INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION

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**GUIDANCE FOR COMPANY SECURITY OFFICERS (CSOs) – PREPARATION
OF A COMPANY AND CREW FOR THE CONTINGENCY OF HIJACK BY PIRATES IN
THE WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN AND THE GULF OF ADEN**

1   Following adoption of United Nations Security Council resolution 1851 (2008), the Contact Group on Piracy off the coast of Somalia (CGPCS) was established and held its inaugural meeting on 14 January 2009 to facilitate discussion and coordination of actions among States and organizations to suppress piracy off the coast of Somalia. The participants in the CGPCS, *inter alia*, agreed to establish four working groups, one of which (Working Group 3) was to address the strengthening of shipping self-awareness and other capabilities.

2   Industry organizations within Working Group 3 developed Guidance for company security officers (CSO) – Preparation of a Company and crew for the contingency of hijack by pirates in the Western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden (the Guidance), attached in annex 1.

3   The Maritime Safety Committee, at its eighty-eighth session (24 November to 3 December 2010), agreed to disseminate the Guidance to all interested parties.

4   The Guidance does not contradict the Organization's universal guidance on countering piracy and armed robbery against ships contained in:

        .1   MSC.1/Circ.1333 on Recommendations to Governments for preventing and suppressing piracy and armed robbery against ships;

        .2   MSC.1/Circ.1334 on Guidance to shipowners and ship operators, shipmasters and crews on preventing and suppressing acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships;

        .3   resolution A.1025(26) on Code of practice for the investigation of crimes of piracy and armed robbery against ships; and

        .4   resolution A.1026(26) on Piracy and armed robbery against ships in waters off the coast of Somalia,

or subsequent amendments thereto.

5   Member Governments are invited to consider the Guidance as set out in annex 1, and advise owners, operators and managers of ships entitled to fly their flag to act accordingly taking into account the guidance provided in MSC.1/Circ.1333 and 1334, and in MSC.1/Circ.1337 on Best Management Practices to Deter Piracy off the Coast of Somalia and in the Arabian Sea Area.

6   Intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations with consultative status are also invited to consider the Guidance as set out in annex 1 and to advise their membership to act accordingly, taking into account the guidance provided in MSC.1/Circ.1333, 1334 and 1337.

7   Member Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations with consultative status are invited to consider bringing the results of the experience gained from using the Guidance, as set out in annex 1, to the attention of the Committee.

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ANNEX

GUIDANCE FOR COMPANY SECURITY OFFICERS (CSO) – PREPARATION OF A COMPANY AND CREW FOR THE CONTINGENCY OF HIJACK BY PIRATES IN THE WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN AND THE GULF OF ADEN

Introduction

The purpose of this guidance is to assist the CSO in making preparations for vessels scheduled to transit through the Western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden, an area experiencing a significant level of attacks from Somali-based pirates. The guidance is divided into 2 parts: Part 1 sets out issues to consider when preparing the crew of a vessel, and Part 2 sets out issues to consider when preparing the Company.

Piracy in the Western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden differs from piracy in other areas of the world because the pirates have the clear objective to capture and hold the ship and crew in order to extract a ransom. Somali pirates appear to recognize that harm or injury to the crew or its cargo may have adverse effects on negotiations and ransom amounts.

The focus of the CSO's preparations should be directed toward preventing an attack or hijacking of the ship and/or crew. Useful advice is contained in **Best Management Practices to Deter Piracy off the Coast of Somalia and in the Arabian Sea Area (BMP3)**[1], which defines a geographic "High Risk Area" for piracy attacks off the Coast of Somalia and in the Arabian Sea area. The following guidance is intended to assist CSOs in developing procedures to prepare crews for the contingency of their vessel being hijacked when transiting the High Risk Area. The guidance set out below also addresses the actions of the Company in fulfilling its responsibilities to the crew, and highlights the need to prepare crisis management plans specifically designed to handle hijacking and its effects on the crew.

The following documents provide useful further information:

- EUNAVFOR – "Surviving Piracy off the Coast of Somalia"
- UN Guidance on Surviving as a Hostage
- IMO Maritime Safety Committee circular MSC.1/Circ.1334 on Guidance to shipowners and ship operators, shipmasters and crews on preventing and suppressing acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships

This guidance is supported by the following international industry representatives:

1. International Chamber of Shipping (ICS)
2. International Shipping Federation (ISF)
3. International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF)
4. BIMCO
5. Oil Companies International Marine Forum (OCIMF)
6. International Association of Independent Tanker Owners (INTERTANKO)
7. International Association of Dry Cargo Ship Owners (INTERCARGO)
8. International Parcel Tankers Association (IPTA)

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[1]   MSC.1/Circ.1337 on Best Management Practices to Deter Piracy off the Coast of Somalia and in the Arabian Sea Area.

1.   Preparation of Crew

When preparing crews of ships that are to travel through the High Risk Area, it is recommended that the CSO gives careful consideration to the following. These considerations are in addition to preparations which primarily focus on resisting a pirate attack, as contained in BMP3.

Training Requirements

.1   Consider any contractual, national/flag/training or preparation requirements for the crew.

Seafarers and Others on board the Vessel

.1   Consider the rights of seafarers and what constitutes reasonable grounds with respect to requests for disembarkation and repatriation prior to entering the High Risk Area; this might have to be done on a case by case basis.

.2   Review the presence of seafarers and others, e.g., partners, children, on board and their safety during the transit of the High Risk Area.

