



Iranian UAV Attack Against MOTOR TANKER MERCER STREET

06 August 21





29-30 JULY 2021: IRANIAN UAV ATTACK ON M/T MERCER STREET

EXECUTIVE CONCLUSION: The confluence of multiple components with very specific and matching identities to previously exploited (and known) Iranian one-way attack UAVs. The use of Iranian designed and produced one way attack “kamikaze” UAVs is a growing trend in the region. They are actively used by Iran and their proxies against coalition forces in the region, to include targets in Saudi Arabia and Iraq.

Summary:

- Early on 29 July, Liberian-flagged M/T MERCER STREET, operated by Zodiac Maritime Limited (chaired by Israeli businessman), came under attack from two one-way UAVs while transiting in international waters off the coast of Oman.
- After first failed UAV attack, crew was able to recover some UAV debris.
- On 30 July, in a separate and deliberate attack, MERCER STREET was struck by another drone, killing the ship's master (Romanian citizen) and a security officer (UK citizen).
 - This second attack required calculated and deliberate retargeting of M/T MERCER STREET by Iran
- The crew followed appropriate procedures, gathered in safe haven inside the ship, and informed their company of an attack.
- The company informed UK Maritime Trade Organization (UKMTO) of the incident, who then communicated the matter to Headquarters, US Naval Forces Central Command (USNAVCENT).



(U) M/V MERCER STREET (Stock Photo)



(U) Damage Caused by Iranian UAV Attack



(U) Debris From Failed Iranian UAV Attack



(U) Iranian UAV Impact Location



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- USNAVCENT directed aircraft carrier USS RONALD REAGAN with escort (USS MITSCHER), to close the coast of Oman, establish communications with the MERCER STREET and render assistance. A US drone was also directed to the area to assist.
- A helicopter from USS RONALD REAGAN located the MERCER STREET in a remote area of the Arabian Sea.
- Working through UKMTO and Zodiac, communications were established with MERCER STREET; surviving crew confirmed Master and a Security Officer had been killed.
- In early afternoon, an Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team from USS RONALD REAGAN fast-roped onto MERCER STREET to ensure vessel security, verify no further explosive-related danger existed, facilitate vessel communications with Zodiac, and gather debris from the incident.
- By 31 July, the US EOD team was extracted and returned to USS RONALD REAGAN. Material gathered from the scene was transported to NAVCENT Headquarters for forensic analysis.
- By 2 Aug, a multi-lateral exploitation team initiated analysis of the recovered debris.



(U) EOD Site Assessment of Iranian Attack



(U) Internal View of Iranian UAV Impact Site



(U) From UAV on MERCER STREET



(U) Vertical Stabilizer on Iranian UAV

FORENSIC CONCLUSIONS: 1) Verified components of the Iranian one-way attack UAV were identical to previously identified Iranian unmanned one-way attack systems, and 2) Confirmed the Iranian UAV was explosive laden.



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(U) Vertical Stabilizer Identical to Iranian UAV



(U) Side and Top View of Iranian UAV Fin



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Iranian Delta Wing UAS Family



May 2014: Smaller
Delta Wing UAV on
Display in Iranian
Airshow



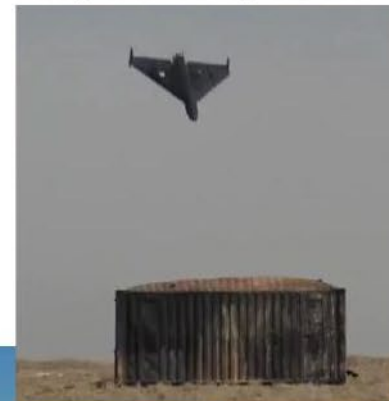
May 2019: Iranian
Smaller Delta Wing
UAV Used in Attack on
Saudi Arabia

Iran has publically displayed delta wing, one-way attack UAVs consistent with UAVs observed operating across the Middle East in recent years.



Sep 2020: Larger
Iranian Delta Wing
UAV Crash in Yemen

May 2021: Iranian Video of
Larger Delta Wing UAV Test



Jan 2021:
IranPress Video
of Smaller Delta
Wing UAV Test



FORENSIC CONCLUSIONS: US Experts concluded, based on the vertical fin being identical to those identified on one of the Iranian designed and produced one-way attack "kamikaze" UAV family, that Iran was actively involved in this attack.



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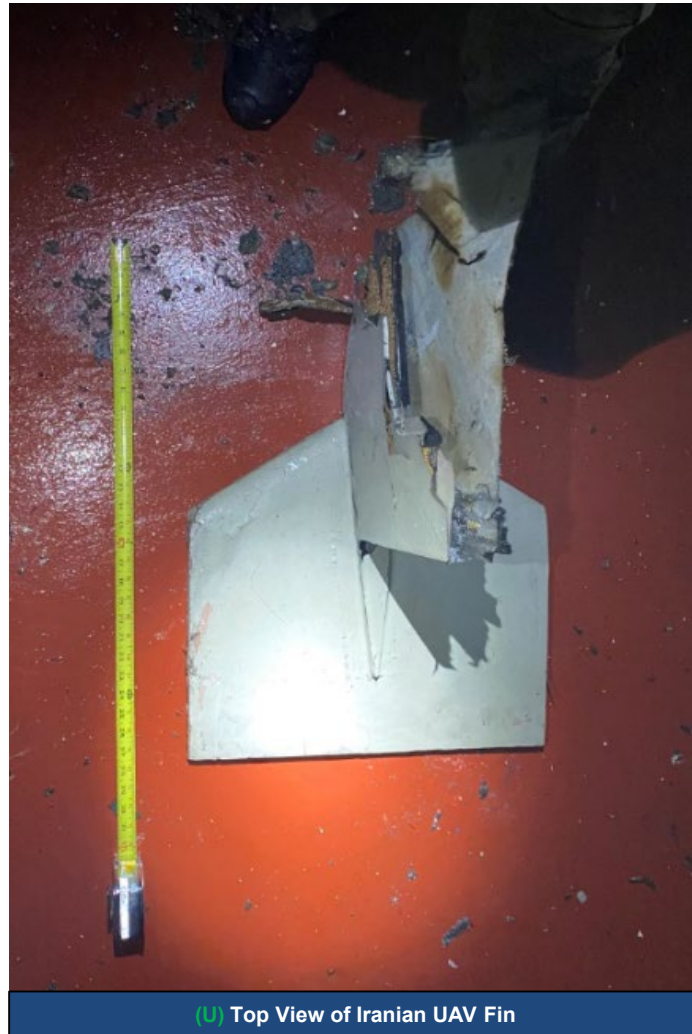
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(U) Vertical Stabilizer Identical to Iranian UAV



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(U) Top View of Iranian UAV Fin



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(U) Side View of Iranian UAV Fin



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(U) Internal View of Iranian UAV Impact Site



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(U) Internal View of Impact Site from Iranian UAV Attack



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(U) Internal View of Impact Site from Iranian UAV Attack