

Houthi fire at MSC and Borealis ships

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MSC Grace F / Source: VesselFinder

Two of MSC vessels and a boxship owned by UK tonnage provider Borealis Maritime were hit by Houthi missiles in the Red Sea on 6 April, as the rebels restarted attacks after several days of inactivity.

Houthi spokesperson Yahya Saree said on 7 April that “ballistic and winged” missiles were fired at the 1999-built, 4,056 TEU MSC Gina, 1991-built multi-purpose ship MSC Grace F and Borealis’ 2006-built, 3,534 TEU Hope Island.

MSC has not responded to *Container News*’ request for comment.

MSC Grace F was attacked despite having an armed escort; the ship departed Mogadiscio, Somalia, on 2 April, and is now in Mombasa, Kenya.

Vessel-tracking data shows that MSC Gina is now anchored outside Berbera, Somalia. The ship, which had set out from Colombo, Sri Lanka, on 27 March, is expected to sail on to Djibouti.

Yahya claimed the MSC ships were attacked as they were “Israeli ships” going to occupied areas in Palestine.

According to UK Maritime Trade Operations, Hope Island was targeted 60 nautical miles southwest of Al Hudaydah, Yemen.

UKMTO said, “The master reported two missiles in the vicinity of the vessel. The first was intercepted by coalition forces, the second impacted the water a distance from the vessel. The vessel reports no damage and the crew are reported safe.”

UKMTO said the Houthis attempted to attack Hope Island again on 7 April, 59 nautical miles southwest of Aden, with the missile landing in the water near the ship. Again, no damage to the ship was caused, and the crew was unhurt.

Hope Island, which had set out from Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on 4 April, continued on its voyage and is due to arrive in Mombasa on 16 April.

Hope Island was chartered out in November 2023 for a six-month period to an undisclosed charterer, although S&P Global’s data indicates that Italian operator Ignazio Messina fixed the ship.

US Central Command said that on 6 April, between approximately 10 am and 3 pm Yemen time, its forces destroyed one mobile surface-to air missile system in Houthi-controlled territory of Yemen. The US forces also shot down one drone over the Red Sea. Additionally, at approximately 6 pm Yemen time, a vessel operated by Western forces detected and successfully engaged and destroyed one inbound anti-ship missile.

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