



## Operations Epic Fury and Roaring Lion: 5/8/26 Update

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The United States, Israel, and Iran reached a two-week ceasefire agreement on April 7, which President Donald Trump extended indefinitely on April 21. JINSA continues to release regular updates about the conflict. The update below includes information since [JINSA's last update](#) as of May 8 at 11:00 am ET.

Days left in U.S.-Israel-Iran ceasefire: **Extended indefinitely**

Days left in Israel-Lebanon ceasefire: **6**, following April 23 three-week extension

Iranian missiles and drones launched since ceasefire: **260** (12 on May 7–8)

Hezbollah attacks since ceasefire: **At least 77** (at least 7 on May 7–8)

Ships transiting Strait of Hormuz since ceasefire: **At least 318 (at least 6 on May 7–8)**

- Note: Many of these ships are local fast boats, tugboats, or landing craft, not commercial vessels. Numerous ships in the area are also transmitting false locations.

Total blockade-eligible ships rerouted by U.S. forces: **At least 52** (None on May 7–8)

Total blockade-eligible ships that [evaded the blockade](#): **At least 21** (None between May 7–8)

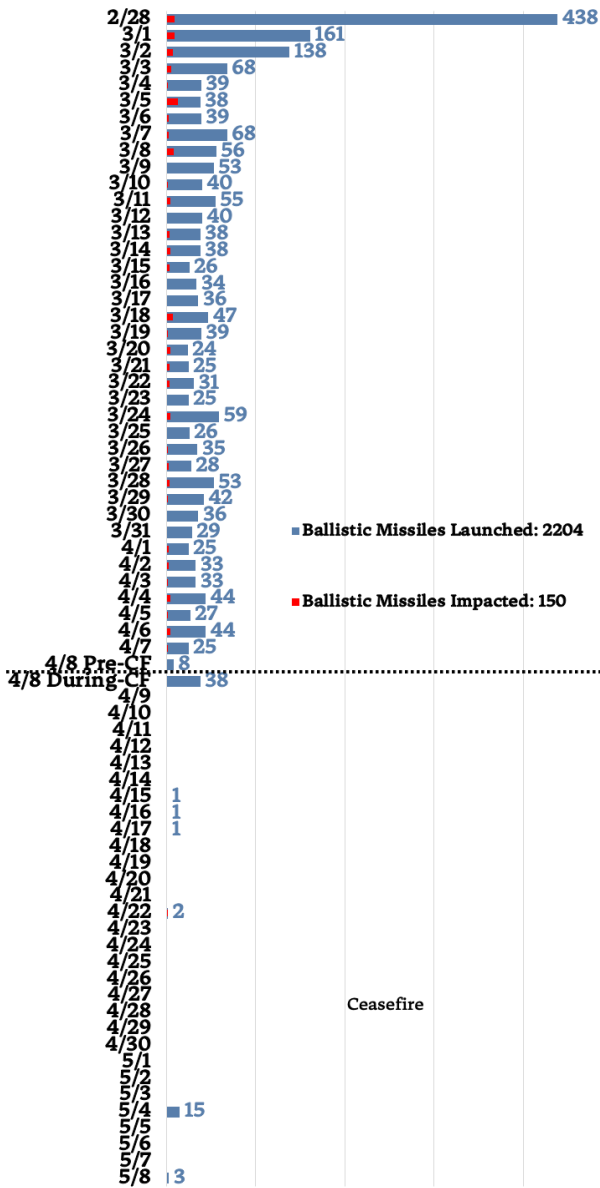
- Note: The blockade line that the Pentagon announced crosses where the Gulf of Oman opens into the Arabian Sea, beyond the Strait of Hormuz itself. Some of the ships that evaded the blockade are small vessels with limited utility to the Iranian regime.

