

Geollect Comment: Naval forces on 24 Feb 20, reported the destruction of an unmanned boat loaded with explosives, the vessel was launched from the coast of Yemen. As of 25 Feb, 20 there has been no confirmation of involvement from the Houthi movement. Similar incidences were reported by the Saudi-led military coalition off the coast of Hodeida on 19 Sep 19 and 9 Jul 19 and Al-Mocha in 16 Aug 17 and 29 Jul 17.

Water-Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (WBIEDs) and sea mines have been known to be deployed in attempts to deter and deny Saudi naval forces. It is assessed that these are less likely to pose a significant threat to commercial traffic in recognised transit routes, however, the threat of drifting, acoustic or magnetic contact mines cannot be discounted, and vessels should remain aware of the threat whilst transiting through the area.

Naval mines have become an increasing threat during 2020. On 14 Feb 20, the U.S Maritime Administration issued a warning of floating mines to merchant shipping near the coastal areas south of the Port Jazan. Additionally, on 5 Feb 20 at 0200 UTC, a distress signal was received concerning a fishing boat sinking in the South Red Sea after being caught in a mine explosion.

Historically, Naval mines have been deployed off the coast of Yemen in the areas of Al Mukha, Hodeidah, Al Luhayyah and the coastal maritime border area between Yemen and Saudi Arabia, see fig 1. Mariners should remain vigilant whilst transiting through these areas in the Red Sea.

