombia, Ecuador, Costa Rica and El Salvador. Mexican authorities alone intercepted several large shipments off the Pacific coast, while Colombian and Ecuadorian operations recovered multiple tonnes of cocaine. Panama remained particularly prominent as both a trafficking and transshipment hub, with narcotics intercepted aboard small vessels, at Pacific ports and within containers transiting the Panama Canal. A notable seizure involved

approximately 1.13 tonnes of cocaine aboard a merchant vessel transiting from Peru towards Antwerp, illustrating the continued exploitation of legitimate commercial shipping routes connecting Latin America with Europe.

The Caribbean similarly remained exposed to high-volume maritime narcotics trafficking, with significant seizures around the Bahamas and Dominican Republic and wider joint interdiction activity involving US and regional authorities. Trafficking methods ranged from high-speed craft and offshore transfers to sophisticated concealment within commercial containers, reflecting the adaptability of organised criminal networks and the continued importance of maritime routes for moving narcotics towards North American and European markets.

Away from narcotics, opportunistic robbery and theft continued to affect recreational vessels, particularly around Caribbean anchorages. Dinghies, outboard engines and yachts were targeted in Saint Lucia, Martinique, Curaçao, Saint Martin and Panama, generally while vessels were unattended or crews were asleep. These incidents remained comparatively low-level but reinforce the persistent security risk to yachts and recreational traffic operating around poorly secured anchorages.



MARITIME INCIDENTS, JULY 2026

30-07-26	PANAMA	NARCOTICS	Panamanian authorities seized approximately 1.13 tonnes of cocaine concealed within a container aboard a merchant vessel transiting the Panama Canal en route from Peru to Antwerp, Belgium. According to the Attorney General's Office and the National Aeronaval Service (SENAN), officers identified irregularities with the container's security seal before discovering 1,130 packages of cocaine hidden among the declared cargo. Authorities stated that the differing logos displayed on the packages indicate the shipment was linked to multiple criminal organisations. Investigations remain ongoing.
29-07-26	MEXICO	NARCOTICS	Mexican authorities seized approximately 1.14 tonnes of cocaine and 840 litres of fuel from a small vessel during a maritime interdiction operation off the coast of Chiapas. Three suspects were detained. According to the Mexican Navy (SEMAR), the seizure prevented an estimated 2.28 million doses of cocaine from reaching the illicit market and represented a significant financial loss to organised criminal groups. Investigations into the trafficking operation remain ongoing.
29-07-26	PARAGUAY	NARCOTICS	Paraguayan authorities, in coordination with the Public Prosecutor's Office and the National Police, seized 509kg of cocaine concealed in 24 tons of grain sacks at the private port of Villeta. The narcotics were discovered in 1,363 packages of approximately 250g each, wrapped in plastic film and impregnated with animal fat to evade detection. The shipment, valued at USD \$20m, was destined for the Netherlands. Authorities noted the exporting company was relatively new and on only its fourth shipment. One individual was arrested.
27-07-26	ECUADOR	NARCOTICS	Ecuadorian authorities seized approximately 2.49 tonnes of cocaine hydrochloride concealed within a container at Puerto Bolívar destined for Europe. According to the National Police, the narcotics were hidden among cartons of fruit and discovered during a container inspection conducted with the support of specialised anti-narcotics, canine and forensic units. Authorities stated that the seizure prevented an estimated 230,030 doses from reaching international markets and represented an estimated value of USD 136.65 million in the European market. Investigations into those responsible remain ongoing.
25-07-26	BAHAMAS	NARCOTICS	The crew of US Coast Guard Cutter CHARLES SEXTON, in coordination with the Royal Bahamian Defence Force, interdicted a suspected drug-smuggling vessel approximately 80NM southwest of Great Inagua, Bahamas. Authorities seized approximately 2,380lbs

