

## Mines laid in and outside Ukraine: sources

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North of England Club has reported that there had been conflicting analyses in circulation regarding the situation of sea mines in the Black Sea and whether, as had been claimed by Russia, that they had become detached from their anchors and were now drifting. Ukraine had said that the Russian claim was misinformation. Ambrey Intelligence said that it was aware of the reported minefield laid by the Ukrainian forces to prevent the threat of Russian amphibious attack.

Ambrey said that it had been informed, by sources in Ukraine, that sea mines were laid not only in the seaports, but also in some of Ukrainian's internal waters.

To date, Ambrey said that it had recorded a single event of a suspected mine strike involving a vessel, which occurred 4.8nm outside of the designated minefield area. Ambrey said that it had received the Russian authorities' report on drifting mines.

There had been no independent verification of these reports or credible reports of sightings, but there remained an underlying threat of physical damage to merchant vessels in the Black Sea region.

While there had been a report of sea mine being spotted, Ambrey was informed that divers were sent, and the object turned out to be a damaged buoy.

The types of mines deployed did not use power sources and therefore they could remain active for some time. In the unlikely event of mine becoming detached, the mine would be subject to sea currents. Additionally, in the case of a significant storm that did detach the mine, it would likely be brought ashore and not drift out to sea.

There was also a possibility that the military activity in the Black Sea might disturb historic mines from previous conflicts and that they may emerge from the sea. Ambrey noted that these events also happened on regular basis in peacetime.

Russian forces had closed the Kerch Strait and strictly regulated which vessels were allowed into the Sea of Azov. Ambrey said that it understood that these were mostly Russian-flagged vessels and some vessels of other flags on the grain and oil trade to/from Russia.

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Meanwhile, Turkish authorities issued a NAVTEX, or navigational alert, against mines that it said were drifting in the Black Sea. The Turkish Naval Forces' office of navigation issued a statement on March 21st warning ships in the Black Sea against the mines. Skuld said that it was advised by local sources on March 22nd that the Romanian Hydrographic office issued a notice alerting the vessels in the area, recommending that the crews of these vessels should monitor the sea with care and to immediately inform the coastal authorities if they noticed any suspicious floating objects.

The Romanian navy was carrying out mine sweeping operations and so far, no mines had been spotted in the Romanian territorial waters, Skuld said.

<https://www.skuld.com/topics/port/port-news/europe/war-in-ukraine-latest-developments/>