

## RECORD OF DISCUSSION

### MARITIME INFORMATION EXCHANGE VESSEL OPERATORS' MEETING (MIEVOM) HELD ON 18 MAY 2017 AT THE DUBAI INTERNATIONAL SEAFARERS' CENTRE (DISC).

<b>Attendees</b>	See Enclosure 2
<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>
<b>0930</b>	Lt Cdr Iain Beaton RNR welcomed all attendees to his first MIEVOM and introduced his guest presenters and members of the UKMTO team. During his introduction he made reference to the recent passing of Giles Noakes from BIMCO, who was instrumental in improving maritime security which included his contribution to the development of BMP4. Expressions of condolences to his family were also given by Capt Robert Buckham (GEM) and John Harris (ASKET Ltd).
<b>2</b>	<b>Shared Awareness and De-confliction Meeting (SHADE) feedback – Lt Cdr Iain Beaton, OiC UKMTO Dubai</b>
<b>0940</b>	<p>Lt Cdr Iain Beaton gave feedback on the 40<sup>th</sup> SHADE meeting held in Bahrain 25-26 Apr 17, attended by over 100 representatives from 25 different nations. SHADE, which has been in existence since 2008, brings together those with a common interest in combating piracy in the Indian Ocean, he said that following the recent spike in pirate activity it is clear SHADE has not lost its purpose or relevance.</p> <p><b>Operational Commander's Update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CMF &amp; EUNAVFOR - Col Cantrill delivered an update attributing the recent spike in piracy to various factors, including the continued drought in Somalia which has led to a population migration to urban areas. In addition the continued crisis in Yemen has added to instability in the region, resulting in a greater flow of weapons, including higher caliber weapons and a reduction in their price. The internal problems in both Yemen and Somalia have resulted in the political focus being concentrated on other issues away from the maritime arena. The lack of pirate activity in recent years has led to an element of complacency in the merchant community.</li><li>• It had been reported that there have been up to 8 Pirate Action Groups (PAGs) operating at sea and that there was a meeting between financiers and PAGs, but this has never been substantiated. Therefore, it was subjective to determine whether the recent activity has been planned or was opportunistic, probably an element of both.</li><li>• What can be said is that none of the recent attacks have ultimately been effective from a financial standpoint as no ransoms have been paid, another pleasing factor is that local forces, in the case of Aris 13 and Al Kusar, have been involved in the release of ships and crew.</li><li>• The consensus is that PAGS are active again, probably as a result of three main factors:-<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The drought conditions in Somalia.</li><li>- Merchant vessels lower adherence to BMP4.</li><li>- The perceived decrease in military assets.</li></ul></li></ul>

- Col Cantrill went onto touch on the subject of EUNAVFOR and the future of the mission at the end of the mandate in 2018 (details of which were covered during the MIEVOM by Cdr Brady, see section 4).

### **CTF 151 Combined Counter Piracy Brief**

- Capt Staley RN highlighted the success of military action in freeing the OS35.
  - This incident was a good example of international co-operation with assets from 5 different nations being involved in the response.
  - It was important to note that the adherence to the citadel principle, described within BMP4, ultimately saved the crew in this incident. With secure knowledge that the crew were all safe the military had freedom of manoeuvre, especially the boarding team, in the action taken.
  - Capt Staley mentioned the fragility of security stating that piracy still had the potential to increase again. He put forward the opinion that the merchant community may have become somewhat complacent with evidence of a lowering of BMP adherence and an increase in shipping cutting the Socotra Gap. Whilst it is understood that the majority of these ships were container vessels with a high freeboard and able to transit at a high speed, it still puts out the wrong message to smaller operators and vessels.
  - He summarised that the merchant community should adhere to BMP4 and that co-operation between all interested parties should remain at a high level.
  - To highlight this Capt Staley identified where the military community could improve in their coordination in response to an incident and confirmed that CTF 151 will continue to explore all avenues to counter piracy activity.

