

Comment on the GC and Spanish Navy Activity

Since the OEM vessels have been based here we usually have 1 infringement a day of innocent passage by a Guardia Civil vessel which passes 3-400yds off the south mole and then turns into Algeciras. Not an issue.

Since Monday 4 June this has changed:

5-6 June The Spanish Navy Patrol Vessel "Viga" (Serviloa Class) has conducted a patrol 8nm SE of Gibraltar, her patrol has encompassed the site of the Sussex. This vessel usually patrols from Ceuta into the Straits.

5 - 8 June the Merchant Vessel Ile de Sane - a cable layer and seabed capable vessel under Spanish contract has operated stopped over the Sussex wreck. This vessel had for the last two months been involved in seabed operations between Morocco and Spain laying a new comms cable. She was still there this morning and is being monitored by Windmill hill Signal Station in position 36' 02" 48.8N 005' 14" 29.6W.

On 7 June the Patrol Boat Viga abandoned her patrol and conducted a slow passage into Gib bay passing 400yds off the South mole before departing back out to sea and resuming her patrol

The Guardia Civil have become more daring since 5 June with 2-3 incursions a day. Some are innocent passage involving a slow transit off the south and detached moles to sight the OME vessels. However at least one a day has been an infringement where the GC vessels has stopped (and in one instance) tied up to the Western Aero buoy. In each case the GC vessels have departed slowly when a Gib Sqn vessel or GSP RIB has approached them - again passing close to the naval base seawall (200yds) to check on the OME vessels.

You will no doubt be aware of the CPO GSP/Col Guardia Civil (Algeciras) conversation 1039 Tues 7 June in which Col Marcial Vasquez Giginel stated that they had no intention of conducting any activity in our waters and that they would be exercising a "Stop and Search" of the vessels when in Spanish waters. Further that if any material was found (unspecified) the vessels would be arrested.

I shall be glad to see the vessels clear the harbour on Tuesday

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