

OPEN-SOURCE INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

# April 2026

## National Security

United Kingdom · Monthly threat & risk briefing

# Reimagining Protective Risk Management.

Intelligence · Advisory · Protection · Response

---

CONTENTS

# In this issue

---

**01** About Us

---

**02** Disclaimer

---

**03** Executive Summary

---

**04** National Threat Levels

---

**05** National Security

---

**06** Crime and Disorder

---

**07** International Security

---

## 01 — ABOUT

# About Triton Risk Management

---

**Triton Risk Management** is a protective risk management company established in September 2019. Our vision is to deliver integrated risk management solutions aimed at protecting people and assets in high-hazard environments and complex threat landscapes. We do this by attracting the best people and leveraging the best equipment and technology available to safeguard the things that matter most to us and our partners.

Our model is predicated on highly trained, competent individuals provided with extensive cross-training programmes, deployed with cutting-edge technology and hardware, tried and tested over years of exposure in both the public and private sector. We assure this through looking after our people, delivering only a best-in-class service to our partners, and constantly innovating and challenging ourselves to strive for perfection in delivery.

## 02 — EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# April 2026 in review

A material deterioration in the UK's security environment.

---

April 2026 was characterised by a **material deterioration in the UK's security environment**, driven by a convergence of elevated domestic terrorist threat, sustained serious and organised crime activity, and significant international instability with direct secondary impacts on the United Kingdom. The cumulative effect is an increasingly complex and interconnected threat landscape for organisations, infrastructure operators, and individuals.

At the **national level**, the most significant development was the decision by the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC) to raise the UK National Terrorism Threat Level from **SUBSTANTIAL** to **SEVERE** on 30 April 2026, indicating that a terrorist attack is assessed as **highly likely**. This escalation reflects a sustained rise in both Islamist and Extreme Right-Wing terrorist activity, alongside a marked increase in threats directed at **Jewish and Israeli individuals and institutions**. April saw multiple terrorism-related arrests, disrupted attack planning, and a confirmed terrorist stabbing incident in Golders Green.

Alongside terrorism, **state-linked threats and counter-espionage risks** remain prominent. The jailing and sectioning of a former MI5 contractor for attempting to disclose sensitive information to a foreign state highlights the persistent risk posed by insider threats, grievances, and mental health vulnerabilities within sensitive national security ecosystems.

**Serious and organised crime (SOC)** continues to exert a corrosive impact on UK security and public safety. April featured multiple high-profile National Crime Agency operations targeting people-smuggling networks, maritime-enabled drug trafficking, and organised immigration crime. Of particular concern is the continued exploitation of **maritime routes**, including small-boat crossings, at-sea narcotics drop-offs, and the use of commercial and leisure vessels to facilitate transnational criminal activity.

Internationally, the **ongoing US–Iran conflict** represents the most significant external driver of risk to the UK. Despite a fragile ceasefire announced on 8 April, the **Strait of Hormuz remains effectively closed**, with continued disruption to global energy markets, shipping routes, and insurance conditions. Rerouting of Asia–Europe trade via the Cape of Good Hope has increased transit times and costs, contributing to inflationary pressure on UK businesses.

In parallel, the **militarisation of the Black Sea** linked to the Ukraine conflict continues to affect global commodity markets, with downstream consequences for UK food security and agricultural sustainability.

Overall, April 2026 demonstrates that **domestic security risks and international geopolitical shocks are increasingly interlinked**. Organisations operating in the UK must assume a prolonged period of elevated threat. Proportionate, intelligence-led protective security measures and ongoing situational awareness remain essential.

03 — NATIONAL THREAT LEVELS

# Threat landscape

Terrorism, espionage and state threats facing the United Kingdom.

The UK faces a range of national security threats from terrorism, espionage and state threats. Understanding and assessing the threats facing your business or organisation will ensure protective security measures are proportionate, effective and responsive. Information on the current threat landscape is provided by MI5.

To report an imminent threat, call **999** or the police Anti-Terrorist Hotline on **0800 789 321**. To report information about a threat to national security such as terrorism or espionage, contact MI5 online or call Freephone **0800 111 4645**.

