



**INFORMATION FUSION CENTRE
INDIAN OCEAN REGION**

Collaboration for Safety and Security

Working Definitions

Maritime Safety and Security Incidents

Updated as of July 2022



Scan for Reports



WORKING DEFINITIONS MARITIME SAFETY AND SECURITY INCIDENTS

FOREWORD

1. The entire gamut of maritime security challenges can be broken down into a large number of specific threats. While some of these have been defined by international bodies, many have not been formally laid out. Since Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) monitors all the different types of maritime safety and security incidents, it is essential to define each type of incident, towards better data capture, analysis and representation.
2. This document therefore compiles the working definitions used by the Centre in various publications. A list of common abbreviations used by the Centre is included in the document.
3. The definitions in some cases have been derived from international conventions, treaties, etc. A large portion of the terms have been defined by the Centre in order to classify and analyse the entire spectrum of non-military maritime security threats.
4. This document has therefore been named “Working Definitions” and these are to be used only for better understanding of IFC-IOR publications. These set of terms and definitions may also be amended from time to time based on experience/ new developments.



WORKING DEFINITIONS

MARITIME SAFETY AND SECURITY INCIDENTS

Piracy and Armed Robbery

1. **Piracy.** Article 101 of the UNCLOS defines piracy as any of the following acts:

(a) Any illegal act of violence or detention, or any act of depredation, committed for private ends by the crew or the passengers of a private ship or a private aircraft, and directed:

- (i) On the high seas, against another ship, or against persons or property onboard such ship.
- (ii) Against a ship, persons or property in a place outside the jurisdiction of any State.

(b) Any act of voluntary participation in the operation of a ship or of an aircraft with knowledge of facts making it a pirate ship or aircraft.

(c) Any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described in subparagraph (a) or (b).

2. **Armed Robbery.** In accordance with the Code of Practice for the Investigation of Crimes of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Assembly Resolution A.1025(26), armed robbery is defined as:

(a) Any illegal act of violence or detention, or any act of depredation, or threat thereof, other than an act of "Piracy", committed for private ends and directed against a ship, or against persons or property onboard such ship, within a State's internal waters, archipelagic waters and territorial sea.

(b) Any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described above.

Note: It has been observed that sometimes the exact location of an incident is unavailable in order to classify it as piracy and armed robbery. Hence, while capturing the incident, the sub-categories used in the Piracy and armed robbery cluster are listed below.



3. **Sub-categories of Piracy and Armed Robbery.** The incidents of piracy and armed robbery (attempted/ successful) are classified as follows:

- (a) **Hijack.** An illegal act of violence where attackers have illegally boarded and taken control of a ship against the crew's will with an objective which could include armed robbery, cargo theft or kidnapping.
- (b) **Kidnap.** An illegal act of violence involving unauthorised forcible removal of persons belonging to the vessel.
- (c) **Attack.** An act of violence, where a ship has been subjected to an aggressive approach by an unidentified craft AND weapons have been discharged.
- (d) **Illegal Boarding.** An act of violence, where attackers have boarded a ship but HAVE NOT taken control. Command remains with the Master.
- (e) **Sea Theft.** Any illegal act of stealing property from a vessel without any violence against the crew or passengers, other than an act of piracy and directed against a ship or property onboard a ship.
- (f) **Sea Robbery.** Any illegal act of stealing property from a vessel committed with arms or with violence against the crew or passengers, other than an act of piracy and directed against a ship or property onboard a ship.
- (g) **Attempted Sea Theft.** Any illegal act of an attempt to steal property from a vessel without any violence against the crew or passengers, other than an act of piracy and directed against a ship or property onboard a ship. Nothing reported to be stolen from the vessel.
- (h) **Attempted Sea Robbery.** Any illegal act of an attempt to steal property from a vessel committed with arms or with violence against the crew or passengers, other than an act of piracy and directed against a ship or property onboard a ship. Nothing reported to be stolen from the vessel.
- (j) **Attempted Boarding.** An action involving, close approach or hull-to-hull contact with report that boarding paraphernalia were employed or visible in the approaching boat, but are thwarted by BMP measures, PAST, weather conditions, lack of appropriate equipment, etc.
- (k) **Suspicious Approach.** An action involving, definite alteration towards the ship, rapid increase in speed which cannot be accounted for in the



prevailing conditions, sudden changes in course towards ship and aggressive behaviour by the craft.