### 1. Overview

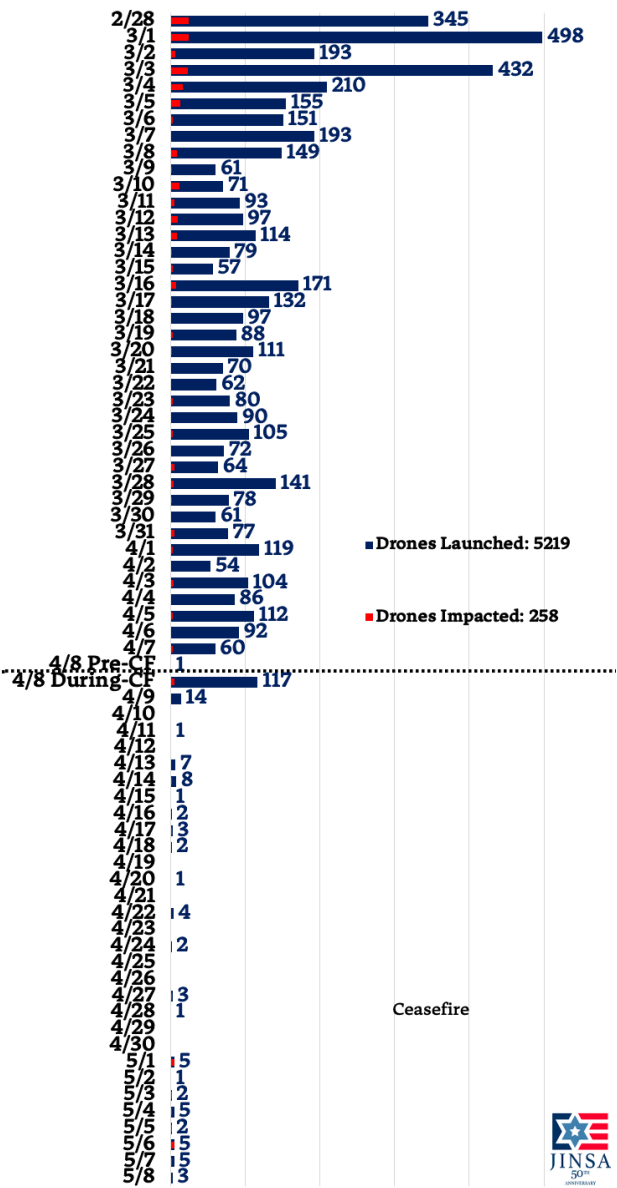
- U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) [struck](#) two Iranian oil tankers, the *Sevda* and the *Sea Star III*, on May 8, as they attempted to breach the blockade en route to Iran. The tankers were not carrying cargo, CENTCOM said. JINSA-reviewed Kpler data shows the two oil tankers traveled from East Asia.
  - » So far on May 8, zero commercial ships have crossed the Strait of Hormuz, according to JINSA's review of Kpler data. However, according to satellite imagery reviewed by the analytics firm Windward Intelligence, dozens of ships in the region are not broadcasting their location, complicating ship tracking.
- Following President Trump's downplaying of the exchange of fire between the United States and Iran, Iran launched another attack against the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) on May 8 local time by launching three drones and two ballistic missiles.

- » Iran has also continued to target opposition groups in Iraqi Kurdistan, with a ballistic missile on May 8 and four drones on May 7.
- Iranian authorities [claimed](#) to have seized the [Chinese-owned-and-operated](#) *Ocean Koi*, also known as the *Jin Li*, a U.S.-sanctioned oil tanker that Iran claimed was carrying Iranian oil, in the Gulf of Oman on May 8. Iranian officials [accused](#) the ship of attempting to “damage and disrupt Iran’s oil exports” and redirected it to Iran’s southern coast.
- In response to Iran firing “multiple missiles, drones and small boats” at U.S. Navy warships in the Strait of Hormuz on May 7, “U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) eliminated inbound threats and targeted Iranian military facilities responsible for attacking U.S. forces including missile and drone launch sites; command and control locations; and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance nodes,” according to a CENTCOM [statement](#).
  - » The response marked the first U.S. strikes against Iranian territory since the ceasefire began.
  - » President Donald Trump [posted](#) on X on May 7, “Three World Class American Destroyers just transited, very successfully, out of the Strait of Hormuz, under fire. There was no damage done to the three Destroyers, but great damage done to the Iranian attackers,” which he added were “completely destroyed along with numerous small boats.”
  - » On May 7, President Trump [described](#) the U.S. strikes on Iran as “just a love tap,” noting that “the ceasefire is going. It’s in effect.”
- On May 7, *The Washington Post* [reported](#) that analysis conducted by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) indicated Tehran could withstand the American naval blockade for three to four months, or more, before it would experience more significant damage to its economy.
  - » One official familiar with the assessment stated that it suggests Iran’s current stockpile of missiles is at around 70 percent of the pre-war level, and its inventory of mobile launchers is at around 75 percent of the pre-war level.
    - The report described Iran’s overall missile and launcher capacity but did not specify how much of its medium- or short-range arsenal it maintains.
- On May 7, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait reportedly [lifted](#) restrictions on the use of their bases and airspace for the use of U.S. military operations to ensure safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz.
  - » Previously, NBC News [reported](#) on May 6 that President Trump’s announcement on May 3 of Project Freedom, the U.S. effort to help commercial ships leave the Persian Gulf, was not coordinated with Gulf states, prompting Saudi Arabia to restrict U.S. access to its airspace and Prince Sultan Airbase. President Trump later announced on May 5 that Project Freedom was paused.

