



SUMMARY

In response to violence and criminality in the maritime sector, the shipping industry has relied on several models of contracted maritime security to protect vessels and seafarers. This trend has resulted in a proliferation of weapons at sea and various types of armed security teams operating aboard private commercial vessels. If the activities of these armed maritime security teams continue to be largely ungoverned, the actions of some unaccountable actors could increase incidents of violence at sea and possibly hinder efforts to pursue sustainable rule of law solutions to maritime criminality. Accordingly, Oceans Beyond Piracy (OBP) and other organizations within the maritime community are striving to increase transparency and oversight of maritime security operations. However, differences in function, applicable national jurisdiction, and types of services offered by maritime security providers makes assessing operational scope and designing uniform global policy for this sector a challenging endeavor.

As a first step in empirically examining the extent of maritime security operations, OBP seeks to define various models of contracted maritime security. OBP is releasing a series of issue papers which build on our publication from December 16th, 2016 titled [“Defining Contracted Maritime Security”](#) to further classify and define each identified model of contracted maritime security. As defined in the paper, these categories include:

- ▶ **Private Maritime Security:** Embarked private security force personnel hired by the shipping industry.
- ▶ **Vessel Protection Detachments:** Uniformed military personnel embarked on a vessel with explicit approval of the Flag State.
- ▶ **Coastal State Embarked Personnel:** Embarked armed personnel originating from the Coastal State, based on arrangements between ship operators and the providing national authorities – not specifically endorsed by the Flag State.
- ▶ **State Affiliated Escorts:** Escort by a State military asset.

This issue paper will explore the model of State Affiliated Escorts.

STATE AFFILIATED ESCORTS IN THE GULF OF ADEN AND WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN

As a response to piracy off the Horn of Africa in 2008, sovereign states began offering escort services to vessels transiting the Internationally Recommended Transit Corridor (IRTC)¹ between Somalia and Yemen. The escort service involves a state-owned warship escorting a merchant vessel or a convoy of merchant vessels through dangerous waters. The mandates of Coalition Forces including CTF-151, NATO Operation Ocean Shield, and EUNAVFOR Operation Atalanta focus largely on anti-piracy patrol operations, but these coalition forces occasionally provide escorts for merchant ships delivering humanitarian aid or involved in peacekeeping operations (ex. World Food Programme and AMISOM).²



1 According to the International Maritime Organization, the limits of the IRTC are as follows: “The corridor includes the creation of separate eastbound and westbound transit lanes. Each lane will be 5 nm wide and will be separated by a 2 nm buffer zone. The IRTC eastbound lane begins at 045° E between 11° 48′.00 N and 11° 53′.00 N. The lane is oriented along a straight line course of 072° and terminates at 053° E between 14° 18′.00 N and 14° 23′.00 N. The IRTC westbound lane begins at 053° between 14° 25′.00 N and 14° 30′.00 N. The lane is oriented along a straight line course of 252° and terminates at 045° east between 11° 55′.00 N and 12° 00′.00 N.”

2 “Missions | Eunavfor.” Accessed August 30, 2017. <http://eunavfor.eu/mission/>.

Other sovereign states acting independently, such as China, India, Russia, Japan, and the Republic of Korea,³ also deployed vessels to protect commercial traffic in the Gulf of Aden. The Convoy Coordination Working Group associated with the Shared Awareness and De-Confliction (SHADE) meetings works to de-conflict and organize convoy services provided by these states, but much of the organizing, managing, and protection of convoys sailing through the IRTC⁴ is left to the individual states. The cost of the convoys is borne by each navy running their own escorts and convoys.

