

21 SEP 2001

TO:

Operators of U.S. flag and effective U.S. controlled vessels and other Maritime interests

SUBJ:

Maritime alert and increased required AMVER position reporting for U.S.-flag vessels

1. The threat to maritime vessels is likely to increase as various extremist groups anticipate U.S. retaliation for the September 11 attacks. This includes the entire spectrum of threats - from civil unrest/demonstrations that may not be able to be contained by port security, especially in ports of countries with sizeable radical Islamic communities, to attacks similar to what the maritime community saw with the USS Cole last year. While we have no specific threat information against U.S. commercial shipping, ships are urged to review their security procedures and discuss with local port authorities what security measures are in place to protect ships at anchor or pier side from surface threats, threats from land, or underwater threats.

2. Cruise ships and U.S. merchant vessels should be on a heightened state of alert, and should closely monitor the National Imagery and Mapping Agency's (NIMA) broadcast warnings.

3. Commencing immediately all U.S.-flag ships required by regulation to file AMVER position reports and operating in the North Arabian Sea, Gulf of Oman, Persian Gulf, Gulf of Aden, Red Sea and the Suez Canal shall file AMVER reports every 24 hours vice every 48 hours.

4. This increase in position reporting is a precautionary measure due to the current situation. The change is directed by the Maritime Administrator in accordance with 46-cfr part 307.11. This is not to be construed as a war zone declaration.

5. All U.S. flag operators with ships in the affected areas are requested to forward this advisory to their ships by the most expedient means. This advisory will subsequently be published in the "weekly notice to mariners" and MARAD worldwide web site.

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