Accurate Crew Records

.1   Ensure that the personal details of crew members are up to date including:

.1   Contact details for next of kin (telephone number and e-mail address)

.2   Any medical conditions of crew members and medication required

.3   Clothing sizes for each crew member (to enable replacement clothing to be provided).

Company Commitment

.1   Ensure, when possible, that crew are made fully aware in advance of the voyage route of the ship including projected dates and times of transiting the High Risk Area.

.2   Ensure crews are reassured of their rights and what constitutes reasonable grounds with respect to disembarking prior to entering the High Risk Area.

.3   Ensure crews are aware of the company's commitment to their health and safety.

Crew Awareness of the Hijack Environment

.1   Ensure that the crew are aware of the "shock of capture" and that the greatest anxiety is usually experienced in the hours after the initial hijack incident. Feeling depressed, helpless and humiliated are emotions that many hostages experience during captivity. The crew should be encouraged to try to focus on surviving the ordeal.

.2   Ensure that the crew understand the importance of being cooperative with the demands without appearing either servile or antagonistic.

.3   Ensure that the crew appreciate the importance of mutual support, teamwork and maintaining a shipboard routine both during and in the aftermath of a hijack incident.

.4   Ensure that the crew understand the importance of trying to maintain the standard of living conditions on board for the crew.

.5   Advise that the pirates may demand that the crew pose for photographs and muster on the upper deck. This should not be resisted as this may be to prove the wellbeing of the crew to the owners during the negotiations for release.

.6   Ensure crew awareness that the pirates are likely to show them disrespect during captivity and may seek to disorientate them by possible separation into small groups or being held in confined areas, e.g., bridge/engine-room.

.7   Ensure crew awareness of personal actions to reduce opportunities for coercion and intimidation by pirates in the event of capture, for example minimizing pirates' access to crew's family contact details (e.g., mobile phone SIM cards, e-mail addresses, etc.), not being isolated from other crew members, trying to establish a single point of contact amongst the crew for communications with the pirates.

.8   Advise the crew to treat all information given to them by the pirates with caution.

.9   Ensure the crew awareness of the use by Somali pirates of the drug khat and its effects.

.10   Ensure crew awareness of communications procedures to be followed during captivity by company and crew in particular:

    .1   On board the ship amongst crew members

    .2   Between the ship and company

    .3   Between the company and crew families, e.g., via the internet, telephone contact and face-to-face meetings

    .4   How the crew should co-operate with pirates during captivity – where possible try to establish a single contact point amongst the crew.

.11   Advise the crew of the need to be observant (without appearing to study the captors) during captivity in the interests of recalling events clearly during the crew debrief post-incident.

.12   Ensure that the crew and the families understand that it can take significant time to readjust after a hostage incident and that this is a normal reaction to an abnormal experience.

Crew Awareness of Company Actions

.1 Ensure that the crew are aware of company crisis management procedures that will be undertaken during captivity and after release, in particular:

.1 Assurances that the Company will do everything practical to expedite release

.2 Assurances of the Company's commitment to its continued obligations towards the crew in respect of safety, pay, employment, replacement of personal effects, etc.

.3 Assurances that the Company will notify the Next of Kin in the event of an incident and establish a point of contact within the Company to provide families with ongoing information and coordinate support for families from internal and external sources as required

.4 Awareness that negotiation can be a lengthy process and that the company will be working hard for the crew's release

.5 Company policy on media relations during a hijack.

.2 Awareness of Company considerations/actions following release:

.1 The provision of supplies to the ship and crew as required post incident, including:

.1 Food and Water

.2 Fuel

.3 Replacement clothing

.2 The provision of medical assistance including counselling, in the period commencing after release. The Company policy on how to handle events at the first port of call including repatriation of the crew

.3 The Company policy on post-incident press relations

.4 The Company policy on post-incident debriefs and review of Crisis Management Procedures.

2. **Company Crisis Management**

When preparing Crisis Management Procedures to respond to a hijack of a ship and crew the CSO should as a minimum prepare and exercise plans to address the following:

.1 The Company Board's designation of a head of crisis management answerable to the Board for the duration of the crisis and to lead the response effort.

.2 Establishment of a single point of contact within the Company for contact with the pirates.

.3　　The composition of the management team and the roles and responsibilities of the persons involved, including:

    .1　　Negotiator

    .2　　Crew welfare (including contact with families and external sources of support, e.g., welfare organizations)

    .3　　Logistics and operations

    .4　　Medical advice

    .5　　Media relations.

.4　　The ongoing obligations to the crew in respect of such items as wages, employment, replacement of personal effects.

.5　　Communications policy during the crisis:

    .1　　Recommendations on communications between captive crew members

    .2　　Communications between the Company and ship

    .3　　Communications between the Company and families of crew, including internet, telephone contact and face to face meetings

    .4　　Communications with pirates.

.6　　Provisions of supplies prior to transit and after release, including food, water, stores and fuel.

.7　　Choosing a first port of refuge post-release, factors are likely to include:

    .1　　The availability of relevant local resources

    .2　　The provision of vital assets to the ship, including:

        .1　　Counselling and/or medical assistance to the crew

        .2　　Replacement clothing

        .3　　Specialist Contractors/Advisors

        .4　　Full or partial replacement of crew

        .5　　Victuals

        .6　　Repatriation of crew members.

.8　　Provision of immediate medical assistance post-release including counselling and the potential requirement for ongoing support and assistance.

.9　　Post-release media relations.

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