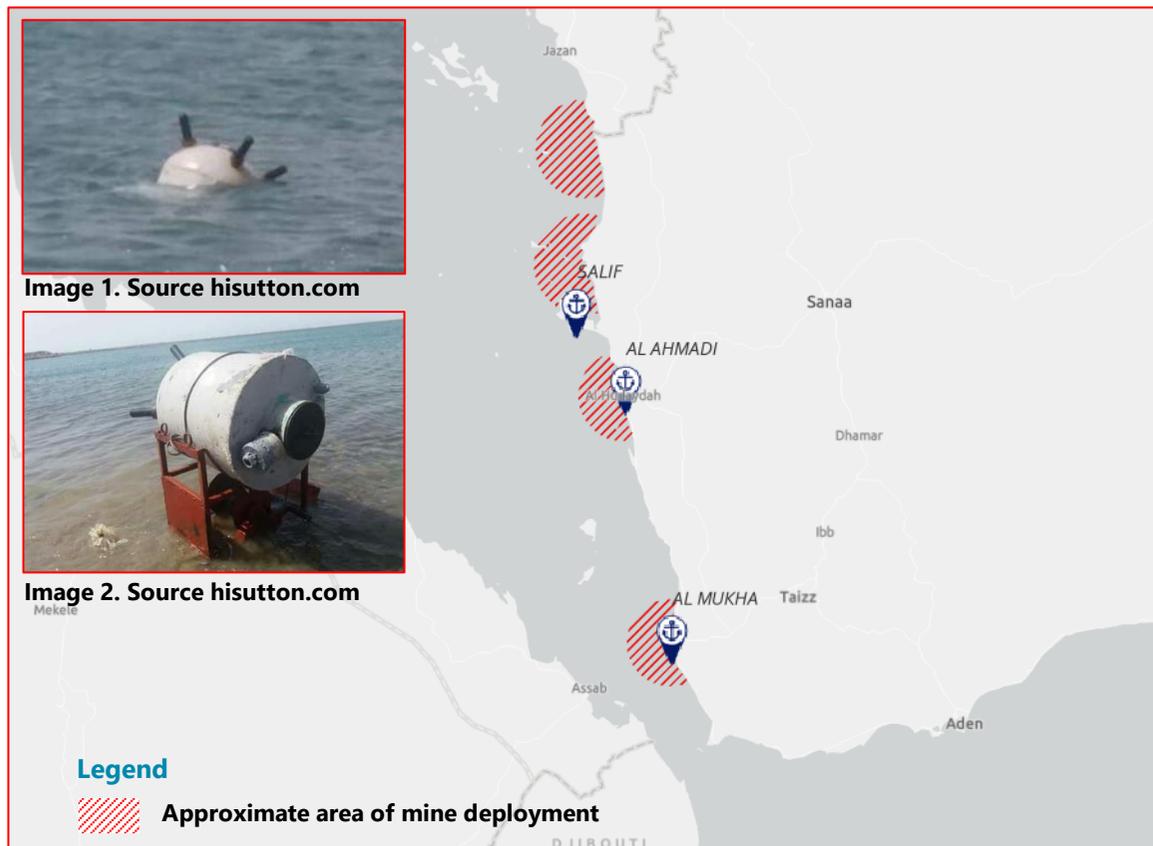


Figure 1. Historical areas of naval mine deployment and example recovered mines

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Geollect Assessment:

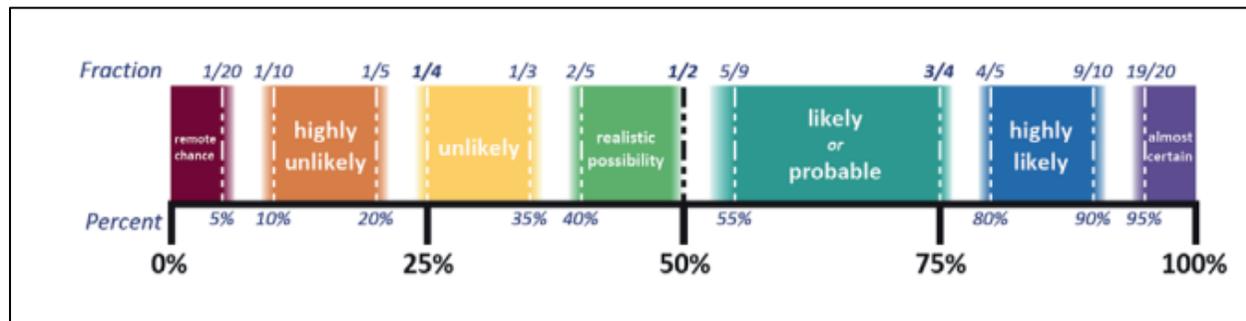
Deployment of naval mines and WBIEDs are a serious threat to maritime navigation and international trade in the south Red sea and Bab-el-Mandeb Strait. Historically, naval mines recovered in Yemen have been described as either direct contact or magnetic mines, all though sophisticated acoustic naval mines have been sporadically recovered by the Yemeni Navy and Royal Saudi Navy. It is likely that these contact, magnetic, acoustic mines are Iranian produced.

Geollect recommend following conventional shipping lanes through the Bab Al Mandeb Strait and Red Sea and avoiding routes close to the Yemeni coastline. Vessels should exercise heightened vigilance whilst transiting West of al Mukha, Hodeidah and Midi where naval mines and WBIEDs have historically been released.

Vessels are urged to report any unusual activities, hostile or potentially hostile action to the coalition naval forces using VHF Channel 16, via e-mail at cusnc.bwc@me.navy.mil or by phone 011-973-1785-3879; additionally to remain in contact with the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) and the U.S. Naval Cooperation and Guidance of Shipping (NCAGS) at cusnc.ncags_bw@me.navy.mil to the maximum extent possible

UKMTO Contact details

- **Emergency contact +44 (0) 2392 222060 watchkeepers@ukmto.org**
- **Ops room Manager +44 23 922 12 042 mtic-orm@ukmto.org**



Almost all Intelligence assessments contain a degree of uncertainty. In order to avoid any misinterpretation, these intelligence assessments are categorised using the terms outlined in the image below, instead of using numerical probabilities. Throughout all Geollect products the scale of probability is split into these seven categories. The use of this standard ensures analysts can make reliable judgments and avoid inappropriate use of terms.

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