			(1,079kg) of marijuana, estimated to be worth USD 2.8 million, and detained three suspects for prosecution. The interdiction highlights continued counter-narcotics operations targeting trafficking routes through the Caribbean.
24-07-26	SAINT LUCIA	ROBBERY	A dinghy and its 18HP Nissan outboard motor were stolen from a yacht while anchored in Rodney Bay, Gros Islet, Saint Lucia, at approximately 0401 local time. According to a first-hand report, the dinghy had been left in the water and secured with a cable lock while the owners slept onboard. The following morning, the owners located the stolen dinghy on the deck of a nearby yacht and successfully recovered it. The suspect reportedly departed the area heading northbound before authorities arrived.
24-07-26	OFF COLOMBIA	NARCOTICS	Colombian naval authorities intercepted a suspected drug-smuggling vessel in the Eastern Pacific Ocean off the Colombian coast, seizing approximately 3.6 tonnes of cocaine. The suspects were detained and the narcotics transferred to the relevant authorities for further legal proceedings. The interdiction highlights the continued use of the Eastern Pacific maritime corridor by organised criminal groups to facilitate large-scale cocaine shipments destined for international markets and reflects sustained regional efforts to disrupt maritime trafficking networks.
23-07-26	MARTINIQUE	ROBBERY	A dinghy and its 2.5HP Suzuki outboard motor were stolen from a yacht anchored at St. Anne, Martinique, at approximately 0100 local time. According to a second-hand report, the dinghy had been left in the water and was not secured at the time of the incident. The theft occurred overnight while the yacht was at anchor. No further details regarding the incident or the perpetrators have been reported.
22-07-26	OFF THE PACIFIC COAST OF EL SALVADOR	NARCOTICS	The Salvadoran Navy intercepted a suspected drug-smuggling vessel in international waters off the Pacific coast of El Salvador, seizing approximately 1.36 tonnes of cocaine. Several suspects were detained during the operation and transferred to the relevant judicial authorities, while the narcotics were confiscated. The seizure forms part of ongoing regional counter-narcotics operations targeting maritime trafficking routes used by transnational organised crime groups to transport cocaine from South America towards North America and Europe.
21-07-26	MEXICO	NARCOTICS	The Mexican Secretariat of the Navy (SEMAR) intercepted a small vessel carrying approximately 1,530kg of cocaine during a maritime and aerial patrol conducted approximately 150nm southwest of Puerto Chiapas, in the Pacific Ocean. During the operation, naval personnel detained five individuals and seized 51 packages of cocaine together with three outboard engines. The vessel, narcotics, and detainees were transferred to the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office for further legal proceedings. According to SEMAR, the seizure prevented the distribution of an estimated 3.06 million doses and represented an estimated financial loss of more than MXN 335 million to organised criminal groups.
18-07-26	EL SALVADOR	NARCOTICS	The Salvadoran National Navy intercepted a small motorised vessel carrying approximately 1.36 tonnes of cocaine in international waters, approximately 947nm southwest of Bocana El Cordoncillo, El Salvador. The operation resulted in the detention of two Ecuadorian nationals and the seizure of narcotics with an estimated value of USD 34 million. According to the Salvadoran authorities, the vessel was intercepted on 17 July during a maritime counter-narcotics patrol. The detainees and seized narcotics have been transferred to the relevant authorities for legal proceedings. The seizure forms part of El Salvador's ongoing maritime operations targeting transnational narcotics trafficking routes in the eastern Pacific Ocean.
17-07-26	OFF COLOMBIA	NARCOTICS	The Colombian Navy seized approximately 3.60 tonnes of cocaine during two separate maritime interdiction operations in the Caribbean Sea, with authorities assessing the larger shipment to be linked to the Clan del Golfo. In the first operation, a maritime patrol aircraft detected a go-fast vessel carrying approximately 3.12 tonnes of cocaine concealed in 124 bales, enabling coast guard units to intercept the vessel and arrest five individuals. In a separate operation, naval personnel recovered a further 474kg of cocaine concealed within a double-bottom compartment aboard an abandoned vessel hidden in the mangroves of San Bernardo Island. Authorities are continuing investigations into both seizures and the suspected criminal networks involved.
16-07-26	PANAMA	NARCOTICS	Panamanian authorities seized 650 packages of illicit narcotics onboard a narco-vessel intercepted southeast of Punta Coco in the Pearl Archipelago. The vessel was detected exhibiting suspicious behaviour and was subsequently boarded, with three individuals onboard arrested.
15-07-26	PANAMA	NARCOTICS	Panamanian authorities seized 834 packages of illicit narcotics onboard a narco-vessel intercepted off the Pacific coast near Darién during patrol operations. The vessel was detected during territorial control activities and subsequently boarded, where the narcotics were found concealed within refrigerated compartments used for storing fish and packed in coloured sacks. One Colombian and two Panamanian nationals was arrested.
15-07-26	PANAMA	NARCOTICS	Panamanian authorities, with the assistance of narco-sniffer dogs, seized one tonne of illicit narcotics concealed in 999 packages within a maritime container intercepted at a