## Threat categories

<b>Counter-Terrorism</b>	International terrorism, Northern Ireland-related terrorism (NIRT), Right Wing terrorism (RWT) and Left, Anarchist and Single-Issue terrorism (LASIT).
<b>Counter-Espionage</b>	Espionage against UK interests continues and is potentially very damaging — the threat did not end with the Cold War.
<b>Cyber</b>	The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) provides advice to businesses, organisations and the public about cyber security.
<b>Counter-Proliferation</b>	The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) poses a potential threat — a number of countries continue to develop programmes of concern.

## UK terrorism threat levels

<b>LOW</b>	An attack is highly unlikely
<b>MODERATE</b>	An attack is possible, but not likely
<b>SUBSTANTIAL</b>	An attack is likely
<b>SEVERE</b>	An attack is highly likely ■ <b>CURRENT</b>
<b>CRITICAL</b>	An attack is highly likely in the near future

## CURRENT UK TERRORISM THREAT LEVEL

**SEVERE**

An attack is highly likely.

**How threat levels are decided**

The Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC) sets the threat level for the UK from terrorism, and the level for Northern Ireland-related terrorism in Northern Ireland. Both are kept under regular review and are informed by available intelligence, terrorist capability and intent, and timescale considerations.

- **Available intelligence** — judgements based on a range of fragmentary information, including current activity and comparison with prior incidents.
- **Terrorist capability** — what is known about what a terrorist could do based on prior attacks or intelligence.
- **Terrorist intentions** — overall aims and likely target sets, drawing on intelligence and open sources.
- **Timescale** — the threat level expresses likelihood of an attack in the near term, recognising that some attacks take years to plan and others are mounted quickly.

Source: [mi5.gov.uk/threats-and-advice/terrorism-threat-levels](https://mi5.gov.uk/threats-and-advice/terrorism-threat-levels)

**Serious and Organised Crime**

Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) in the United Kingdom encompasses individuals or groups planning, coordinating and committing serious offences — independently, collaboratively, or as part of transnational networks. The National Crime Agency (NCA) identifies several primary categories:

- **Child Sexual Abuse** — exploitation and abuse of minors.
- **Illegal Drugs** — production, trafficking and distribution of controlled substances.
- **Firearms** — illegal possession, trafficking and use of firearms.
- **Organised Immigration Crime** — facilitating illegal entry or residence in the UK.
- **Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking** — coercion or deception for labour or services.
- **Fraud and Economic Crime** — money laundering, corruption and deceptive practices.
- **Cyber Crime** — hacking, online fraud and malicious software.

In recent years, the scale and threat from SOC have almost certainly increased, attributed to greater online activity, global instabilities and increased interconnectivity among criminal networks. The NCA's response combines intelligence, proactive investigation and lifetime offender management.

Source: [nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk](https://nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk)

**04 — DISCLAIMER**

# Notice to readers

---

In compiling this report, Triton Risk Management has relied on the veracity of public open-source information available at the time of publication. Triton Risk Management accepts no legal, equitable or other liability whatsoever for any actual or consequent loss incurred by the client in relation to this report or for the accuracy of any statement herein.

This report has been produced in line with the scope of the contents page. It is principally aimed at informing the reader of developments of relevance to physical security practitioners. It is not aimed at cyber security practitioners, nor does it purport to cover, in any great depth, matters of international significance — except where they have a direct bearing on domestic security.

## 05 — NATIONAL SECURITY

# Critical update & counter-terrorism

Threat-level escalation, attack planning and counter-espionage.

CRITICAL UPDATE — 30 APR 2026

## National threat level raised to SEVERE

The Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC) has raised the UK National Threat Level from **SUBSTANTIAL** (a terrorist attack is likely) to **SEVERE** (a terrorist attack is highly likely).

This change follows the stabbings in Golders Green on 29 April, although it is not solely a result of that attack. The UK has been experiencing a gradual increase in terrorist threats for some time, driven by a rise in both Islamist and Extreme Right-Wing terrorist threat from individuals and small groups.

- **Significant volume, breadth and complexity** of terrorist incidents and cases across various ideologies, including attack planning, extremist travel intent, and online and offline radicalisation.
- **Islamist Terrorism remains the primary threat**, while **Extreme Right-Wing Terrorism (ERWT)** has been on a steadily rising trajectory.
- **Elevated threat to Jewish and Israeli individuals and institutions** in the context of the conflict in the Middle East, evident in recent incidents in the UK and overseas.

Alongside the JTAC threat level, a sustained and significant tempo of **state-linked threats** — including against Jewish and Israeli individuals and institutions — continues.

