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U.S. Sanctions Strait of Hormuz Authority

The move could raise costs for shippers, insurers and companies that rely on Gulf trade routes

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The United States on Monday imposed sanctions on the Strait of Hormuz Authority, a body that oversees security and management in one of the world's most important shipping corridors, in a move that could raise costs for cargo carriers, insurers and companies that depend on Gulf trade routes.

The Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control said it added the authority, known as SOHA, and several senior officials to its Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons list. That designation blocks U.S. persons and companies from doing business with the group and freezes any assets under U.S. jurisdiction that belong to those named.

The Strait of Hormuz links the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea. Roughly 20% of global petroleum moves through the waterway, making it a central route for energy shipments and other maritime trade. Any disruption there can ripple through freight markets, insurance pricing and supply chains far beyond the region.

Treasury said the sanctions were intended to respond to what it described as efforts by SOHA to obstruct freedom of navigation and increase risks to commercial shipping. The department said the action was meant to impose costs on actors that destabilize maritime security and to deter further interference in the strait.

For shipping companies, the immediate effect is likely to be heightened compliance scrutiny. Vessels transiting the area may face closer monitoring from operators, insurers and lenders trying to avoid exposure to sanctioned parties. Maritime insurers often adjust premiums when geopolitical risk rises, and even a limited change in underwriting can add costs for carriers already dealing with fuel prices, port fees and security expenses.

The impact could also reach importers and exporters that rely on routes through the Gulf, including businesses moving food, industrial goods and beverages. Wine shipments that travel by sea through Middle Eastern hubs may not be directly targeted by the sanctions, but any increase in freight rates, delays or rerouting can affect delivery times and landed costs for distributors and retailers.

Companies involved in shipping, logistics, marine insurance and trade finance will need to review counterparties carefully, according to compliance specialists tracking the action. That includes screening vessels, agents, brokers and related entities for ties to SOHA or other designated parties. Firms that fail to do so risk violating U.S. sanctions rules even if they are not based in the United States.

The Strait of Hormuz has long been a flash point in regional tensions because of its narrow geography and its role in global energy flows. The latest sanctions add another layer of uncertainty for operators moving through the corridor at a time when many are already weighing security risks against delivery schedules and cost pressures.