Iranian Missiles Launched Per Day



Iranian Drones Launched Per Day



## 2. Diplomatic Engagement

### Iran

- On May 8, Secretary of State Marco Rubio [said](#) that the United States expects to receive a response to its proposal to end the war by the end of the day, telling reporters that the “hope is, it’s something that can put us into a serious process of negotiation.”
  - » Israel’s Channel 12 news outlet [reported](#) on May 7, citing Israeli officials, that the Trump administration is optimistic that a framework agreement with Iran will be reached in the coming days. Channel 12 also reported that Iranian officials are now willing to transfer their 60 percent-enriched uranium to another country.
- On May 8, Iran’s foreign ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baghaei [indicated](#) that the U.S. proposal was “under review” and that the two sides were still “nominally in a ceasefire situation,” but Iran would respond “with full force to any aggression or adventurism.”

### Lebanon

- On May 7, the U.S. State Department [confirmed](#) that it will host a third round of Israel-Lebanon talks on May 14–15. Discussions will reportedly focus on a framework that would see Israel withdraw from Lebanon, the Lebanese government commit to disarming Hezbollah, and the normalization of diplomatic ties between the two countries.
  - » Lebanese President Joseph Aoun has so far resisted U.S. pressure for direct talks with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, arguing that this high-level engagement would be premature before a security agreement is reached and Israeli strikes in Lebanon cease.

### 3. U.S. and Israeli Operations

- On May 7, as part of Economic Fury, America’s campaign to increase economic pressure on Iran, the U.S. Treasury Department [sanctioned](#) Ali Maarij Al-Bahadly, Iraq’s Deputy Minister of Oil, stating that he “abuses his position to facilitate the diversion of oil to be sold for the benefit of the Iranian regime and its proxy militias in Iraq.”
  - » The Treasury Department also sanctioned “three senior leaders of Iran-aligned terrorist militias Kata’ib Sayyid Al-Shuhada and Asa’ib Ahl Al-Haq.”

#### *Iran*

- In response to Iranian missile, drone, and attack boat [attacks](#) against U.S. Navy ships on May 7, the United States [struck](#) Qeshm Port and Bandar Abbas, but U.S. officials told Fox News’s Jennifer Griffin that this did not indicate an end to the ceasefire.
  - » A CENTCOM [statement](#) indicated that the U.S. strikes “targeted Iranian military facilities responsible for attacking U.S. forces including missile and drone launch sites; command and control locations; and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance nodes.”
  - » When asked why the United States struck Iranian territory, Secretary of State Marco Rubio [explained](#), “of course, we fired back at them. They were shooting at us. That’s what I would expect us to do. Only stupid countries don’t shoot back when you’re shot at—and we’re not a stupid country. ... If they threaten Americans, they’re going to get blown up. I mean, how much clearer can you be than that?”

#### *Lebanon*

- On May 8, Israeli forces [struck](#) a Hezbollah launcher used earlier that day to target the western Galilee and Haifa Bay.
- On May 8, Lebanese media [reported](#) that the Israeli Air Force was carrying out strikes in southern Lebanon, with the Lebanese Health Ministry stating that a strike in the town of Toura killed four people.
- On May 7, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) [confirmed](#) that its troops recently demolished a Hezbollah-operated 30-meter-long tunnel located in Labbouneh, which is within the Israeli military’s security zone in southern Lebanon, as well as seized weapons located in a Hezbollah command center.
- The IDF has eliminated over 220 Hezbollah operatives and struck at least 180 Hezbollah arms depots, command posts, and launchers since the Israel-Lebanon ceasefire began on April 16, Israel’s *Maariv* outlet [reported](#) on May 7.
  - » The Israeli military has also [confiscated](#) over 1,000 Hezbollah weapons in that timespan, according to a separate article from Israeli outlet *Arutz Sheva*.

