



HEADQUARTERS, ALLIED MARITIME COMMAND

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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER NATO MARCOM OCTOBER 2018.

NATO MARCOM continues maritime security and counter-terrorism operations in its areas of responsibility. This month focused on Operation Sea Guardian (OSG) and the exercise Trident Juncture 18, the largest NATO Live Exercise in decades with regard to the number of units and personnel participating.

Maritime Security Operations

This month, OSG, NATO's Maritime Security Operation in the Mediterranean Sea, saw significant participation from multiple NATO nations with a total strength of 68 warships. Additionally, there were 90 Maritime Patrol Aircraft flights provided by Greece, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Turkey, France, and USA. Support was also provided by NATO submarines under national and NATO operational control.

Focused Operations (FOCOPS) 5 took place in the waters of Central and Eastern Mediterranean Sea from the 3rd to the 17th of October under the command of the Turkish Navy Captain, E. Altiner, who led the operation on frigate TCG Yavuz with the Italian ITS Scirocco and the Romanian ROS Regele Ferdinand frigates completing the surface action group. This group patrolled with the support of Maritime Patrol Aircrafts and Submarines.

Together a total of 271 merchant vessels were hailed during the month of October. Additionally, a boarding coordinated by NATO MARCOM in support of OSG occurred on a Merchant Vessel suspected of smuggling activities. The boarding occurred in the Central Mediterranean Sea by NATO forces after obtaining consent with the ship's flag State in accordance with international law. Investigations are still ongoing.

Excellent cooperation between Georgia and NATO MARCOM resulted in the arrest of a sailing vessel by Greek authorities in the Aegean Sea comprising of 2 crew members and 54 immigrants onboard.

OSG continues to enhance NATO's Maritime Situational Awareness (MSA) and security of the maritime domain in order to counter terrorism activities.

Standing Naval Maritime Groups

Standing Naval Maritime Group 2 (SNMG-2) and its tactical unit number 1 (TU 01) continues its deployment in the Aegean Sea, supporting the efforts of EU, Greece, and Turkey to control migration. The SNMG-2 TU 01 Commander leads his units from the German frigate FGS Lubeck with support from the Hellenic warships HS Troupakis and HS Kasos, who relieved HS Armatolos and HS Nikiforos on the 12th of October. The Turkish warship TCG Karadeniz Eregli relieved TCG Karsiyaka and the Albanian warship ALS Lissus. SNMG-2 TU 01 patrolled the areas assigned and sighted 6 small boats with immigrants coming from Turkey. The movements of these small boats were reported to local authorities for further actions.

Standing Naval Maritime Group 2 (SNMG-2) and its tactical unit number 2 (TU 02), formed by the Dutch HNLMS De Ruyter (flagship), the Canadian HMCS Ville de Quebec, the Spanish ESPS Cristobal Colon and the Turkish TCG Orucreis, finished the Turkish Exercise Mavi Balina in the Eastern Mediterranean and left for the Norwegian Sea to join the Trident Juncture exercise. The Spanish ESPS Cantabria joined the Group on the 13th of October. During the transit, the ships contributed to MSA enhancement, conducted ship training activities and visited Rota (Spain). On the 21st of October, the units arrived in Trondheim for the Trident Juncture 18 pre-sail conference.

Meanwhile, SNMG-1, formed by the HDMS Esbern Snare (flagship), the HNOMS Helge Ingstad and the Portuguese NRP Corte Real, sailed the Baltic Sea and the North Sea carrying out training activities and MSA. The Belgian BMS Louise Marie joined the group on the 22nd of October. They visited Cherbourg before leaving for Trondheim.

Standing Naval Mine Counter Measures Group 1 (SNMCMG-1), led by the Belgian warship BNS Godetia and consisting of the Norwegian HNOMS Maaloey, Lithuanian LNS Kursis, Latvian LVNS Ruisis, German FGS Hamburg, and the Dutch HNLMS Makkum, carried out mine countermeasures training and MSA in the Baltic Sea. They also took part in the Lithuanian Operation HOD (historical bombs and mines disposal) from the 10th to the 11th of October and visited Wismar and Klaipeda. After leaving Klaipeda on the 15th of October, the group initiated the transit to Trondheim for the Trident Juncture pre-sail conference.



Standing Naval Mine Counter Measures Group 2 (SNMCMG-2), formed by the German FGS Rhein (flagship), Italian ITS Termoli, French FS Orion, Turkish TCG Erdmeli, Greek HS Evropi, and Spanish ESPS Turia, left Toulon (France) and carried out training with the Tunisian Navy. They then completed MSA enhancement and training in the Central and Eastern Mediterranean. The Bulgarian BGS Tsibar joined the group on the 12th of October in time to participate in the Turkish exercise Nusret 18 with port calls in Aksaz and Cannakele in Turkey. The group entered the Black Sea at the end of October.

Exercise TRIDENT JUNCTURE 18

From 31 NATO and partner countries, more than 50,000 personnel, 250 aircraft, 65 vessels and 10,000 vehicles united to train their warfare capabilities in Norway. The training commenced on the 25th of October and completed on the 7th of November. The training area was large and varied with land operations in Central and Eastern Norway, maritime activity in the surrounding waters from the Baltic Sea to the edges of the Norwegian Sea, including Iceland, and the airspace of Sweden and Finland. The purpose of the exercise was to ensure that NATO forces are trained to be able to operate together and ready to respond to any threat from any direction.

NATO MARCOM acted as the Maritime Component Command, gaining and maintaining control of the maritime domain and providing key protection that enabled the cohesion, unity and interoperability of NATO forces and NATO nations.