### **Key Note Speakers**

- The Hon Saeed F Mohamed, Minister for Puntland State, Somalia, is responsible for Transport, Ports and Maritime Crime Prevention, and is the first minister from Somalia to address a SHADE meeting.
  - The minister started by saying that the recent piracy activity had come as a surprise and emphasized that closer links and sharing information is imperative in order that this issue can be tackled. He confirmed previous comments that smuggling and the conflict in Yemen was a source of instability in Somalia that was having a derogatory influence on the youth. For the way ahead he stated that he had the resources to deal with the activity with manpower based in 6/7 locations around Puntland and Somalia. What he lacked was the logistical support to undertake operations for which he estimated that they required \$1 million.
  - In addition to the causes mentioned above for the return of piracy, the minister reminded the conference that illegal fishing was also one of the original factors which is still prevailing today. He pleaded that international pressure be brought to bear on the countries from where the illegal fishing vessels originate.
- Ms Judith Anne Thimke, Chief, Ocean Transportation Service for the World Food Programme (WFP), gave a presentation on their Organisation and explained that they were based on fighting hunger around the world and gave stark statistics on Yemen and Somalia.
  - In Somalia, there are some 440,000 people displaced and 3,000,000 that cannot meet their daily food requirement. There has been near total crop failure and the livestock has been decimated. The recent rainfall has done nothing to alleviate the situation.
  - It is similar in Yemen but for different reasons. There are 18,800,000 people

needing assistance with 90% of their food requirements being imported.

- The current conflict is adding to the logistic difficulties in ensuring that aid reaches those that most desperately need it.
- WFP contract their own vessels which gives them control over their shipping logistics in the area. The close liaison with EUNAVFOR will continue and Ms Timke thanked them for their support and highlighted that no WFP vessel has been pirated over all the years they have been operating in the region.

### **Shipping Industry Update**

- Giles Noakes from BIMCO presented from an Industry perspective.
  - Giles highlighted that the focus was now back on piracy and that the situation in Yemen had taken a back seat but should not be forgotten. He stated that piracy should not be confused with war and terrorism and that it only takes one PAG to be successful to encourage more activity.
  - Supporting Capt Staley's earlier comments, Giles stated that Industry had become a bit complacent which needs to be addressed with greater adherence to BMP4. He gave MV Costina as an example - and asked what was she doing so close to the coast with no visible BMP4 measures in place?
  - He ventured that vessels not complying should be named and shamed but after a brief discussion with other attendees this was discounted. He also stated that he supported armed security teams (AST) but only if that was the only way it could be done.
  - Giles thanked the military community, including the independent deployers, for their actions in response to the OS35 boarding but recognised that it is difficult for countries to continually maintain this level of support. He countenanced that any future draw down of EUNAVFOR support should be very carefully managed.

### **Keynote Speakers**

- Gerry Northwood from Maritime Asset Security and Training (MAST) discussed the use of AST and their operations outside TTWs.
  - He stated there was a very strong unquestionable link between the success in the fall of piracy and the presence of AST onboard vessels. However, due to this reduction in piracy activity the financial cost of ASTs has fallen dramatically since 2011. He continued that this fall had led to a general lowering of quality and due diligence.
  - He highlighted that if ASTs are under resourced it may undermine the progress made to date, emphasising that legitimacy, especially correct paperwork, must be in place with all weapons accounted for. For example there are only 2 companies with floating armouries that comply fully with legal requirements.
  - Gerry requested that information sharing be both ways to enable a joined approach over all sectors in dealing with the threat.
  - In conclusion he quoted UN Secretary General from 2016 when he said "I urge continued international naval presence in the region and continued vigilance in terms of private security and adherence to best management practices".
- John Steed, Oceans beyond Piracy.
  - He continued on the same theme as previous speakers that although piracy had been suppressed, the business model and intent is still there.
  - To solve the longer term problem the issue had to be addressed ashore

ranging from the rule of law through to the ability of the Somali's to sustain themselves both in food cultivation and employment.