Contraband Smuggling

4. **Contraband Smuggling.** Contraband is any item that is illegal to produce or possess. Smuggling is most prominently a form of customs violation, avoidance of duties, and tax fraud. Contraband smuggling involves movement of goods that are against the law to be imported or exported.

(a) **Drug Smuggling.** The broad understanding of drug smuggling is derived from commentary of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1988. For the purpose of this report, “drugs” also refers to UNODC’s definition of any natural or synthetic substances in Schedules I and II under the Controlled Substances Act, and “illicit traffic” under the International Drug Control Convention. The report categorises drugs by *type* and *effect* under the following definitions:

(i) **Opioids.** Substances that bind to μ -opioid receptors, including opium and derivative substances, such as heroin and morphine. Also includes semi-synthetic opioids of varying strength such as codeine, fentanyl, carfentanyl, methadone, hydrocodone, hydromorphone, meperidine, tramadol, and oxycodone.

(ii) **Cannabinoids.** All substances derived from or synthesized to emulate and bind to cannabinoid receptors in the brain. Includes hashish, cannabis, ganja, charas, marijuana, bango, and synthetic cannabinoids.

(iii) **Amphetamine Type Substances (ATS).** Amphetamine and derivatives, predominantly methamphetamine, captagon, ecstasy, syabu, yaba, and mephedrone; includes ephedra as a precursor for synthetic drugs.

(iv) **Other Drugs.** There are several additional drugs noted in this report that are not easily placed into these categories. They include khat, cocaine, LSD, magic mushrooms, and ketum.

(b) **Domestic Products Smuggling.** Goods that are either common household products or manufactured items. Examples include rice, flour, salt, turmeric, gas cylinders, and cars.



- (c) **Natural Resources Smuggling.** Goods or resources that are harvested from nature, including gold, wood, sand, and metals.
- (d) **Fuel Smuggling.** Smuggling fuel is a form of arbitrage aimed at bringing lower priced fuel from one jurisdiction into a higher priced jurisdiction in order to obtain a profit through the price differential. Examples include petroleum, crude oil, and gas.
- (e) **Tobacco Smuggling.** Any product of the tobacco plant, including cigarettes, cigars, and chewing tobacco.
- (f) **Alcohol Smuggling.** Smuggling of alcoholic beverages that are illegal to be imported or exported.
- (g) **Weapons Smuggling.** Goods designed for inflicting bodily harm or any form of damage, including guns, knives, explosives, and fireworks.
- (h) **Wildlife Smuggling.** Live animals, bird, or animal parts listed under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) of Wild Fauna and Flora, including elephant tusks, pangolin scales, sea cucumber, tortoises, turtle eggs, and shells.
- (j) **Others.** Items not falling in any of the categories above such as ancient artefacts, ammonium nitrate, etc.

Illegal Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing

5. **IUU Fishing.** A range of offences covering fishing without permission or in violation of regulations of the flag state or host nation, misreporting or failure to report catches to relevant authorities where required to do so, fishing vessels without a flag or national registration, or fishing on stocks without management measures in place. These following terms are defined in the International Plan of Action to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing (IPOA-IUU), prepared by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations:

- (a) **Illegal Fishing.** Fishing conducted by national or foreign vessels in waters under the jurisdiction of a State, without the permission of that State, or in contravention of its laws and regulations; conducted by vessels flying the flag of States that are parties to a relevant regional fisheries management organisation but operate in contravention of the conservation and management measures adopted by that organisation and by which the



States are bound, or relevant provisions of the applicable international law; or in violation of national laws or international obligations, including those undertaken by cooperating States to a relevant regional fisheries management organisation.

(b) **Unreported Fishing.** Fishing activities which have not been reported, or have been misreported, to the relevant national authority, in contravention of national laws and regulations; or are undertaken in the area of competence of a relevant regional fisheries management organisation which have not been reported or have been misreported, in contravention of the reporting procedures of that organisation.

(c) **Unregulated Fishing.** Fishing Activities in the area of application of a relevant regional fisheries management organisation that are conducted by vessels without nationality, or by those flying the flag of a State not party to that organization, or by a fishing entity, in a manner that is not consistent with or contravenes the conservation and management measures of that organization; or in areas or for fish stocks in relation to which there are no applicable conservation or management measures and where such fishing activities are conducted in a manner inconsistent with State responsibilities for the conservation of living marine resources under international law.

