



Philippines DMW Advisory for the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden

In response to the recent armed attacks in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden on ships manned by Filipino seafarers, The Philippines Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) issued Advisory No. 21 dated 10 July 2025 addressed to all licensed manning agencies (LMAs) and their accredited foreign principals/shipowners.

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As reported by Manila law office Del Rosario and Del Rosario, [the advisory](#) provides:

“Ship Rerouting and Compliance with Existing Orders

All licensed manning agencies (LMAs) and their principals/shipowners must reroute or divert their ships manned by Filipino seafarers away from ITF/IBF-designated warlike and high-risk zones, particularly the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden.

LMAs and foreign principals are reminded to strictly adhere to:

- 1. Department Order No. 01, Series of 2024 which refers to the Guidelines on the Observance of the ITF/IBF High-Risk and War-Like Zone and Implementation of the Right to Refuse Sailing of Seafarers*
- 2. Department Order No. 02, Series of 2024 which refers to the Prohibition for Filipino Seafarers On-Board Passenger/Cruise Ships to Sail in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden*
- 3. Department Order No. 03, Series of 2024 which refers to Prohibition Against Deployment of Filipino Seafarers On-Board Ships Which Traversed Through the ITF/IBF Designated Warlike and High Risk Zones and Have Been Attacked and*
- 4. DMW Advisory No. 16, Series of 2025 on the Amended List of IBF Warlike and high-Risk Areas.*

Right to Refuse Sailing and Repatriation

LMAs and principals must honour the right of Filipino seafarers to refuse sailing in the warlike and high-risk areas. Immediate and safe repatriation must be arranged for those invoking this right.

Mandatory Reporting

LMAs and principals must report to the Seabased Accreditation Bureau of the DMW (sbhighrisks@dmw.gov.ph) the names of principals/employers who have diverted their ships to safer routes, names of Filipino seafarers who refused to sail and names of Filipino seafarers who voluntarily continued with the voyage after being informed of the risks and their rights.

Prohibition on Deployment to Previously Attacked Ships

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LMAs and principals are strictly prohibited from deploying Filipino seafarers to any ship that:

- 1. was previously subjected to an attack*
- 2. is traversing or intends to traverse the same ITF/IBF designated warlike and high-risk zones*
- 3. has been targeted by Houthi rebel forces and/or other armed groups.*

This prohibition applies regardless of whether the incident occurred in the past, is ongoing or is foreseeable in the designated zones.

Appointment of Seafarers' Welfare and Crisis Management Officer (SWACO)

All LMAs must appoint a Seafarers' Welfare and Crisis Management Officer (SWACO) to: coordinate with the proper authorities during maritime crises, monitor critical incidents and ensure timely corrective measures and accurate reporting to the DMW, assist in the conduct of incident investigations, ensure compliance with maritime safety and security regulations and company protocols and lead the safety and crisis-awareness training programs of seafarers.

The credential of the appointed SWACO must be submitted to the Seabased Accreditation Bureau and Licensing Regulation Bureau of the DMW within 5 days or up to 15 July 2025.”

Gard Comments

We thank Del Rosario for allowing us to republish their advice which can be found on their [website](#) . We have received the following clarification as to the right to refuse sailing - " *Based on the DMW issuances, there seems to be no absolute prohibition to pass through Red Sea/Gulf of Aden at this time (except for passenger ships). However, as mentioned above, there are very burdensome reporting, consent and reportorial requirements for shipowners who will do so.*

Further, Filipino seafarers have an absolute right to say no. Even if they have given their consent, they can always change their minds and shipowners are obliged to send them home. For practical purposes, it would seem that shipowners with Filipino seafarers onboard should review the option to reroute or divert their vessels."

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