

# *U.S. Navy Ends Escorts Through Strait of Hormuz*

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Washington, May 7 (RHC)-- The Pentagon says the U.S. Navy ships will no longer accompany American and British flagged cargo vessels passing through the Strait of Hormuz near the Persian Gulf.

Pentagon spokesman Col. Steve Warren told reporters in Washington on Wednesday the U.S. military order authorizing the mission expired yesterday and commanders chose not to renew it.

The U.S. Navy has been accompanying American-flagged ships passing through the strait since Thursday in response to last week's detention of a Marshall Islands-flagged cargo ship by Iran. U.S. Navy warships also began escorting British-flagged commercial vessels through the Strait of Hormuz on Monday.

The protection mission ended on Tuesday but U.S. warships will remain in the area to conduct "routine maritime security operations," Warren said. He added that the U.S. naval commander in the Persian Gulf region "adjusts his mission based on his view of the conditions" and there had been "several days without incident."

Located on the southern coast of Iran, the Strait of Hormuz is one of the world's most important oil shipping channels and a strategically important choke point.

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