- He presented some interesting statistics highlighting in particular that:-
- - The naval presence has declined with the number of days on station by independent deployers now exceeding those from coalition forces.
  - Less shipping are now using convoys however 77% still use the IRTC.
  - Use of AST was still around 34% however, echoing Gerry Northwood's comments, their composition is decreasing to 3 man teams.
- Finally John gave a hostage update that included the release of Naham 3's crew in October last year and confirmed the eight Iranians from FV Siraj are still being held but alive.

### **Convoy Co-ordination working Group (CCWG)**

- The CCWG met on 25 May and the following key points were briefed.
- There has surprisingly been a decline in the number of vessels using the convoy system since 2012 however this is expected to rebound.
- Convoys are now being planned 2 months ahead rather than three with an additional 2 slots per month being planned. Full details can be found on EUNAVFOR's website.
- A discussion was held to explore the idea of military ships patrolling nearer to the shore of Somalia to try and potentially discourage and intercede any PAGs getting to the IRTC however, this was discounted.
- The problem of identifying PAGs was difficult due to fishing skiffs operating legally close inshore and carrying weapons for self-protection.
- It was highlighted that although OS35 was overall a success story there were 5 military ships surrounding the boarded vessel which was possibly an overreaction. The response could have been more effectively tactically co-ordinated between navies.

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### **Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) Update – Capt Brett Sampson RAN, Director Operations CMF**

- Capt Brett Sampson introduced himself explaining his current role within CMF and its relevance to the current situation in the region. Drawing attention to the size of area covered and its three main chokepoints; Suez, Bab-el-Mendeb and the Straits of Hormuz, he highlighted the complexities and difficulties involved in monitoring and policing such a vast area.
- Using the 'event iceberg' he demonstrated the links between piracy and terrorist activity, stating that they all had criminal aspects that often involved the same elements. Possibly connecting drugs, weapons and human smuggling with pirate and terrorism activity.
- Due to the many forces operating in the area he explained the difference between an Alliance and a Coalition. He emphasised that not all coalitions were similar and because they are created for different reasons it had to be recognised that 'one size did not fit all'.
- Capt Sampson went on to give details of the CMF mission statement, stating that there are currently 31 member states across 5 continents with additional countries waiting to join. His role was to continue to build relationships between countries here in the Middle East and bring them together.
- He gave a comprehensive overview of the components of the task forces operating in the region explaining their roles and responsibilities including the breakdown of chains of command. The working framework and how it operated with United Nations (UN) and with UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) was also covered.

<p>4 1020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication with the merchant industry and its civilian partners is a strategic priority and meetings such as SHADE, MIEVOM and the Contact Group on Piracy off the coast of Somalia (CGPCS) are important for outreach support.</li> <li>• Presenting the key elements of the mission statement for CTF 151, the potential timeline for response was given with an explanation of how incidents might be prioritised.</li> <li>• Capacity building was ongoing, from engagement with clan elders to gain better understanding of how the youth were affected by life in the region to support for the Coastguard and Puntland Maritime Police Force (PMPF). Communities that have been decimated by illegal fishing were vulnerable and relevant programmes were being put in place to deter and influence them away from piracy.</li> <li>• The protection of shipping was a joint commitment and the continued use of convoys and escorts was highlighted as providing the greatest level of protection along with adherence to BMP4.</li> <li>• Concern was given to the rise in criminal incidents and that lax procedures may become exploited by terrorists. The country's instability, failing economy and continued illegal unregulated fishing was forcing people to move into piracy and criminal activity.</li> <li>• Asking if we are seeing a resurgence or a spike in piracy, Capt Sampson referred to recent incidents stating there was various reasons for the attacks; slower transit speeds, transiting close to the Somali coast or through the Suctra Gap, no visible BMP measures in place and no ASTs. He said an encouraging factor was the involvement of the PMPF in the release of Aris 13 and the Galmudog authorities in the release of Al Kausar resulting in no ransoms being paid. If pirate action resulted in ransoms being paid it may encourage other groups to join in.</li> </ul> <p><b>EUNAVFOR – OP ATLANTA Update – Cdr Sean Brady RN</b></p>
<p>5 1030</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cdr Brady gave a brief overview of the EUNAVFOR mission with respect to OP ATALANTA stating its focus was Counter Piracy operations, protecting the WFP and vulnerable shipping. He highlighted that its mandate had been extended until 31 December 2018. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He explained that there is currently 'transition' planning underway on the future role of EUNAVFOR. The Op Cdr had presented a set of 8 Courses of action grouped into 3 areas to the EU Political and Security Council. The left of arc being no change to the right of arc of ceasing the mission. Most countries sit somewhere in the middle of these options.</li> <li>- During the transition phase EUNAVFOR will continue to support UKMTO and MSCHOA with information or with assets while operating off the Somali coast.</li> <li>- Discussing capacity building in the area Cdr Brady gave examples of organisations operating to identify current symptoms, he also mentioned that Chinese escorts are assisting with the protection of WFP shipping.</li> <li>- EUNAVFOR are keen to continue using any assets in order to increase capacity building and to move the economy forward which will hopefully deter</li> <li>- piracy.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>UK Maritime Component Commander (UKMCC) Bahrain – Capt Tom Guy RN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capt Guy explained the UKMCC mission, emphasising their role and how from a UK perspective they assist in protecting and maintaining free flow of shipping. He also described how they engage with regional partners to build confidence</li> </ul>