STATE AFFILIATED ESCORTS IN THE GULF OF GUINEA

In Nigerian territorial waters, one of the only officially permitted Contracted Maritime Security services is a State Affiliated Escort; although, as documented in an earlier OBP report in this series, embarkation of government forces is still occurring. Unlike in East Africa, where the navies of sovereign states provide and conduct the escorts, in Nigeria, the Nigerian Navy provides escort services by embarking Nigerian naval personnel aboard private patrol vessels chartered-in to service for military use or chartered to the companies seeking protection. Generally, a private company owns and operates the vessels, while the Nigerian Navy provides the crew and security personnel—who are responsible for handling weapons and providing security services. The conduct of these services is governed by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between specific Private Maritime Security Companies and the Chief of Naval Staff of the Nigerian Navy. Currently, there are approximately 20 of these MOUs in effect.

These public-private models of escort services in Nigeria are used to protect oil and gas assets, commercial vessel traffic moving to and from oil and gas infrastructure, commercial vessels moving into and out of ports, and in special zones like Secure Anchorage Areas. In total, [OBP estimates](#) that the costs of Nigerian Delta Port escorts alone amounted to \$12.4 million dollars in 2016.

DELTA PORT ESCORT COSTS

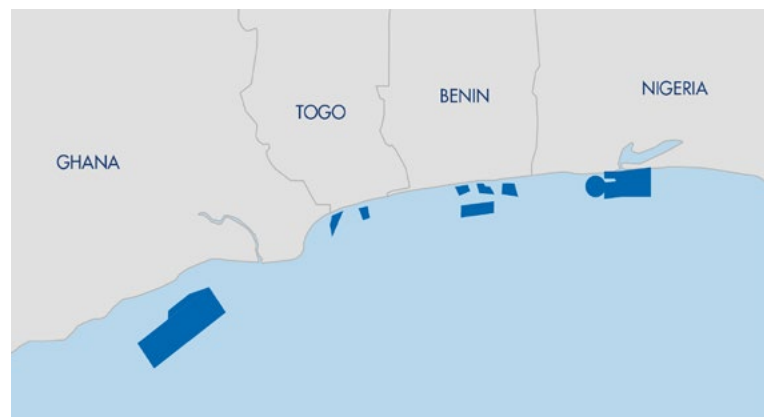
DELTA PORT ESCORTS	ANNUAL ESCORTS	COST PER ESCORT	ANNUAL COST
Lagos to Warri	Agent's coordination fee	\$37,500	\$1,650,000
Warri to Onne	4 Armed Guards	\$56,000	\$3,360,000
Lagos to Onne	Embark/Disembark via Shuttle	\$64,000	\$7,424,000
ESTIMATED COST FOR DELTA ESCORTS			\$12,434,000

SECURE ZONES IN THE GULF OF GUINEA

In addition to traditional escorts, the waters off Ghana, Togo, Benin, and Nigeria also contain a number of secure zones where vessels can safely anchor to wait for a berth or conduct ship-to-ship transfer (STS) operations. In Benin and Togo, coastal state navies are responsible for patrolling the secure zones, and in Ghana the Ports and Harbor Authority is responsible for providing protection.

Access to the SAA in Nigeria costs roughly \$10,500 for a merchant vessel to use, and the STS Zone costs roughly \$3,000—all of which must be paid for by the ship operator. The Nigerian SAAs are protected by the Nigerian Navy, which provides all the personnel and weapons, although they are usually embarked aboard patrol vessels owned and operated by a private company and chartered into use.

