

# Central Command Releases Timeline of Mine Attack in Gulf of Oman



An unclassified slide provided by U.S. Central Command shows the damage from a June 13 explosion and a likely limpet mine on the hull of the M/V Kokuka Courageous in the Gulf of Oman.

ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Central Command has published a timeline of the June 13 attacks on two commercial tankers in the Gulf of Oman.

The two motor tankers, the Norway-flagged M/T Altair and the Japan-flagged M/T Kokuka Courageous, were

apparently damaged by limpet mines placed on their hulls. Ships and P-8

aircraft of the U.S. 5th Fleet responded to the incidents to render assistance

and to investigate who launched the attacks.

Secretary of State Michael

Pompeo later blamed Iran for the attacks, according to a June 13 report in

Politico. “These attacks are a threat to international peace and security,

a blatant assault on the freedom of navigation and an unacceptable escalation

of tension by Iran,” he is quoted as saying by the Politico report.

Video recorded by a U.S aircraft of an Iranian Gashti-class patrol boat and crew removing an unexploded limpet mine from the M/T Kokuka Courageous.

Pompeo said his assessment

was based “on intelligence, the weapons used, the level of expertise needed to

execute the operation, recent similar Iranian attacks on shipping and the fact that no proxy group operating in the area has the resources and proficiency to act with such a high degree of sophistication," Politico reported.

The incidents followed covert attacks on May 12 on four tankers in the waters of the United Arab Emirates, apparently also with limpet mines.

The following is a timeline of the June 13 attacks provided by Capt. Bill Urban of U.S. Central Command public affairs:

- U.S. Naval forces in the region received two separate distress calls at 6:12 a.m. local time from the Altair and a second one at 7 a.m. from Kokuka Courageous.
- Both vessels were in international waters in the Gulf of Oman about 10 nautical miles apart at the time of the distress calls. USS Bainbridge was about 40 nautical miles away from Altair at the time of the attack and immediately began closing the distance.
- At 8:09 a.m., a U.S. aircraft observed an Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Hendijan-class patrol boat and multiple IRGC fast attack craft/fast inshore attack craft (FAC/FIAC) in the vicinity of Altair.
- At 9:12 a.m., a U.S. aircraft observed the FAC/FIAC pull a raft from the Altair from the water.
- At 9:26 a.m., the Iranians requested that the motor

vessel Hyundai

Dubai, which had rescued the sailors from the Altair, turn the crew over to the Iranian FIACs. The Hyundai Dubai complied with the request and transferred the crew of the Altair to the Iranian FIACs.

- At 11:05 a.m. local time, USS Bainbridge approached the Dutch tug Coastal Ace, which had rescued the crew of 21 sailors from the Kokuka Courageous who had abandoned their ship after discovering a probable unexploded limpet mine on their hull following an initial explosion.
- While the Iranian Hendijan patrol boat appeared to attempt to get to the tug Coastal Ace before Bainbridge, the mariners were rescued by Bainbridge at the request of the master of the Kokuka Courageous. The rescued sailors are currently aboard Bainbridge.
- At 4:10 p.m., an IRGC Gashti-class patrol boat approached the Kokuka Courageous and was observed and recorded removing the unexploded limpet mine from the Kokuka Courageous.

“The U.S. and our partners in the region will take all necessary measures to defend ourselves and our interests,” Urban said.

“Today’s attacks are a clear threat to international freedom of navigation and freedom of commerce. The U.S. and the international community stand ready to defend our interests, including the freedom of navigation. The United States has no interest in engaging in a new conflict in the Middle

East. However, we  
will defend our interests.”