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and deter aggression.

- The new naval base, HMS JUFAIR, located in Bahrain will provide logistical support to assets of UK and its Allies operating within the region. Looking to the future it will become a support base for the carrier strike group when it operates in the Gulf area.
- Capt Guy continued with a comprehensive overview of operations being carried out across the region:-
  - Carrier - protection of coalition carriers conducting counter-Daesh ops.
  - Counter-smuggling – helicopter support to boarding ops.
  - Counter-piracy & counter-narcotic – interdicting pirates & smugglers.
  - Disruption of arms smuggling – countering attempts to arm Houthi rebels.
  - Protection of trade and commerce – combating the maritime threat in the BAM.
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- He discussed operations in the Southern Red Sea, stating that since the attack on MV Swift in Oct 16, the focus has been to provide a physical and visible presence in the area.
- Highlighting the regional chokepoints, he explained how UKMCC worked with its allies to allocate resources to meet the daily requirements needed to provide a presence that gives reassurance to the maritime trade.
- The importance of countries working together was emphasised, close co-operation ensured allies played to each other strengths tactically while recognising what each member was capable of and what their countries mandates allowed them to do. Planning and sharing both information and assets was key and Capt Guy mentioned the links used to International Agencies for support and monitoring.
- In summary, Capt Guy stated how important the link between UKMTO, UKMCC and the merchant community was in providing support and co-ordination to each other.

**‘Piracy – an owner’s perspective’ - Capt Robert D Buckham, Head of Marine Safety Environment and Quality, Gulf Energy Marine (GEM).**

- Capt Buckham gave an overview of his company with particular details on the type of vessels, their cargos and nationality breakdown of crews. He also gave details of historical trade routes which included details on use of both unarmed and armed guards.
- Discussing the use of AST, it was explained that originally his company had reservations against their use as did many in the industry to this new concept however, after a vessel was attacked in Nov 2010 their wider policy changed. Vessels transiting the GoA before this date had employed AST embarking/disembarking in Salalah and Djibouti respectively but after the attack all vessels transiting the HRA commenced carrying AST.
- Capt Buckham covered the subject of BMP 4 compliance in relation to his company and their vessels, in addition to standard BMP4 hardening measures all vessels will have:-
  - Company specific instructions for transiting the HRA & VRA with checklists separate to Ships Standing Procedures.
  - An AST on-board if transiting/operating in the HRA with an approved Risk Assessment made for each voyage which includes vessel routing.
  - Hardening measures in compliance with BMP4, dependent upon RA layered approach approved by head office, when transiting the VRA.
  - Registered with MSCHOA with daily reporting to UKMTO, CSO and charterers if instructed.
- He mentioned the problems of razor wire stating that in addition to safety concerns for the crews having to fit, store and remove in preparation of vessels going alongside, Pilots often refused to board vessels if it was in place. He also

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highlighted the issue of rust and the unsightly damage the staining can do to a vessel which can be an issue in some ports, there was also an issue of disposal of rusted and unwanted razor wire as there is no identifiable legal waste route.

