



The Khasab corridor: a week of hits on merchant shipping

Four merchant vessels struck or near-missed in five days in one twenty-mile box off Oman. No claim, no identified weapon - and the corridor being attacked is the one shipping was told to use.

INCIDENT DETAILS • 5WH

Who Unclaimed and officially unattributed; UKMTO has named no actor. Reporting places it within the Iran nexus. One master reported VHF threats from people claiming Sepah Navy affiliation.

What At least four incidents: two confirmed strikes causing engine-room damage and fire, two near-misses with explosions, warning shots and radio threats. UKMTO Warning 104-26 classified the latest as an attack.

Where The Hormuz approaches off Oman's Musandam Peninsula, concentrated 20nm north-east of Al Khasab - the southern route backed by the US.

When 31 Jul to 4 Aug 2026; the Minoan Pioneer strike at 2200 UTC on 3 Aug.

Why No motive claimed. Runs alongside Iran-Oman talks on a route through the strait.

How Projectiles of unidentified type against merchant hulls, twice striking the engine room. Casualties - one seafarer missing.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

A 7 Jul: Al Rekayyat - projectile, engine-room fire, crew evacuated

B The corridor being hit is the advised southern route

C Iran negotiating with Oman on managing the strait

1 31 Jul: LNG carrier GasLog Shanghai disabled, engine room

2 31 Jul: tanker hit off Lima; another near-missed off Khasab

3 2 Aug: Velos Amber - explosion alongside; Iranian media photos

4 2 Aug: Egypt Prosperity threatened on VHF; On Pride shot at

5 3 Aug 2200Z: Minoan Pioneer struck, abandoned, engineer missing

IMPACT

- Human: one seafarer missing - the third engineer of the Minoan Pioneer. The first casualty of the sequence, and it changes its character.
- Operational: two vessels disabled by engine-room strikes, losing propulsion, power and fire pumps together.
- Economic: Hormuz carries about a fifth of global oil and is Qatar's only LNG route; Brent above 90 dollars, force majeure since March.
- Adversary gain: hold-at-risk demonstrated without a claim, without an identified weapon, and across every flag.

ASSESSMENT, LESSONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- The engine room is being aimed at - a realistic possibility this is deliberate, and it implies real accuracy.
- Attribution is unclaimed; the signalling is not - VHF threats and state-media photographs of a burning tanker.
- AIS silence did not protect - two vessels went dark and were engaged anyway.
- It is almost certain that commercial shipping remains the most exposed element of this corridor, because it is the one thing that has to keep moving.