6. While undertaking analysis of the reported incidents, the Centre observed that it is difficult to categorise incidents into distinct 'illegal', 'unreported', or 'unregulated' fishing. Therefore, to avoid inaccurate representation of data, the reported incidents are categorised as 'Local IUU Fishing' and 'IUU Fishing - Poaching'.

(a) **Local IUU Fishing.** IUU fishing conducted by fishing vessels of a state, in the waters under the jurisdiction of the flag state, without valid license/ permit of that state, or in contravention of its laws and regulations. Offences by licensed foreign fishing vessels are also counted under this category.

(b) **Poaching.** IUU fishing conducted by foreign flagged vessels, in waters under the jurisdiction of a state, without valid license/ permit of that state, or in contravention of its laws and regulations.

Irregular Human Migration

7. **Migrant Smuggling.** United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) defines Migrant Smuggling as the facilitation, for financial or other material gain, of irregular entry into a country where the migrant is not a national or resident.



8. **Human Trafficking.** UNODC defines Human Trafficking as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of people through force, fraud or deception, with the aim of exploiting them for profit.

9. **Irregular Human Migration.** The incidents have been placed in a single category of Irregular Human Migration due to the challenges associated with conclusively determining the will and intent of illegal migrants.

Note: Only Migration/ Trafficking incidents/ attempts in the maritime domain are recorded and analysed by the Centre.

Maritime Incidents

10. **Fire.** Incidents involving fire and/ or explosion in the maritime domain.
11. **Grounding.** Incidents involving vessel running aground.
12. **Collision.** Incident involving collision of vessels or collision of vessel with navigational hazards/ aids.
13. **Mechanical Failure.** Incidents involving failure of mechanical shipboard systems such as engine, steering, switchboards etc.
14. **Medical Evacuation (MEDEVAC).** Incidents involving evacuation of crew from their vessel due to a medical emergency.
15. **Search and Rescue (SAR).** Incidents involving conduct of search and rescue by authorities or maritime personnel to locate missing person or vessel.
16. **Sunk.** Incident involving vessels sinking at sea due to maritime accidents attributable to collision, weather or other constraints.
17. **Capsize.** Incident involving capsizing of vessels sinking at sea due to maritime accidents attributable to collision, weather or other constraints.
18. **Flooding.** Incidents involving water ingress into the vessel not classified as collision, grounding, sunk, capsized, etc.
19. **Man Overboard.** Incidents involving crew/ passengers falling overboard from a vessel.



20. **Vessel Detained.** Incidents involving apprehension of vessels by maritime authorities of a state for engaging in unauthorised activities within the maritime jurisdiction of the state.
21. **Violent Confrontation.** Incident involving acts of violence (such as use of force) in an encounter between two or more parties in the maritime domain.
22. **Cargo Mishap.** Incidents involving cargo including containers falling overboard at sea.
23. **Missing.** Incidents involving mariners reported missing due to accidents at sea.
24. **Death.** Incidents involving loss of life at sea attributable to collision, weather or other constraints.
25. **Grouping of Maritime Safety Incidents.** For ease of comprehension, the individual categories have been grouped into the following three broad classifications (some incidents may involve both vessels and individuals):
 - (a) **Incidents Affecting Vessels.** Fire, Grounding, Collision, Mechanical Failure, Flooding, Sunk, Capsize, Cargo Mishap and SAR.
 - (b) **Incidents Affecting Individuals.** MEDEVAC, Man Overboard, Missing and Death.
 - (c) **Incidents with Legal Connotations.** Vessel Detained and Violent Confrontation.

Maritime Security Threats (Hybrid)

26. An action conducted in the maritime domain by state or non-state actors, whose goal is to undermine or harm a target at sea or in maritime ports by combining overt and covert military and non-military means, conventional capabilities, irregular tactics and formations, indiscriminate violence and coercion, as well as criminal disorder.
27. Includes the use of conventional military measures like rockets, missiles, and floating mines, with unconventional measures like unmanned, remotely controlled Water Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (WBIEDs), unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), and drones.