TRIDENT JUNCTURE was a good test of NATO's force aggregation and cooperation and was a reminder that maritime domain control is a critical and enduring task essential for the stability and prosperity of all nations in peacetime and in crisis.



NATO Shipping Centre (NSC) Updates

The Director of the NSC attended the Interferry conference in Cancun (Mexico) in October, strengthening the shipping industry's cooperation with NATO and providing information about future NATO MARCOM activities.

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The NSC's ongoing engagement with EUNAVFOR Operation Sophia continues to provide an increased understanding of maritime security issues in the Mediterranean Sea. Cooperation is critical for deterring and countering both terrorism and the criminal activities that sustain it.

The NSC, in cooperation with US MARAD, requests that all ships report incidents of GPS jamming or interference in the Eastern Mediterranean in order to maintain overall awareness of issues affecting safety and security of navigation. A first assesment is annexed to this newsletter.

Merchant ships are encouraged to report all suspicious activity in the Mediterranean Sea and broader North Atlantic Region to the NSC: info@shipping.nato.int / +44 (0) 1923-956574.

Ben Lofstad

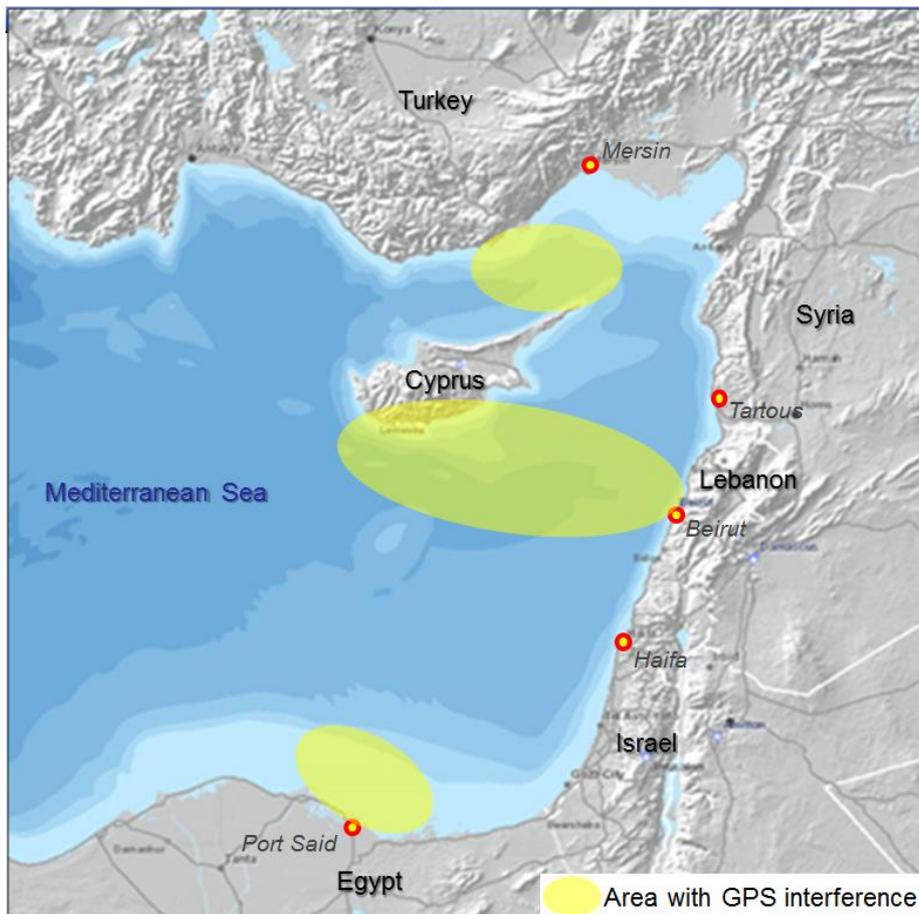
Commander, NOR N
Director, NATO Shipping Centre

ELECTRONIC INTERFERENCES ASSESMENT

The eastern Mediterranean is extremely busy militarily. There are numerous warships operating in the region all with high powered transmitting devices. This undoubtedly results in a challenging electromagnetic environment and to some degree, mutual interference is expected. Furthermore, adjacent band interference and mobile phone networks such as 4G LTE likely compound the problem by causing additional interference or anomalies. While reporting to date has shown no serious impact to shipping, MARCOM N2 continues to monitor the region and assess the problems it may pose.

In July 18, the NATO Shipping Centre Published a report on Cyber Interference requesting additional reporting from industry should they experience interference during transit of the Mediterranean. Following this request a number reports have been received by HQ MARCOM that has proven helpful in gaining an understanding of the problem and potential difficulties experienced by commercial vessels at sea.

These reports included interference that resulted in the loss of GPS signal and systems requiring GPS input such as ECDIS and GMDSS. Despite these losses masters were able to switch to reversonianary methods of navigation and suffered no lasting impact to transit time or operations. The location of these interferences have been varied, to include south of Mersin (Turkey), south of Cyprus up to the coast of Lebanon, and the approaches of Port Said (Egypt) – see figure below.



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HQ MARCOM greatly appreciates reporting provided by the commercial industry and would request they continue to forward these reports as interference is experienced. In addition to these reports, also please forward anything you deem as suspicious while conducting your business in the Mediterranean. HQ MARCOM will provide collective feedback on all reporting received on a regular basis.

As of October 18 Information was shared with the United States Maritime Administration, and used in the revised U.S. Maritime Advisory version 2018-014.

This Maritime Alert now includes all areas where GPS jamming was reported by commercial vessels for the benefit of all. Please continue to provide your reporting.