Source: [mi5.gov.uk/uk-national-terrorism-threat-level-raised-to-severe](https://mi5.gov.uk/uk-national-terrorism-threat-level-raised-to-severe)

## Counter-terrorism updates

### Man charged with firearm offences after interception at Port of Dover — 01 Apr 2026

A 24-year-old man accused of trying to smuggle 10 guns and ammunition into the UK as he drove off a ferry into Dover has been remanded in custody. Khalid Ahmed, from Ealing in west London, a dual Dutch and Irish national, appeared at Westminster Magistrates' Court after being charged overnight with firearms offences.

He was stopped at Dover the previous Thursday by counter-terrorism police after arriving from France, and when officers searched his car it is alleged that 10 self-loading pistols, along with ammunition, were found hidden behind the seats.

Source: [theguardian.com/uk-news/2026/apr/01/man-charged-firearms-offences-dover](https://theguardian.com/uk-news/2026/apr/01/man-charged-firearms-offences-dover)

### Synagogue targeted by arsonists in London — 15 Apr 2026

On Wednesday 15 April, a 47-year-old woman was arrested at a residence in Kings Langley, Hertfordshire, on suspicion of arson with intent to endanger life. Later that evening, officers apprehended a

46-year-old man in Watford under similar suspicion. Both arrests were carried out by officers from the Metropolitan Police's North West Area Command Unit. Both were released on bail and are scheduled to return in July.

These actions are part of an ongoing investigation into an attempted attack on a synagogue on Fallow Court Avenue in Finchley. The case is now being handled by detectives from Counter Terrorism Policing London.

Source: [news.met.police.uk/news/further-arrests-after-attempted-finchley-synagogue-arson-attack](https://news.met.police.uk/news/further-arrests-after-attempted-finchley-synagogue-arson-attack)

## **Further arrests under the Terrorism Act — Kensington Gardens synagogue plot — 29 Apr 2026**

On Wednesday 29 April, a 31-year-old man was arrested at an address in the Potters Bar area on suspicion of preparing an act of terrorism, contrary to section 5 of the Terrorism Act 2006, and remains at a London police station. Officers are conducting a search at the Potters Bar address as part of the investigation.

This forms part of an ongoing Counter Terrorism Policing investigation, which was launched after jars containing a non-hazardous substance were discovered in Kensington Gardens on 17 April. Authorities have clarified that this case is not related to the separate CTP London investigation into the stabbing of two men in Golders Green on 29 April.

Previously, two other men were arrested in connection with the investigation and have since been released while inquiries continue: a 39-year-old arrested on 21 April at an address in Ealing under section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000, and a 37-year-old detained in Devon on 26 April on suspicion of preparing terrorist acts.

Source: [news.met.police.uk/news/third-man-arrested-in-counter-terrorism-policing-investigation-into-kensington-gardens-incident](https://news.met.police.uk/news/third-man-arrested-in-counter-terrorism-policing-investigation-into-kensington-gardens-incident)

## **Golders Green knife attacks declared a terror incident — 29 Apr 2026**

Two men, aged 76 and 34, were assaulted on Highfield Avenue in Barnet. Both sustained stab wounds. Metropolitan Police officers who responded to the scene were also attacked, resulting in the tasering and arrest of a 45-year-old man on suspicion of attempted murder; he remains detained.

Counter Terrorism Policing is leading the investigation, and the incident has been formally declared a terrorist act. Specialised teams are working alongside the Metropolitan Police to advance the investigation and determine the full circumstances. Authorities are also collaborating with security services to ensure a comprehensive intelligence assessment.

Source: [apnews.com/article/uk-london-stabbing-jewish-community-golders-green](https://apnews.com/article/uk-london-stabbing-jewish-community-golders-green)

# **Counter-espionage update**

## **Ex-MI5 contractor jailed and sectioned under the Mental Health Act — 15 Apr 2026**

A former MI5 employee was detained under the Mental Health Act after being accused of repeatedly leaking sensitive information to a foreign power. Juan Joseph, 43, who previously worked as a government IT contractor, was found not guilty by reason of insanity following a week-long trial at the Old Bailey in

March.

