National Maritime Domain Awareness Plan (NMDAP) FAQs

Note. All answers are directly from the NMDAP, as cited, unless otherwise noted.

What is the purpose of the National Maritime Domain Awareness Plan (National MDA Plan or NMDAP)?

- This Plan provides the context to understand the importance of MDA to maritime security and why it is imperative to enhance MDA. It will empower the U.S. Government to understand the characteristics of the current environment, identify the strategic approach we seek to employ, clarify our strategic and foundational priorities, and develop an implementation plan to improve MDA that enables decision-makers to perform their responsibilities consistent with Presidential Policy Directive 18 (PPD-18) and the National Strategy for Maritime Security (NSMS). [NMDAP EXSUM page iv]

What is Maritime Domain Awareness?

- Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) is the effective understanding of anything associated with the maritime domain that could impact the security, safety, economy, or environment of the United States. [NMDAP page 2. Note this definition was retained from the previous *National Plan to Achieve Maritime Domain Awareness*.]

What is the Maritime Domain?

- The Maritime Domain is all areas and things of, on, under, relating to, adjacent to, or bordering on a sea, ocean, or other navigable waterway, including all maritime-related activities, infrastructure, people, cargo, vessels, and other conveyances. [NMDAP page 2. See also the *National Strategy for Maritime Security*.]

Why is MDA important?

- The world shares a collective interest in promoting the timely and efficient flow of legitimate commerce, while protecting and securing the maritime domain from exploitation and reducing its vulnerability to disruption by either man-made or natural disasters. We recognize security as an essential element of an efficient and functioning maritime domain. To successfully achieve these aims, an effective maritime awareness and information sharing arrangement must:
  - Improve detection, collection, and identification capabilities that can be used to discover unknown or uncooperative maritime items of interest that represent threats, challenges, and opportunities to the GMCOI;
  - Recognize threats early by effectively integrating intelligence, law enforcement information, and all source data from the public and private sectors throughout the GMCOI, according to established statutes and policy. Stakeholders can identify items of particular concern and seek to resolve or prepare as early as possible,

thereby minimizing exposure, as well as maximizing response and resilience to, or recovery from, disruption or harm;

- o Enhance the protection of maritime infrastructure by sharing and safeguarding relevant information to protect critical nodes and limiting access to those with validated permission and relevant roles and responsibilities; and,
- o Maximize legitimate use of the maritime domain by modernizing maritime information sharing; safeguarding architecture, infrastructure, and processes to meet future validated requirements; and encouraging stakeholder collaboration.

[NMDAP page 6]

From what strategic documents does the NMDAP derive its authority?

- Presidential Policy Directive 18 (PPD-18) and the National Strategy for Maritime Security (NSMS). [NMDAP page 2]

What plans preceded the National MDA Plan?

- Consistent with Presidential Policy Directive 18: *Maritime Security* (PPD-18) and the *National Strategy for Maritime Security* (NSMS), the *National Maritime Domain Awareness Plan* (NMDAP) merges and supersedes the *National Plan to Achieve Maritime Domain Awareness* of 2005 and the *Global Maritime Intelligence Integration Plan* of 2005. It establishes the foundation for the effective understanding of potential and actual maritime threats and challenges by promoting favorable conditions for integrating and sharing information, including intelligence, to inform decision-makers. [NMDAP Foreword page ii]

Why was there a need to merge the National Plan to Achieve Maritime Domain Awareness and the Global Maritime Intelligence Integration Plan?

- PPD-18 affirmed the NSMS, which included the *National Plan to Achieve Maritime Domain Awareness* (NPAMDA) and the *Global Maritime Intelligence Integration* (GMII) Plan, as well as six other implementation plans to coordinate maritime security programs and initiatives across the GMCOI, and in particular, across departments and agencies of the U.S. Government. Although progress has been made toward goals set forth in the NPAMDA and GMII Plans, this bifurcation has proven to be less than optimal. The consolidation of the two plans into a single national MDA plan acknowledges advancements that have been made and highlights the inextricable relationship between MDA and maritime intelligence integration, promoting sustained progress while retaining a mandate for interagency action. [NMDAP page 3]

What are the NMDAP core principles?

- The MDA core principles guide the NDAP's goals and objectives and they include:
    - o Promote Unity of Effort across the GMCOI;
    - o Foster Information Sharing and Safeguarding using enterprise architecture with partners who have validated appropriate access;

- o Ensure Safe and Efficient Flow of Legitimate Commerce through the recognition that maritime and economic security are mutually reinforcing.

[NMDAP EXSUM pages v-vi; NMDAP pages 9-10]

What are the NMDAP Goals?

- The objectives of the NMDAP strive to achieve the following goals:
  - o Enhance transparency in the maritime domain to detect, deter, and defeat threats
  - o Enable accurate, dynamic, and confident decisions and responses to the full spectrum of maritime threats and challenges through information sharing and
  - o Further partnerships to promote and facilitate maritime domain information sharing, safeguarding, and integration; and
  - o Preserve our Nation's rights, freedoms of navigation and over-flight, and uses of the sea and airspace recognized under international law while promoting the lawful, continuous, and efficient flow of commerce.

[NMDAP EXSUM page v; NMDAP page 10]

What are the NMDAP Objectives?