			Pacific port. The narcotics were hidden inside 20 black suitcases within the container, which was transiting through Panama from Charleston, USA to Callao, Peru.
14-07-26	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	NARCOTICS	Dominican authorities seized approximately 1.6 tonnes of cocaine onboard a speedboat intercepted off Playa Blanca in Pedernales province. The narcotics were contained in 1,670 packages within 57 bales onboard the vessel. The 32-foot vessel, equipped with twin outboard engines and advanced communication equipment, was detected and subsequently pursued, with suspects opening fire before fleeing.
13-07-26	ECUADOR	NARCOTICS	The Ecuadorian Navy intercepted a vessel carrying approximately 2.72 tonnes of cocaine in Ecuador's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), off the coast of Esmeraldas, during a maritime security operation. Personnel aboard the missile corvette BAE MANABI boarded the vessel and discovered 2,358 packages of cocaine concealed inside plastic drums. Authorities also seized two GPS navigation devices, four mobile phones, and USD 199 in cash. Six individuals aboard the vessel were arrested and have since been placed in pretrial detention on charges of illicit drug trafficking.
12-07-26	COSTA RICA	NARCOTICS	Costa Rican authorities seized approximately 3.7 tonnes of cocaine onboard two speedboats intercepted at Playa Guápil in Savegre, Quepos. The vessels were detected operating along Pacific trafficking routes from South America and were subsequently intercepted onshore, where the narcotics were recovered. Six individuals onboard were arrested and both vessels were seized.
10-07-26	ECUADOR	NARCOTICS	Ecuadorian authorities seized over 500kg of cocaine concealed within a container with signs of tampered security seals at Posorja Port. The narcotics were packed in 620 rectangular blocks hidden inside 20 suitcases and three jute sacks within the container. No arrests were reported.
10-07-26	PANAMA	NARCOTICS	Panamanian authorities seized 992 packages of illicit narcotics onboard a narco-vessel intercepted southwest of San José Island in the Las Perlas Archipelago during maritime patrol operations. The vessel was detected exhibiting suspicious behaviour and was subsequently boarded, where the narcotics were observed onboard. Two individuals onboard were arrested.
10-07-26	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	NARCOTICS	Dominican authorities seized 151 packages of cocaine onboard a speedboat intercepted several nautical miles south of Bani in Peravia province. The narcotics were contained within five bales onboard the 32-foot vessel, while additional bales were reportedly discarded overboard during the interception. Authorities also recovered equipment including fuel tanks, jerrycans, communication devices and GPS units from the vessel. Two individuals onboard, both Dominican nationals, were arrested.
09-07-26	CARIBBEAN SEA	NARCOTICS	A joint counter-narcotics operation involving the Dominican Republic and the United States resulted in the interception of a suspected go-fast vessel in the Caribbean Sea. Following detection by a Dominican Republic maritime patrol aircraft, the suspects reportedly jettisoned their cargo before Dominican interception units gained control of the vessel and recovered the contraband. Authorities seized more than 2,124lbs (approximately 963kg) of marijuana and 13.6kg of cocaine, while two suspected smugglers were detained. The operation was coordinated by the Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-S) as part of ongoing efforts to disrupt transnational maritime drug trafficking in the region.
09-07-26	COSTA RICA	NARCOTICS	Costa Rican authorities seized approximately 1.9 tonnes of cocaine onboard the speedboat POSEIDON intercepted around 175nm off Cabo Blanco in the Pacific. The narcotics were contained in 1,901 packages onboard the vessel. The speedboat, equipped with four outboard engines and carrying over 20 fuel barrels. Three Colombian nationals were arrested.
09-07-26	CURACAO	ROBBERY	A dinghy at anchor was boarded by an unknown number of perpetrators and a Hangkai 6HP outboard motor was stolen in Santa Marta, Curacao. The incident was reported to local police and Coast Guard.
08-07-26	MEXICO	NARCOTICS	Mexican federal authorities seized approximately 1,187kg of suspected cocaine aboard a merchant vessel at the Port of Lázaro Cárdenas, Michoacán. The consignment was reportedly valued at more than MXN 259 million and was assessed to be linked to organised criminal activity. No further details regarding the vessel, concealment method or arrests have been reported.
08-07-26	PANAMA	ROBBERY	An unsecured vessel at anchor was boarded by an unknown number of perpetrators and a dinghy with its outboard motor was stolen in Bocas del Toro, Panama. The dinghy was later recovered near Las Olas without the engine and returned to the owner.
06-07-26	BRAZIL	NARCOTICS	Brazilian federal authorities seized a combined 448kg of cocaine during two separate operations at the Port of Santos. In the first incident, customs officers discovered 11kg of cocaine aboard the Malta-flagged containership CMA CGM MISSISSIPPI during an inspection. The vessel had arrived from Paranaguá and was reportedly destined for Tangier, Morocco. In a separate operation, authorities recovered a further 437kg of cocaine concealed within a shipment of scrap iron bound for the United Arab Emirates. No arrests were reported.
03-07-26	MEXICO	NARCOTICS	Mexican authorities, supported by a long-range maritime patrol aircraft, intercepted two suspected drug-smuggling go-fast vessels off the west coast of Mexico. The operation