- Costs for providing AST and hardening measures were given based on each vessel and then for the company. Capt Buckham stated in addition there were Insurance premiums, bunker & port costs and depending on the charterer there might be additional hardening measures required for specific transits. He went on to give a detailed breakdown of the hidden costs such as maintenance,
- overtime payment, audit costs for security contractors and communications costs. He paid particular attention to the human element of providing support to crews and families, use of social media within the piracy domain and the difficulties being experienced in attracting young people into the industry due to the high profile of piracy incidents.
- He did however state that there was benefits from piracy because it had given a worldwide awareness of security issues making crews more aware and ensuring training was to a higher standard. There was cross border co-operation of nations to keep the commercial routes open along with the setting up of piracy reporting forums such as IMB, MSCHOA, IFO, UKMTO and the MDAT-GoG.
- Highlighting owners concerns, he mentioned the implications of having a vessel hijacked with regard to the company's loss of business and reputation but also to difficulties of retaining crews who are willing to operate within the HRA.
- Finally Capt Buckham turned to recent incidents and concerns that piracy had returned. There was also concern over the instability within the Middle East in particular the conflict in Yemen, the situation between USA & Iran, the presence of China and the relationship between the USA & N Korea. Other areas of concern were the Straits of Malacca, West Africa and the waters off the Philippines and governments restriction of naval assets in the face of the current global uncertainty.

**Yemen's Maritime Security: Conundrum - Cdr Steve Strange RN, Maritime Security Advisor, Yemen Office, British Embassy Riyadh**

- Cdr Strange gave an overview of the current Political situation in Yemen with some historical detail on the conflict where he explained the role of the Houthi & Saleh supporters and their fight against the legitimate Government of Yemen.
- He stated personal access to finance is a major factor of the conflict along with terrorist groups within areas of the Yemen with a desire to rule themselves. Short term ceasefires have been conducted but due to accusations from either side of foul play none were successful.
- Details on the humanitarian situation were given stating that 80% of Yemen's food and fuel needs are brought in through the port of Hodeidah highlighting its vulnerability. Use of alternative ports have been investigated but due to poor distribution links and topography on land this was not possible.
- Cdr Strange explained the role of the UN Verification and Inspection Mechanism (UNVIM) which provides processes for commercial ships to gain access to ports in the Red Sea. The current priority for vessels is those carrying food supplies however, it was stated that a crucial factor in gaining access was a 100% accurate and complete manifest. There was also a requirement that all vessels could be tracked via their AIS reports as far back as 10 last ports of call.
- The details of incidents in the Red Sea in October 2016 and January 2017 involving missile attacks against warships was discussed in conjunction with details of suspected mine threats of Mocha and Jizan. Cdr Strange stated that the Houthi maritime capability was diversifying but there was no clear idea how it would continue to be used.
- Looking forward there were no clear solutions. If direct action was taken against the Houthi controlled port of Hodeidah it could have a major humanitarian impact and also limit critical access for shipping to this port. If any action was not

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completed quickly and be backed up with immediate humanitarian assistance, the situation in Yemen could get worse very quickly and tip the country into famine.

- Concluding his brief, Cdr Strange stated the UNVIM role should be enhanced to include the Southern Red Sea Ports ensuring there was a robust maritime security and enhanced inspection regime in place. He also mentioned that the role of the Yemen Coastguard should be restored and urged support from International partners to assist in rebuilding the infrastructure and provision of training for organisations that needed assistance in order to continue capacity building in the area.

