



Kiribati Ship Registry

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MARINE CIRCULAR 11/2026

27 March 2026

FOR : Ship Owners, Ship Managers, Ship Operators, Ship Masters, and Ship Officers

SUBJECT : Middle East Conflict – Guidance on Safety, Security and Operational Precautions

REFERENCES :

- (a) BMP-MS – Best Management Practices Maritime Security
- (b) SOLAS Chapter V – Safety of Navigation
- (c) SOLAS Chapter XI-2 – Special Measures to Enhance Maritime Security and the ISPS Code
- (d) MLC 2006 – Maritime Labour Convention 2006
- (e) Relevant advisories issued by UKMTO, JMIC, coastal States, naval authorities, IG P&I Clubs.

DEFINITION :

For the purpose of this circular:

- “AIS” – Automatic Identification System
- “BMP-MS” – Best Management Practices – Maritime Security
- “CSO” – Company Security Officer
- “GNSS” – Global Navigation Satellite System
- “LRIT” – Long Range Identification and Tracking
- “P&I” – Protection and Indemnity
- “RO” – Recognized Organization as defined by *MSC.349(92) / MEPC.237(65)*
- “UKMTO” – United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations
- “UXO” – Unexploded Ordinance

The following terms shall mean:

“Administration” – Kiribati Ship Registry.

“High-Risk Areas” – for the purpose of this Circular, areas affected by the current Middle East conflict and associated security threats, including as applicable the Persian Gulf, Arabian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz, Gulf of Oman, Arabian Sea, Red Sea and adjacent waters, subject to the latest security advisories.

APPLICATION:

This Circular applies to all Kiribati-flagged vessels operating, drifting, anchoring, conducting STS operations, or transiting through High-Risk Areas.

PURPOSE :

This Circular provides guidance to all concerned on the heightened safety, security, crew welfare and operational risks arising from the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, and sets out the Administration’s minimum expectations for Kiribati-flagged vessels trading or intending to trade in High-Risk Areas.

CONTENTS:

1. General

- 1.1. The security situation in the Middle East remains volatile and may change rapidly
- 1.2. Owners, managers and Masters shall continuously assess the latest threat information before and during any voyage through High-Risk Areas.
- 1.3. Compliance with BMP-MS and all relevant security advisories is strongly recommended at all times.

2. Voyage Risk Assessment and Planning

- 2.1. Prior to entry into High-Risk Areas, the Company shall carry out and document a voyage-specific risk assessment.
- 2.2. The risk assessment should include, as applicable:
 - 2.2.1. missile, drone, waterborne and other hostile threats;
 - 2.2.2. GNSS / GPS interference, spoofing or jamming;
 - 2.2.3. AIS disruption or operational concerns;
 - 2.2.4. drifting, anchoring and STS risks;
 - 2.2.5. tug assistance and emergency response limitations;
 - 2.2.6. availability of bunkers, stores, spares and crew change options; and
 - 2.2.7. insurance, charterparty and war risk implications.
- 2.3. The Master shall be provided with clear company guidance, reporting lines, go / no-go criteria, and escalation procedures in liaison with CSO regularly.

3. Crew and Vessel Preparedness

- 3.1. Owners and Masters shall ensure that the vessel is prepared for security-related emergencies, including fire, explosion, structural damage, flooding, medical emergencies, abandonment and post-incident response.
- 3.2. Emergency drills, equipment checks and contingency plans shall be reviewed and updated before entering the affected area.
- 3.3. Particular attention shall be given to bridge resource management, engine readiness, emergency communications, damage control equipment and lifesaving appliances.

4. Crew Welfare and Communication

- 4.1. Owners and managers shall ensure that seafarers are kept properly informed of the relevant risks, protective measures and contingency arrangements.
- 4.2. Communication with the crew shall be clear, factual and regular.
- 4.3. Crew concerns shall be taken seriously and promptly addressed.
- 4.4. In view of MLC 2006 obligations, companies shall pay due regard to crew welfare, fatigue, mental stress, rest hours, medical support and, where applicable, crew change and repatriation arrangements.

5. Navigation, GNSS Interference and Position Verification

- 5.1. Masters shall remain alert to GNSS / GPS interference, spoofing and jamming, which may affect safe navigation in the region.
- 5.2. The bridge team shall verify the vessel's position using all available means, including radar, visual observations, ECDIS cross-checks, echo sounder, parallel indexing and other appropriate methods.
- 5.3. Any suspected navigation interference shall be recorded and reported in accordance with company procedures and relevant reporting requirements.

6. AIS / LRIT / Reporting

- 6.1. AIS and LRIT shall remain operational in accordance with SOLAS and company procedures, unless the Master considers that temporary restriction is necessary for the immediate safety or security of the vessel.
- 6.2. Any decision affecting AIS or LRIT shall be properly recorded with reasons.
- 6.3. Where required by applicable guidance, the vessel shall report to UKMTO or other relevant reporting authorities and maintain communication in accordance with BMP-MS and company instructions
- 6.4. If LRIT transmission is interrupted for security reasons, the Administration shall be informed without delay.

7. Anchoring, Drifting and STS Operations

- 7.1. Owners and Masters shall exercise extreme caution when planning drifting, anchoring or STS operations in affected areas.
- 7.2. Such operations shall only be carried out after a specific risk assessment has been completed and accepted by the Company.
- 7.3. The assessment shall consider navigation hazards, security exposure, tug availability, emergency escape options, weather, traffic density and the risk of GNSS interference.
- 7.4. Owners shall avoid unnecessary delay or prolonged waiting time in exposed areas where safer alternatives are available.

8. Unexploded Ordnance / Post-Incident Measures

- 8.1. If any suspicious object, debris, projectile or possible UXO is found on board, the crew shall not touch, move, dismantle or discard it.
- 8.2. The affected area shall be isolated and preserved.
- 8.3. Relevant evidence, photographs, statements and electronic records, including VDR data where practicable, shall be secured.
- 8.4. The Company, security advisers and appropriate authorities shall be informed immediately and specialist advice shall be obtained.

9. Insurance, Surveys and Statutory Compliance

- 9.1. Owners and managers shall confirm that war risks, P&I and other relevant insurances remain valid for the intended voyage, area and operation if possible.
- 9.2. If any statutory survey, class survey, audit or certification is likely to be delayed due to the conflict or related restrictions, the owner / manager shall contact the RO and the Administration at the earliest opportunity. Owners are encouraging to arrange the survey at the start of window period of the survey instead of waiting till end of window period which may incur additional charge to the owner in practical.
- 9.3. No owner or Master shall assume that overdue surveys or certificates will be accepted without prior authorization.

For further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the Administration at: technical@kiribaship.com

Yours sincerely,

Deputy Registrar
Kiribati Ship Registry