			resulted in the seizure of more than 6,000lbs (approximately 2.7 tonnes) of cocaine and the arrest of four individuals. The interdiction was conducted as part of ongoing counter-narcotics operations in the eastern Pacific.
02-07-26	SAINT MARTIN	ROBBERY	Poland-flagged sailing yacht ABRACADABRA was reportedly stolen overnight from Marigot Bay, Saint Martin (France). The stolen vessel is described as a Beneteau First 47.7 with a dark blue hull, white decks, and a dark stackpack. The theft was reported to the Police, Port Captain, and Coast Guard, and the vessel remains outstanding.
02-07-26	PANAMA	ROBBERY	An unoccupied private sailing yacht was broken into overnight while anchored at the South Anchorage in Bocas del Toro, Panama. The perpetrators initially attempted to force entry through a locked hatch before locating a concealed spare key, allowing them to gain access to the vessel.
01-07-26	MEXICO	NARCOTICS	Mexican Navy (SEMAR) units seized approximately 1.2 tonnes of cocaine during two maritime interdiction operations conducted off the coast of Chiapas. Authorities arrested eight suspects, reportedly from Ecuador and Guatemala, during the operations. In the first interdiction, authorities seized 860 kg of cocaine concealed in 29 bundles and detained four suspects. A second operation intercepted a speedboat carrying 384 kg of cocaine in 13 bundles, resulting in the arrest of four additional suspects. During the pursuit, one of the suspect vessels reportedly capsized, scattering packages into the Pacific Ocean, where some were later recovered by fishermen and local residents near Mazatán.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