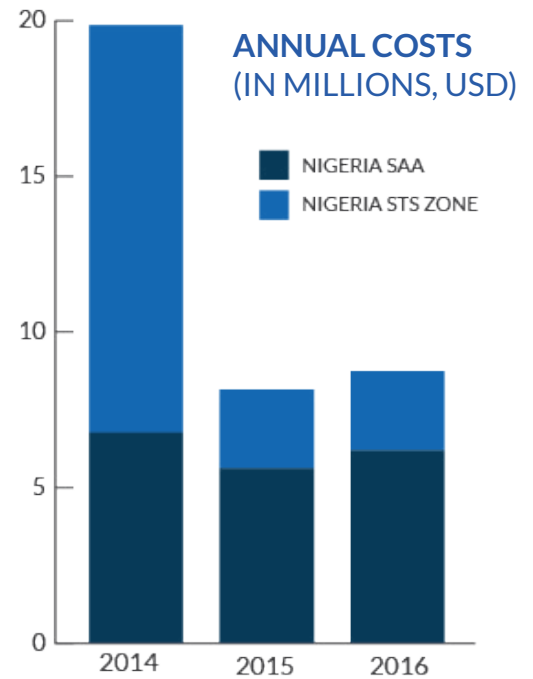
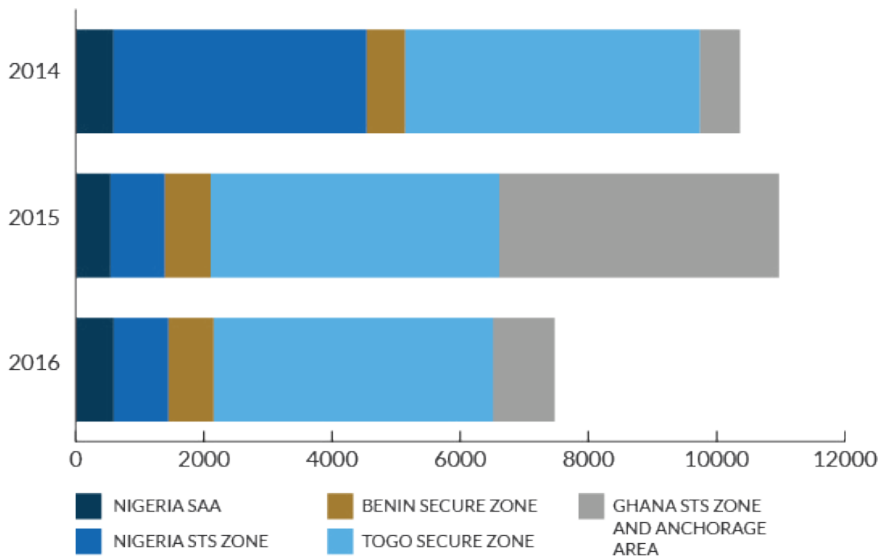
MAP OF WEST AFRICA SAFE ZONES



³ "Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in East Africa | SOP 2016." OBP, April 20, 2016. <http://oceansbeyondpiracy.org/reports/sop/east-africa>.

⁴ For more information on the IRTC please see the following link: [http://www.mcw.gov.cy/mcw/dms/dms.nsf/All/OD267A9F9869F872C2257631002D22E3/\\$-file/3007%20sn%201%20circ%20281.pdf](http://www.mcw.gov.cy/mcw/dms/dms.nsf/All/OD267A9F9869F872C2257631002D22E3/$-file/3007%20sn%201%20circ%20281.pdf)

ANNUAL VISITS TO SECURE ZONES IN GULF OF GUINEA



STATE AFFILIATED ESCORTS IN ASIA

There is evidence that State Affiliated Escorts have been used in Asia in the early 2000’s when incidents of piracy and armed robbery were more prevalent in the Malacca Strait. During 2004, the Royal Malaysian Navy indicated it was willing to provide escort services to vessels under threat while traveling through Malaysian territorial waters—with the government bearing the brunt of the costs.⁵

CONCLUSION

State affiliated escorts, like those described in this paper, are often used in place of [Coastal State Embarked Personnel](#), [Privately Contracted Armed Security Personnel](#) (PCASP), and [Vessel Protection Detachments](#), as outlined in OBP’s preceding contracted maritime security series issue papers. The other models remain significantly cheaper than contracting a State Affiliated Escort—regardless of whether it is a nation state or private enterprise footing the bill. As a result, the high cost of contracted escort services has limited their usage in practical terms and will likely do so into the future as ship operators continue to seek security solutions which strike the balance between optimal protection and cost effectiveness.

⁵ “Malaysia Promises Naval Escorts | IHS Fairplay.” Accessed August 30, 2017. <https://fairplay.ihs.com/safety-regulation/article/4219726/malaysia-promises-naval-escorts>.