During the proceedings, it was revealed that Joseph had emailed officials from the foreign state and travelled abroad to arrange a meeting at their embassy, all while pursuing a personal complaint against MI5. He was ordered to be held indefinitely under sections 37 and 41 of the Mental Health Act, having been accused of breaching the Official Secrets Act and the National Security Act.

The Official Secrets Act protects sensitive government information related to national security, making it a criminal offence for current or former employees to disclose classified material without authorisation. The National Security Act is more recent legislation aimed at strengthening the UK's ability to counter espionage, sabotage and foreign interference, providing updated legal tools for law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

Source: [independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/juan-joseph-mi5-sectioned-latvia](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/juan-joseph-mi5-sectioned-latvia)

06 — CRIME AND DISORDER

# Organised crime

People-smuggling and maritime-enabled drug trafficking.

## Caerphilly-based people-smuggling operation rolled up — 10 Apr 2026

Two men have been sentenced to 19 years' imprisonment each for their involvement in a people-smuggling operation that moved migrants across Europe, following an investigation by the National Crime Agency.

Dilshad Shamo, 43, and Ali Khdir, 42, were closely monitored by the NCA for several months before their roles in a large international smuggling network came to light in 2023. As members of a wider organised crime group, they helped migrants from Iraq, Iran and Syria travel through countries including Belarus, Moldova and Bosnia, with journeys ending in Italy, Croatia, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Germany and France.

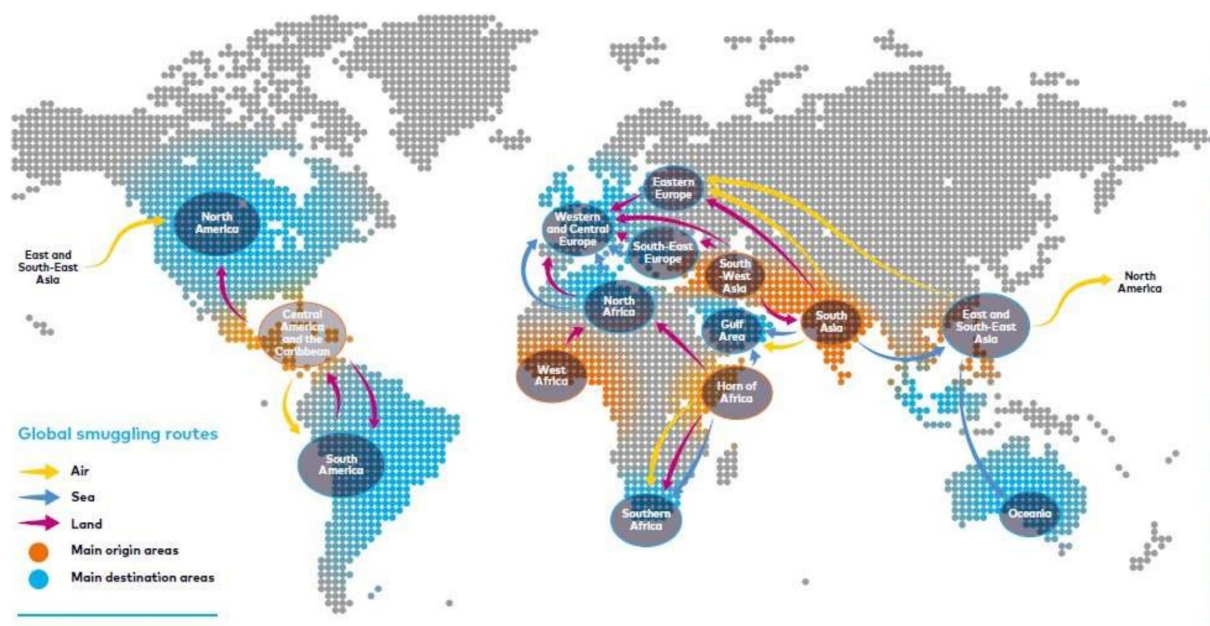
Migrants were given three levels of travel: the most basic involved walking or smaller vehicles; the next tier offered passage by cargo ship or yacht; the highest tier provided travel by aeroplane.

Source: [nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/news/men-jailed-for-people-smuggling-operation-masterminded-from-caerphilly-car-wash](https://nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/news/men-jailed-for-people-smuggling-operation-masterminded-from-caerphilly-car-wash)

## Man charged in connection with small-boat deaths — 11 Apr 2026

A Sudanese national has been charged in connection with the deaths of four small-boat migrants, following an NCA investigation. Alnoor Mohamed Ali, 27 (aka Elnoor Mohamed Ali), was charged with endangering another during a journey by sea to the UK.