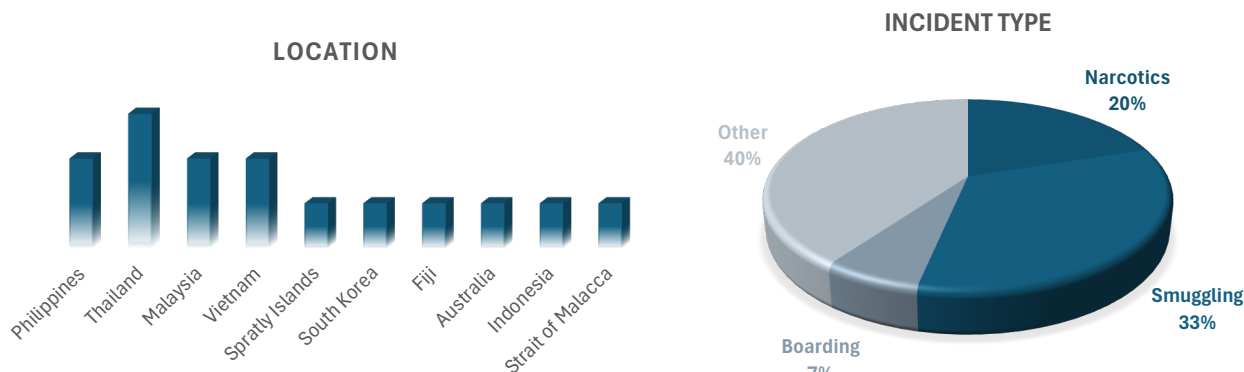
OVERVIEW, JULY 2026

Maritime security across Southeast Asia and Oceania during July was characterised by a mixture of smuggling, narcotics trafficking and marine casualties, with enforcement activity particularly concentrated in the Philippines, Malaysia and Thailand. Smuggling remained a persistent issue, involving illicit cigarettes, fuel and prohibited goods moved aboard small craft and through commercial ports. Particularly significant was the seizure of 25 containers of illicit cigarettes worth approximately USD 15.9 million in Cebu, while Thai and Malaysian authorities continued to intercept vessels involved in cross-border fuel smuggling.

Narcotics trafficking remained an important regional threat, with significant seizures demonstrating the continued use of maritime routes and commercial supply chains. Malaysian authorities intercepted approximately 114kg of methamphetamine apparently destined for Indonesia, while Thai authorities discovered around 1.6 tonnes of cannabis concealed within export containers at Laem Chabang Port destined for the Netherlands. Cocaine packages washing ashore across Fiji also pointed to the continued exploitation of South Pacific trafficking routes.

A notable proportion of incidents involved marine casualties and adverse weather, particularly in the South China Sea. Vessels sank off Vietnam, Thailand and the Spratly Islands, resulting in fatalities and missing crew, while other incidents required substantial search and rescue operations. These events highlight the heightened seasonal operational risks associated with monsoon conditions and severe weather across the region.

Traditional maritime crime was comparatively limited, although the unauthorised boarding of PM CROWN in the Strait of Malacca, during which the engine room was ransacked and spare parts stolen, demonstrates that opportunistic boarding remains a credible threat along major regional shipping routes. Separately, South Korea's seizure of PRADA for alleged violations of UN sanctions relating to North Korea highlighted the continued enforcement risk facing vessels involved in potentially sanctions-linked trade.