Maritime Terrorism

28. While Terrorism has not yet been universally defined, Maritime Terrorism can be broadly defined into two main categories:

- (a) **At Sea.** Maritime terrorism incidents involving attacks against ships at sea.
- (b) **From the Sea.** Maritime Terrorism from the Sea comprises of direct or indirect attacks ashore from the sea.

Maritime Cyber Security Threats

29. Single actors or groups targeting maritime systems, vessels, or organizations for financial or other gains to undermine electronic systems, or to cause disruption, panic, and fear, including attacks using malware, viruses, trojans, spyware, ransomware, adware, botnets, phishing, and denial of service. These may include attacks on Information Technology (IT) and/or Operational Technology (OT) systems.

Environment Pollution & Climate Change

30. The Centre monitors incidents related to the environment and climate change, including:

- (a) **Natural Events.** Natural Events, or incidents involving violent or destructive natural events beyond human control, such as earthquakes, tsunamis, tropical storms and hurricanes, and lightning strikes.
- (b) **Environmental Hazards.** Environmental Hazards, or any substance, situation, or event which has the potential to threaten the surrounding natural environment or adversely affect people's health.

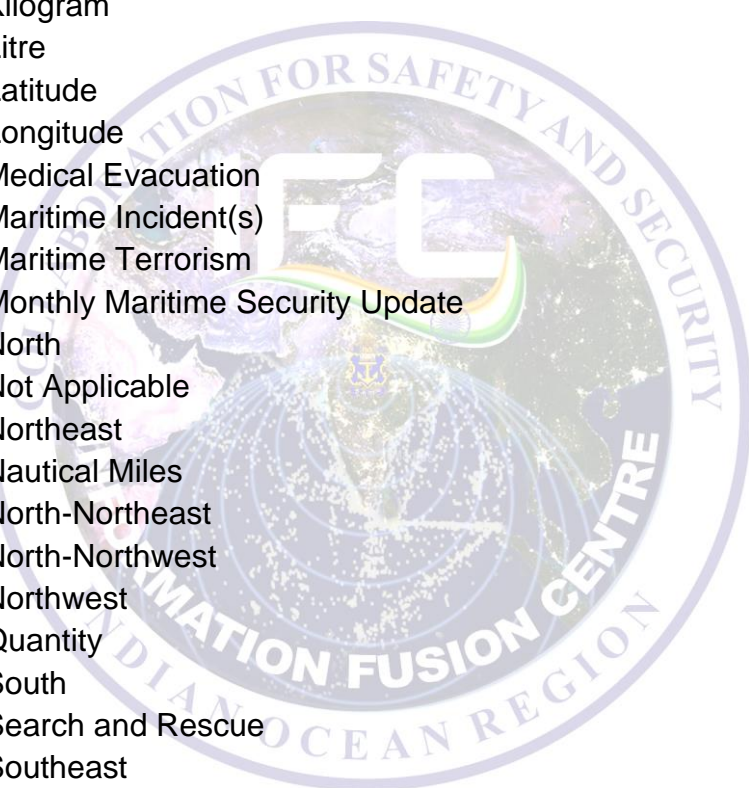
Others

31. This category encompasses incident and events in the maritime domain which do not fall under the previous eight definitions.



Abbreviations

CS	Contraband Smuggling
DMSU	Daily Maritime Security Update
E	East
ENE	East-Northeast
ESE	East-Southeast
IFC	Information Fusion Centre
IHM	Irregular Human Migration
ILO	International Liaison Officer
IOR	Indian Ocean Region
IUU Fishing	Illegal Unreported and Unregulated Fishing
kg	Kilogram
L	Litre
Lat	Latitude
Long	Longitude
MEDEVAC	Medical Evacuation
MI	Maritime Incident(s)
MT	Maritime Terrorism
MMSU	Monthly Maritime Security Update
N	North
NA	Not Applicable
NE	Northeast
nm	Nautical Miles
NNE	North-Northeast
NNW	North-Northwest
NW	Northwest
Qty	Quantity
S	South
SAR	Search and Rescue
SE	Southeast
SSE	South-Southeast
SSW	South-Southwest
SW	Southwest
T	Tonne
UNK	Unknown
USD	United States Dollar
W	West
WBIED	Water Borne Improvised Explosive Device(s)
WMSU	Weekly Maritime Security Update
WNW	West-Northwest
WSW	West-Southwest






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