- The NMDAP provides a collaborative framework for the GMCOI to accomplish the following objectives:
  - o <u>Organize stakeholders through governance</u>. Proper governance to coordinate Federal maritime stakeholder activities will promote an interagency shared perspective, which will acknowledge and balance the equities of Federal, as well as, state, local, tribal, territorial (S/L/T/T), academic, private sector, and international maritime stakeholders;
  - o <u>Continue to mitigate MDA challenges</u>. This Plan acknowledges previous work to identify MDA challenges, promotes the development of metrics to understand when a challenge has been addressed or mitigated, and advocates the continued development of solutions to address those challenges. The Plan also recognizes that new and emerging challenges continue to present themselves, validating the requirement for a continuous reassessment process using risk management methodologies;
  - o <u>Improve Domain Awareness through enterprise-level access to data</u>. This Plan promotes maritime information sharing by transitioning from organization-centric databases to web-centric enterprise services that retrieve data from multiple sources (e.g., clouds, databases). This shift provides authorized users more flexible access to a greater number of sources, types, and volume of data, and the ability to search databases without relying on point-to-point access. Under this construct, data should be authoritative and conform to recognized standards, such as those currently employed under the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM); and,
  - o <u>Enhance collaboration through outreach</u>. This Plan encourages broad interaction to identify organizations, partnerships, best practices, and other efforts that

enhance maritime security through expanded MDA collaboration between the GMCOI members. By collaborating on MDA initiatives and incorporating Federal, S/L/T/T, academic, private, and international maritime partners, this Plan will support and improve interagency capabilities to effectively share information on people, cargo, vessels, infrastructure, natural and man-made disasters, and other potential threats within the maritime domain.

[NMDAP EXSUM pages iv-v; NMDAP page 11]

What is Intelligence Integration?

- It has been stated that, "Intelligence Integration is the Intelligence Community's unity of effort to produce the best intelligence possible." Advancing maritime intelligence integration relies heavily upon effective collaboration among the members of the IC. [NMDAP page 12; See NMDAP footnote 27.]

What is Maritime Intelligence Integration?

- Maritime Intelligence Integration seeks unity of effort for intelligence activities focused on the maritime domain. A coordinated and synchronized intelligence enterprise is a priority for effective security efforts across the maritime domain. To maximize MDA, the United States must leverage and integrate the diverse expertise of the intelligence and law enforcement communities for a global maritime intelligence capability, according to established statutes and policy.
- Crucial opportunities to prevent an incident or provide an early response can be lost without effective awareness of activities within the maritime domain. Awareness grants time and distance to detect, deter, interdict, and overcome threats.

[NMDAP pages 11-12]

Why is Maritime Intelligence Integration important to MDA?

- Underpinning our ability to understand the maritime domain, determine potential threats, and enhance effective decision-making is our ability to integrate maritime intelligence. [NMDAP page 11]

Who in the Federal government is responsible for Maritime Intelligence Integration?

- As discussed in PPD-18, the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) designated the National Maritime Intelligence-Integration Office (NMIO) to coordinate and facilitate maritime intelligence integration and information sharing in support of MDA. NMIO facilitates a unified maritime perspective by coordinating with the Intelligence Community (IC) and across the GMCOI to advance maritime intelligence sharing and integration for early threat detection and decision superiority. [NMDAP page 12]

What is the MDA Executive Steering Committee (MDA ESC)?

- The MDA ESC is comprised of senior executive-level Principals designated by their respective departmental Executive Agents (EA) for MDA from cabinet-level departments (currently DoD, DOT, and DHS) and the designated maritime representative of the IC. [NMDAP page 14]

What is the purpose of the MDA ESC?

- The MDA ESC coordinates MDA policies, strategies, and initiatives. MDA ESC membership may change upon the consensus of the MDA ESC principals. The MDA ESC also provides forums, activities, and venues to engage the GMCOI to promote collaboration and information sharing to enhance MDA. [NMDAP page 14]

How does the MDA ESC provide governance?

- The MDA ESC meets routinely and, under this Plan, is responsible to the NSS MSIPC, in accordance with PPD-1 and PPD-18, to oversee and coordinate interagency collaboration on MDA policy and activities to promote maritime domain information sharing, prioritize MDA efforts, develop MDA work plans, and close or mitigate recognized national-level MDA challenges. The MDA ESC principals will leverage their respective partnerships with industry, academia, S/L/T/T governments, and international partners to reach out to and better position the GMCOI to achieve collective MDA goals. The MDA ESC will also provide forums, activities, and venues to engage the GMCOI to promote collaboration and information sharing to ultimately enhance MDA. [NMDAP Appendix B-2]
- The MDA ESC may create working groups as required to promote the interagency coordination of proposed policies and activities that will potentially affect the maritime domain and the members of the GMCOI. The Chair of the MDA ESC represents the positions of the MDA EAs at external meetings, such as before the MSIPC. Currently, Director, NMIO is Chair of the MDA ESC and, as such, provides staff for executive secretariat support to this forum and is the requisite impartial voice for national-level maritime related issues to the NSS/MSIPC and other interagency policy committees. [NMDAP Appendix B- 3]

What is the National Maritime Interagency Advisory Group (NIAG)?

- The NIAG has been chartered to support the whole-of-government information sharing needs of the GMCOI, this forum specifically advises the Chair of the MDA ESC to:
  o Collaborate to identify national maritime-related issues37 and requirements, including those from national, international, academic, and private sector organizations;
  o Inform, lead, advocate, and reach out to all aspects of the GMCOI; and,
  o Ensure the GMCOI's maritime information and analysis needs are effectively represented.
- The NIAG is a federally-sponsored, whole-of-government forum and includes representatives from the Federal interagency, the IC, and law enforcement, and participants from private industry, academia, and international partners. With input from

these GMCOI members and other participants, the NIAG advises the Chair of the MDA ESC on maritime information needs and concerns.

[NMDAP Appendix B- 3]