MARITIME INCIDENTS, JULY 2026

27-07-26	PHILIPPINES	SMUGGLING	Philippine authorities intercepted a boat carrying a substantial number of master cases of illegal goods and cigarettes, valued at approximately USD 119,703, during a suspected domestic smuggling operation off Barangay. Three suspects were apprehended, and the boat was seized.
25-07-26	SPRATLY ISLANDS	OTHER	The Vietnam-flagged cargo vessel KHOI NGUYEN 18 (IMO: 9846354) sank during heavy weather off Yongshu Reef in the Spratly Islands. 45 people were rescued, while 17 remained missing. Vietnamese authorities initiated a search and rescue operation.
24-07-26	MALAYSIA	NARCOTICS	Malaysian Marine Police intercepted a fibreglass boat carrying approximately 113.8kg of methamphetamine, valued at around RM6.12 million, during an operation off Pulau Rimau. Two Indonesian nationals were arrested and authorities assessed the shipment was destined for Indonesia.
24-07-26	VIETNAM	OTHER	A Vietnamese vessel sank off Ly Son Island, Quang Ngai Province, after reportedly encountering adverse weather conditions. Thirty-three crewmembers were rescued by responding authorities and nearby vessels, while three remained missing at the time of reporting. Vietnamese maritime authorities launched a search and rescue operation. The incident highlights the continued operational risks posed by adverse weather conditions to vessels operating in the South China Sea during the seasonal monsoon period.
22-07-26	SOUTH KOREA	OTHER	South Korean authorities announced the seizure of the cargo vessel PRADA following an investigation that found it had violated United Nations sanctions relating to North Korea. The vessel, detained after entering Pyeongtaek Port, remains under government control.
20-07-26	THAILAND	NARCOTICS	Thai customs authorities seized approximately 1.6 tonnes of dried cannabis buds concealed within two export containers at Laem Chabang Port, Chon Buri Province, that were destined for the Netherlands. According to the Customs Department, the exporter declared the shipment as 626 packages of blankets and duvet covers weighing a combined 32,390kg, with the narcotics discovered during a detailed inspection conducted in the presence of representatives from the shipping line and the port authority.
16-07-26	MALAYSIA	SMUGGLING	Malaysian authorities seized a vessel carrying approximately 360 litres of petrol off Sandakan. According to the authorities, the fuel was stored in 18 jerrycans, and the vessel was unable to produce valid documentation for the cargo. Two suspects reportedly escaped before they could be apprehended. The vessel was seized, while investigations into the suspected fuel smuggling operation remain ongoing.
13-07-26	THAILAND	SMUGGLING	Thai authorities seized 10,500 litres of untaxed diesel from two modified fishing vessels in Satun waters. The fuel was reportedly purchased from a Malaysian vessel near the Thai-Malaysian maritime boundary and smuggled into Thailand without paying excise tax. Two individuals were arrested, while both vessels and the fuel were confiscated.
11-07-26	PHILIPPINES	SMUGGLING	Philippine authorities, including the Bureau of Customs (BOC) and the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), seized 25 containers of illicit cigarettes valued at PHP 980 million (USD 15.9 million) from a container vessel at Gothong Wharf in Mandaue City, Cebu. No arrests were reported.
08-07-26	THAILAND	OTHER	A fishing vessel reportedly sank during adverse weather conditions off Samae San, Chon Buri Province, Thailand. Authorities responded to the incident, although no further information regarding the number of persons on board, casualties or pollution has been released.
07-07-26	FIJI	NARCOTICS	Fijian police recovered a package of suspected cocaine after it washed ashore on Namena Island, bringing the total number of similar parcels recovered across Fiji to 76. Authorities confirmed that all recovered packages have tested positive for cocaine and are working with the Australian Federal Police to determine the source and intended destination of the narcotics. The discovery forms part of an ongoing investigation into suspected maritime drug trafficking routes through the South Pacific.
06-07-26	VIETNAM	OTHER	A fishing vessel sank after colliding with a cargo vessel off Phan Thiet, Vietnam. Search and rescue operations were launched immediately, resulting in the rescue of 16 crew members, while one fatality was reported. The circumstances surrounding the collision remain under investigation.
06-07-26	AUSTRALIA	SMUGGLING	Australian Border Force (ABF) officers seized 426 prohibited weapons concealed within three shipping containers at Port Botany, Sydney. The containers, which originated in Asia and were declared as containing metal fittings, were identified for inspection following x-ray examinations. The seizure included 222 assisted-opening knives, 138 out-the-front knives, 30 trench knives, 12 flick knives, 12 daggers and 12 push knives. Authorities stated the shipment was intercepted before the weapons could enter the Australian community.
05-07-26	INDONESIA	OTHER	A passenger vessel experienced equipment failure and began taking on water while operating off Pari Island, Jakarta. Search and rescue authorities safely evacuated all 150 passengers, with no injuries reported. The vessel was subsequently taken under assistance.

05-07-26**STRAIT OF
MALACCA****BOARDING**

The Singapore-flagged tanker PM CROWN was subject to an unauthorised boarding while transiting the eastbound Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) in the Strait of Malacca. During routine checks, the crew discovered that the engine room had been ransacked, although no unauthorised persons were sighted onboard. All crew were reported safe and accounted for, while engine spare parts were found to have been stolen. The vessel did not require assistance and continued its voyage to Singapore.

Vanguard Technology

The Vanguard Tech team brings together over 30 years of experience within commercial shipping and the maritime domain. We share a passion for providing a new digital approach – the 'Digital Ocean' to how the commercial shipping industry understands and then deals with maritime risk in its many guises.

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