Piracy reporting and collaboration

Submitted by United States

	SUMMARY
Executive Summary:	The WWNWS, some RCCs, the International Maritime Bureau (IMB), United Kingdom Maritime Trade Organisation (UKMTO), the Maritime Security Centre Horn of Africa (MSCHOA), and probably several others report incidents of piracy to ships at sea. This paper summarizes the meeting between NAVAREA IV/XII and the IMB on 13 March 2015 that discussed piracy reporting and future collaboration.
Action to be taken:	WWNWS to increase coordination and improve lines of communication with the International Maritime Bureau Piracy Centre (IMBPC) and other organizations that collect and disseminate piracy information to ships.
Related documents:	IMO Resolution MSC.305(87), IMO Resolution A.1069(28), Best Management Practices 4 for Protection Against Somalia Based Piracy, MSC.1/Circ.1287--Resolution A.705(17)/Rev.1, MSC.1/Circ.1288/Rev.1—Resolution A.706(17).

1. BACKGROUND

1.1   IMO Resolution MSC.305(87) provides guidelines on operational procedures for the promulgation of Maritime Safety Information (MSI) concerning acts of piracy and piracy counter-measure operations. In its annex it states that MSI concerning acts of piracy and piracy counter-measure operations are broadcast through the World-Wide Navigational Warning Service (WWNWS) in accordance with the general guidance and requirements contained in MSC.1/Circ.1310: Joint IMO/IHO/WMO Manual on Maritime Safety Information (Joint MSI Manual). Draft messages concerning piracy and piracy counter-measures for input into the WWNWS should be routed through the Military Navigational Warning Coordinator (MNWC), if a Naval or military authority provided the information, to the Chairman of the IHO WWNWS-SC. Once the MNWC has forwarded information to the Chairman of the IHO WWNWS-SC for broadcast, the final decision on what to broadcast and how this is done rests with the NAVAREA or National Coordinator concerned.

1.2   Best Management Practices 4 (BMP4) recommends, if attacked by pirates off Somalia, to report the attack immediately to the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Organization (UKMTO) (+971 505 523 215). The UKMTO is the primary point of contact during an attack but the Maritime Security Centre Horn of Africa (MSCHOA) acts as a back-up contact point. Additionally, BMP4 recommends to send a distress message via Digital Selective Calling (DSC) and Inmarsat-C, as applicable; see BMP4 Section 9 for more information. Following any piracy attack or suspicious activity, BMP4 recommends that the Master provide a

detailed report of the event to UKMTO and MSCHOA. It further recommends providing a copy of the report to the IMB; see BMP4 Section 12 for more information.

1.3 IMO Resolution A.1069(28) requests governments to instruct national rescue coordination centres, information-sharing centres or other agencies involved on receipt of a report of an attack within the Gulf of Guinea, to promptly initiate the transmission of relevant advice and warnings (through the World-Wide Navigation Warning Service; the International SafetyNet Service; or any other appropriate means) to ships sailing in that area, so as to warn shipping in the immediate area of the attack.

2. COMMENTS (Meeting summary between NAVAREA IV/XII and the IMB)

2.1. Discussed the process flow of information from the IMB to mariners and from NAVAREA Coordinators, through the WWNWS, to mariners.

2.2. IMB noted it only disseminates information it receives directly from ships, not from press or other sources that would require independent validation from the ship.

2.3. Discussed the timeliness of reporting piracy events and information as they relate to the WWNWS: the notification process from MSCHOA to the WWNWS varied widely with respect to the time of incident, and there could be legitimate reasons for those variances. IMB indicated that it immediately promulgated the report of an attack by a vessel, under attack. However, it did not immediately promulgate a report of a robbery, for example, when the vessel reported it after the fact.

2.4. IMB noted in its feedback from mariners that masters are becoming frustrated with the number of national piracy reporting centers that exist. It confuses ships and has the possibility of a loss of information if reports are not shared. This will lead to a delay or loss of transmission of this information to ships.   Additionally, IMB reported that off the horn of Africa MSCHOA and UKMTO have not only the reporting capabilities, but also an effective response capability. A similar level of structured reporting and response capability is not seen in most of the other areas affected by this crime. This may be a disincentive to ships to report incidents. The goal, from the ship's perspective, is to receive help when it reports an incident; it will report quickly when there is a chance that its report will reach the appropriate authorities that can render assistance. Without that incentive, the ship views the report only as more paperwork to complete to populate multiple database that produces metrics and statistics.

2.5. Discussed the format of piracy warnings that the IMBPC initiates with respect to the actual location of the incident, how most extend out over several NAVAREAS. The IMBPC had a logical explanation for its standard. The larger the target audience, the more ships the warning will reach that might be headed to the area. However, it also reaches a great many ships that have no use or immediate use for such information. I explained how the receipt of NAVAREA warnings by the Inmarsat transceiver, its store and forward technology, prevents the ship from missing a such a warning or any warning for that matter, even when transiting into and out of area with regularity. The receiver tracks the warning number to achieve two objectives. The first is to prevent the receipt of duplicate messages. The second is to ensure that when transiting out of a NAVAREA the ship can automatically receive all messages sent during the time the ship was away.

2.6. Discussed potential future collaboration and the need for an overarching, centralized piracy point of contact, whether it should be the IMBPC or WWNWS, or some other entity. When that is decided, an IMO document should be created to support that decision and potentially a new BMP that serves more than just the horn of Africa.

2.7. Covered the value to the IMPBC with respect to directly passing information to NAVAREA Coordinators for broadcast. That would ensure the warning would be in the correct format, save the IMB money, and bring the IMB into compliance with IMO/IHO documentation that governs the WWNWS.

2.8. Demonstrated NGA's Anti Shipping Activity Message (ASAM) app, which is available for both Android and iOS. The IMB was very excited with respect to how useful the data in this format could be to users and how easy it is to instantly recognize trends. Mariners can view the data on any mobile device and even view it off line; offline data contains only information from the last synch point.

2.9. Extended an invitation for the IMB to present at WWNWS7 to continue discussions with the entire WWNWS Subcommittee. In the short term, discussed the need to standardize format not only to be in line with IMO/IHO guidance documents, but to be better prepared to support e-navigation as it moves closer to implementation. Discussed briefly the new IHO S-124 standard and how it will enable MSI to be machine readable and displayable within an ECDIS.

3. RECOMMENDATION

3.1 NAVAREA IV/XII recommends the WWNWS continue to grow its collaboration with the IMBPC and other similar organizations regarding the broadcast and dissemination of piracy incidents. The aim is to provide more timely warnings concerning piracy incidents, broadcast them in the correct format, and only to the affected area per IMO/IHO guidance documents.

4. ACTION REQUESTED OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

4.1 The Sub-Committee is invited to consider the recommendation in section 3.