**Maritime Security: Quality, Compliance & Reliance – John Harris, Managing Director, ASKET Ltd**

- John Harris introduced himself and gave a brief historical overview of his company emphasising that ASKET worked with Private Maritime Security Companies (PMSC), not for them, to ensure they provided a quality and compliant service.
- Discussing recent incidents, John asked if we were seeing a resurgence or a spike in piracy, concluding that the answer was dependent on whether a ransom was paid. He went on to state that at the moment Kidnap & Ransom (KNR) premiums were reduced however, it was expected these would rise if it was confirmed that ransoms had recently been paid.
- Due to the continued decline in pirate activity there had been a marked decrease in the use of AST from 40% in 2014 to 34% in 2016. With this reduction also came changes to the composition of teams, from 4 to 3 with recent requests for 2 man teams being received. Nationalities of teams were also changing from 4 UK personnel to 1 UK as Team Leader and 2 or 3 from other countries. It has also become more common to deploy teams without UK Team leaders.
- The reduction in demand for the use of AST has also created a reduction in the numbers of PMSC's, with companies either closing down or merging with another, however with the need to drive down costs ASKET had concerns that not all PMSC's were operating legally. Clients were also more aware of operating procedures and had turned to ASKET for advice on legal issues such as training requirements and weapon licences.
- In response to their own and their clients concerns ASKET created a short questionnaire and sent it to 14 PMSC's operating in their area. The results were surprising and all revolved around the same topics with quality of service and costs being most prevalent.
- On how the industry has changed in the last 2-3 years the majority stated that standards and prices had been driven down, there was a change of team composition and nationalities, training and compliance standards had been ignored by some operators.
- The greatest challenges were identified as remaining competitive but also remaining legal while driving down overheads and simultaneously keeping quality personnel.
- The areas they thought that CSO's and Masters should take into account when selecting PMSC's ranged from financial stability of the PMSC to ISO 28007 compliance. Weapon ownership, use of floating armouries, training standards and capabilities of team members were also mentioned.
- To ensure compliance, their top 5 expenses were agents fees, floating armouries, ISO 28007 upkeep, staff and MSO wages.
- While 79% agreed that ISO 28007 accreditation allowed them to differentiate from less compliant PMSC's, 86 % agreed the decreasing price of security was driving down quality and compliance of services.
- Although 60% agreed that weapon licencing is managed poorly by competent

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authorities, 44% agreed floating armouries provided a competitive, well organised and legal platform of support.

- Having discussed the findings of their survey, John went on to cover costs involved in achieving and maintaining compliance before giving details of how some PMSC's cut corners. Examples of recent infringements included embarking an AST and weapons with no intention on gaining Flag State Approval, renting of weapons between PMSC's and borrowing personnel and equipment from another PMSC to fulfil contracts. These infringements can put the crew in danger and invalidate premiums.
- In concluding his brief John listed details of what CSO's and Masters can do to ensure Quality Assurance and Compliance for PMSC's and their ASTs. He also included where to find further information and advice from his company.

### **Question & Answer Session**

Lt Cdr Beaton opened the floor to general questions.

**Q.** Anup Khan, Mideast Ship Management Ltd, asked Cdr Strange if further attacks similar to those seen recently where Waterborne Improvised Explosive Devices (WBIED) were used could be expected and what further information could he give about the mining situation in the Yemen coastal region especially around Mocha harbour?

**A.** Cdr Strange replied that it is difficult to say if further attacks would take place but did state that commercial shipping was not directly targeted. He said that the KSA and UAE navies had been engaged in limited mine sweeping operations in the area. Capt Guy added that investigations into the recent reports on mines was ongoing and to date unsubstantiated, there was no evidence to suggest that there was any intention by the Houthi to deploy mines other than at Mocha harbour. Drift and tidal model analysis indicated that it was unlikely that an untethered mine could drift into the main shipping lanes. He also added that the report of a Yemen Coastguard vessel hitting a mine in Mar 17 may not be accurate. He stated that further mine laying could not be ruled out but the threat should be taken in perspective. The advice given to merchant vessels was remain vigilant, plan their transits carefully, remain as far from the Yemen coast as possible and use the western traffic separation.