It is alleged Ali piloted the boat from France to the UK on Thursday morning. Four victims — two men and two women — died when they tried to board the boat off the coast of Saint-Étienne-au-Mont, south of Boulogne-sur-Mer near Calais.



Current people-smuggling routes globally. Source: gov.uk — strengthening the UK's international partnerships on organised immigration crime.

Source: [nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/news/national-crime-agency-arrests-suspect-over-four-deaths-in-channel](https://nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/news/national-crime-agency-arrests-suspect-over-four-deaths-in-channel)

## Further arrests in connection with people-smuggling rings — 22 Apr 2026

Two men were taken into custody after the NCA carried out a series of raids in Kent and the East Midlands, part of a broader investigation targeting a criminal network believed to be smuggling people into the UK via boat. The suspects, aged 27 and 29, were arrested on suspicion of money laundering in Folkestone and Nottingham on the morning of 22 April.

Earlier that day, authorities had raided two car washes and a barber shop in the Nottingham area, along with a residential address in Derby. The coordinated efforts included support from Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Police and Immigration Enforcement, organised by the EMSOU Disruption Team.

Source: [nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/news/arrests-made-following-raids-on-businesses-in-nottingham](https://nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/news/arrests-made-following-raids-on-businesses-in-nottingham)

## Birmingham Airport — £13.8m cannabis haul leads to arrests — 13 Apr 2026

Six men have been charged as part of an NCA investigation into the seizure of more than half a tonne of cannabis at Birmingham Airport. Kyle Gribben, Zaeon Hunter, Lashan Walker (all 26), James Turner and Torian Robinson (both 25), and Devonte Newman (22) were arrested by NCA officers, supported by Bedfordshire Police, at addresses in the Marsh Farm area of Luton and Finchley, north London, in October 2024.

They are suspected of organising the attempted importation of cannabis between 1 June and 9 August 2024, including the incident at Birmingham Airport on 9 August, which resulted in 11 air passengers from various locations in the UK being arrested and charged. All 11 had flown into the UK from Thailand via Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport. The cannabis seized would have had a UK street value of around **£13.8 million**.

Source: [nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/news/six-charged-in-relation-to-13-8-million-cannabis-haul-at-birmingham-airport](https://nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/news/six-charged-in-relation-to-13-8-million-cannabis-haul-at-birmingham-airport)

## 322kg cocaine 'at-sea' drop-off in Somerset — update on arrests — 24 Apr 2026

Two men have been found guilty, with one receiving a prison sentence of over 20 years, after collecting a shipment of cocaine valued at **£26.5 million**, dropped off at sea along the Somerset coast. Colin Benson, 60, and Joshua Rose, 38, both of Longton in Preston, were apprehended by NCA officers following an investigation into the seizure at Watchet Marina the previous year.

Benson and Rose waited on the shoreline for a Rigid Hulled Inflatable Boat (RHIB) named the Guzzla to return after it was sent out to collect the illicit cargo on 30 July 2025. On board the Guzzla were Craig Nuttall (51), Anestis Tsepa (25) and Melios Delvina (39). Also present on land was Craig Nuttall's brother Raymond, 48.

Source: [nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/news/further-convictions-linked-to-322-kilos-of-cocaine-in-at-sea-drop-off](https://nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/news/further-convictions-linked-to-322-kilos-of-cocaine-in-at-sea-drop-off)

## 07 — INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

# Global shocks with UK consequences

US–Iran conflict, Red Sea risk and Black Sea militarisation.

---

## Ongoing impact of US–Iran war on global markets

Despite a fragile ceasefire announced on 8 April, the ongoing conflict between the United States and Iran continues to impact global supply chains and has direct consequences for the United Kingdom across a range of sectors. The **Strait of Hormuz remains essentially closed**, with the United States enforcing a blockade of Iranian ports.

Simultaneously, Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) is still impeding the free transit of US-flagged tankers and other neutral vessels through the use of drone and missile strikes.

Historic strikes against infrastructure in Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates will have a lasting impact on oil and gas production for years to come. While the cessation of hostilities has allowed for a modicum of peace to return, intermittent drone and missile strikes remain a possibility despite Iranian denials of responsibility.

