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25 February 2022

To: All Masters, Ship Security Officers, Company Security Officers of Hong Kong Registered Ships, Shipowners and Ship Managers

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Security and Quality Advisory No.66

Security situation in the Black Sea and the Azov Sea

The Marine Department (MD) would like to draw your attention to the security awareness of the escalating security situation in and around the Exclusive Economic Zones and territorial waters of the Ukraine and the Russian Federation in the Black Sea and the Azov Sea (Concerned Waters).

2. Masters of all Hong Kong-registered ships (HK Ships) currently in or planning to enter the Concerned Waters are advised to conduct the Risk Assessment and to review the required response according to the Ship Security Plan (SSP)
3. The overall responsibility for the safety and security of a ship, and the people on it, rests with the master. Additional security measures should be implemented to counter increased risks when warranted. Under SOLAS Chapter XI-2, Regulation 8, the master has the overriding authority and responsibility to make decisions regarding the security and safety of his ship.
4. Currently, maritime security level for Hong Kong-registered ship is "Level 1" (see <https://marsec.mardep.gov.hk/en/>).
5. HK Ships are required to act upon the security levels set by Contracting Governments (ISPS Code A/7.1) and shall acknowledge receipt of the instruction and shall confirm to the port facility security officer (PFSO) the initiation of the implementation of the appropriate measures and procedures as detailed in the SSP prior to entering a port or whilst in a port within the territory of a Contracting Government (ISPS Code A/7.6). The ship shall report any difficulties in implementation. In such cases, the PFSO and ship security officer (SSO) shall liaise and co-ordinate the appropriate actions.
7. The SSO shall acknowledge receipt of the Contracting Government's instruction and shall confirm to the PFSO the initiation of the implementation of the appropriate measures and procedures as detailed in the SSP.

8. This means that the master has the authority to raise his ship's security measures but not the security level. So if the master wishes to heighten his ship's security measures equivalent to security level 2 or level 3 while transiting Concerned Waters, he is allowed to do so.

9. Please be reminded to report all security incidents to the nearest rescue coordination centre (RCC) or port Authorities and to HKMD as follows:

Hong Kong Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre

(24 Hours Communication Focal Point)

E-mail : hkmrcc@mardep.gov.hk

Telephone : (852) 2233 7999

Fax : (852) 2541 7714

11. All Masters, Ship and Company Security officers, Shipowners and Ship Managers are reminded when planning for voyages regarding the Concerned Waters.

12. Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us by email at mms@mardep.gov.hk.

Yours faithfully,

(No signature on website)

(C. W. HO)

Senior Surveyor of Ship / Cargo Ships Safety Section
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for Director of Marine