**Q.** Capt Geoff Pearson BW Fleet management, thanked Capt Buckham for his presentation and concurred with his findings and concerns from the ship operators' perspective. He said that the handling and cosmetic appearance of razor wire (RW) was a concern, he said RW had a short life span and that it was difficult to dispose of old stock, he posed the question of how disposal could be achieved when in his opinion no one would take it for scrap. He also stated that ships displaying rusty RW could possibly fail Ch12 regulation inspections which covered the cosmetic appearance of vessels. He asked what could be done about this issue? He went on to tell the audience that during a recent attack on one of his vessels in the Gulf of Guinea, in which a number of shots had been fired, adherence to BMP4 measures worked and had prevented the ship from being taken.

**Q.** Lt Long UKMTO, asked David Bancroft from Chevron if he could update the audience on the progress of the Global Best Management Practice publication (GBMP).

**A.** David explained the reasoning behind the creation of a Global edition of Best Management Practices which draws in experience gained in all areas of the world which will provide ships masters with a single source document covering all the regions where piracy is prevalent. He said there was some discussion ongoing whether to go with GBMP now or wait until a decision is made on the future of EUNAVFOR and the continuation of its current mandate beyond 2018.

He said Chevron is 100% behind the GBMP and he called on all members of the shipping industry to support its implementation.

**Q.** Lt Cdr Beaton UKMTO, asked Capt Guy what effect the arrival of the new QE class aircraft carrier will have on the future role of the Royal Navy in the region?

**A.** Capt Guy stated that the current RN presence had already factored in to the force generation planning required to support a carrier group so it should not alter from the

present levels of RN assets in the region. He went on to state that the arrival in theatre of the British carrier will give the UK a strategically important force projection capability in the region.

**Q.** Capt Shaikh International Maritime transportation Ltd, asked Cdr Strange about the capability of the Houthi to conduct further WBIED attacks, he ask specifically if there was any information about the range and numbers of this type of threat.

**A.** Cdr Strange re-affirmed the message that there were no indications that these weapons were being considered for use against commercial shipping and that to date, all the attacks had been directed at the Saudi led coalition forces. He was unable to give information on the range and numbers of WBIED held by the Houthi.

**Q.** Lt Cdr Wood CTF 151, asked the audience how they felt that the counter piracy message, including BMP4 compliance and sharing of information could best be disseminated to the smaller ship owners and operators, particularly those not represented at the SHADE and MIEVOM events. She cited the ARIS 13 as an example where a total lack of BMP4 compliance and threat awareness had made the vessel highly vulnerable to piracy.

**A.** Capt Buckham said that one measure would be to remove sub-standard ships and operators from the industry.

**A.** David Bancroft from Chevron, recommended lobbying the various ship operator groups in an effort to keep BMP4 compliance in the forefront of their members' minds.

**A.** Si Biggs from ASKET, said that in his opinion more needs to be done with regard to the sharing of information with particular regard to post incident reporting, he quoted a case where a ship had been boarded and the crew subjected to a sustained attempt to smoke them from the citadel using oil soaked ropes and rags. By releasing such detail to industry it could help other guard against a similar incident and added that all information needs to be shared.

**A.** Peter Hawkin Maersk tankers, said the lobbying of Insurance companies to ensure they enforce compliance may be one direction to take.

#### **Date of next meeting**

- SHADE Nov 17, Bahrain (TBC)
- MIEVOM Nov 17, Dubai International Seafarers' Centre (TBC)

Lt Cdr Beaton thanked everyone for their attendance stating he was always on the lookout for presenters with a focus on maritime security or challenges and complexities of operating in the Middle East. Anyone wishing to present or has suggestions for the next or future MIEVOMs should send their details to [dubai-2ic@ukmto.org](mailto:dubai-2ic@ukmto.org).