Shipping from Asia into Europe has subsequently been rerouted via the **Cape of Good Hope**, extending travel times and increasing shipping and freighting costs. Insurance premiums are also significantly higher on account of the conflict.

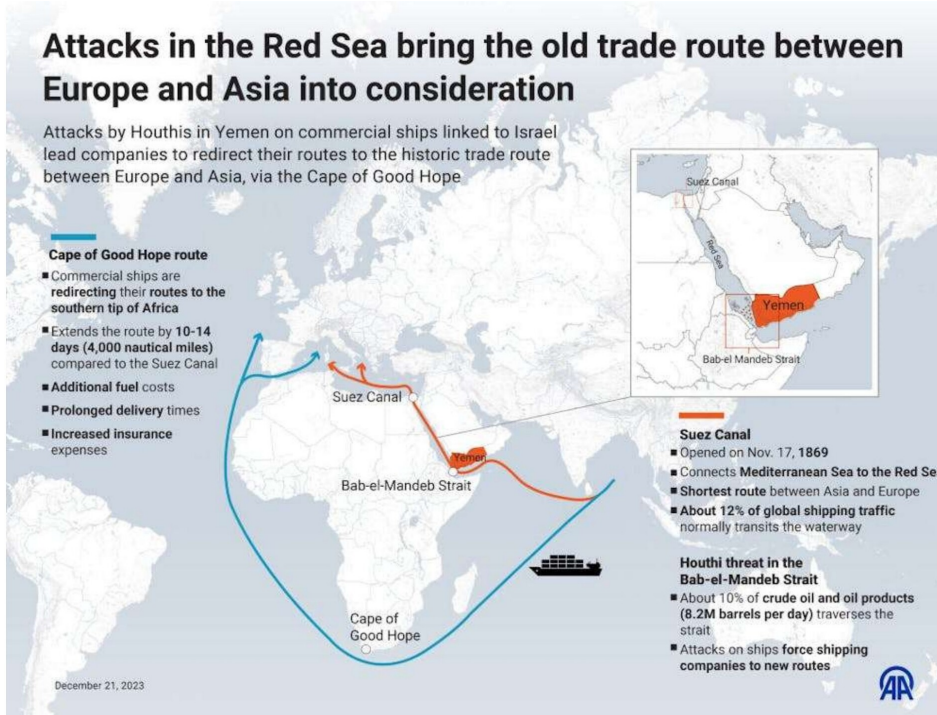
The entry of the Houthi Yemenis into the conflict, despite the current ceasefire, increases the risk of further disruption to oil and gas supplies should they begin to attack vessels transiting through the **Bab-el-Mandeb Strait**.

Sources: maritimeneews.com · maersk.com · seavantage.com

---

## Red Sea attacks revive the historic Europe–Asia trade route

Houthi attacks in Yemen on commercial ships linked to Israel are pushing companies to redirect their routes to the historic trade route between Europe and Asia, via the Cape of Good Hope.



**Cape of Good Hope route**

Commercial ships are redirecting via the southern tip of Africa — extending the route by 10–14 days (≈4,000 nautical miles) compared with Suez. Additional fuel cost, prolonged delivery times and higher insurance expenses.

**Suez Canal**

Opened 17 November 1869. Connects the Mediterranean to the Red Sea. The shortest route between Asia and Europe — about 12% of global shipping traffic normally transits the waterway.

**Houthi threat —  
Bab-el-Mandeb Strait**

About 10% of crude oil and oil products (≈8.2m barrels per day) traverses the strait. Attacks on ships force shipping companies onto new routes.

Source: theconversation.com — the Iran war and global trade

**Black Sea militarisation increases pressure on UK goods**

The ongoing militarisation of the Black Sea as a consequence of the Ukraine conflict continues to add global pressure to the cost of grain, animal feed and fertiliser. Continuous drone and missile strikes in the region drive surcharges for Ukrainian trade goods — even when not in transit by sea — translating into higher import costs for UK businesses.

Given the current situation in the Middle East, these two events in tandem could push prices for key import commodities further and increase pressure on businesses, particularly in agriculture, to operate sustainably. The presence of an increased military buildup of Russian naval assets in both the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov will only intensify this. In the long term, this may prove to be another geopolitical flashpoint that intersects energy and food security for European countries and the broader global community.