## 4. Strait of Hormuz Shipping and Blockade Status

- On May 8, CENTCOM [announced](#) that U.S. forces are currently preventing more than 70 tankers from entering or leaving Iranian ports, with the blocked vessels carrying a capacity of over 166 million barrels of Iranian oil valued at an estimated \$13 billion.
- On May 8, CENTCOM [struck](#) two empty Iranian crude oil tankers attempting to breach the blockade, the *Sea Star III* and the *Sevda*.
  - » Previously, the shipping analytics firm TankerTrackers.com had [claimed](#) on May 8 that two empty crude oil tankers were crossing the blockade line en route to Iran, almost certainly the same vessels that American forces struck.
  - » JINSA has not tracked any Iranian-flagged tankers, or tankers that loaded cargo in Iran, that have breached the blockade since it entered effect on April 13.
    - Of the 21 ships that JINSA tracked evading the blockade, all were smaller cargo ships incapable of transporting large quantities of crude oil or liquified petroleum gas. Only specialized energy tankers can do so.
- On May 8, *Bloomberg* reported that Iran is [increasing](#) its freight train service between Xi'an, China, and Tehran to partially offset the effects of the U.S. naval blockade, with the frequency of cargo trains rising from roughly one per week prior to the conflict to one every three or four days since the blockade took effect.
  - » *Bloomberg* noted that rail routes can only “go a small way” toward bypassing the blockade, as shipments mostly include industrial and consumer goods.

## 5. Iranian and Proxy Operations

### Maritime

- On May 8, Iranian authorities [claimed](#) to have seized the *Ocean Koi*, an oil tanker sanctioned by the U.S. government, in the Gulf of Oman because it wanted “to damage and disrupt Iran’s oil exports.” Iranian officials did not give additional details aside from claiming the ship’s oil belonged to the Iranian regime and that the Iranian Navy redirected the ship to Iran’s southern coast.
- On May 7, Iranian forces [launched](#) missiles, drones, and small boats at three U.S. Navy guided-missile destroyers—USS *Truxtun*, USS *Rafael Peralta*, and USS *Mason*—as they transited the Strait of Hormuz. CENTCOM [reported](#) that no “U.S. assets were struck” as a result of Iran’s launches.

### Lebanon

- On May 8, Hezbollah fired several drones and rockets at northern Israeli communities and Israeli troops operating in southern Lebanon.
  - » Israeli air defenses [intercepted](#) one rocket while others crashed into open areas after Hezbollah launched a barrage of rockets at the Haifa Bay and western Galilee.
  - » Hezbollah [fired](#) a drone that exploded on Israel’s northern border, seriously injuring one soldier and moderately injuring another.
  - » Hezbollah [launched](#) a barrage of explosive-laden drones that crashed close to Israeli troops operating in southern Lebanon, moderately wounding one soldier.
  - » The Israeli military [intercepted](#) one projectile after Hezbollah fired several other mortars and rockets at Israeli forces operating in southern Lebanon.
- On May 8, Israeli authorities [discovered](#) a Hezbollah drone that had crashed on a Nahariya school roof on an unknown date, with police evacuating the building out of precaution to remove the weapon.

- On May 7, Israeli troops operating in southern Lebanon came under fire after Hezbollah mortars and rockets [exploded](#) near their positions in at least two separate incidents, but no injuries were reported.

#### *Iraq*

- On May 8, a Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI) civilian camp was [targeted](#) by an unspecified number of ballistic missiles in Iraqi Kurdistan.
- On May 7, a Kurdistan Freedom Party (PAK) base was [targeted](#) by two drones in Iraqi Kurdistan, with no immediate casualties reported.
- On May 7, PDKI fighters were [targeted](#) by two drones in the Balisan mountains within Iraqi Kurdistan.
- On May 7, the U.S. State Department [announced](#) that since the war started, Iran-backed actors have launched over 600 attacks on American diplomatic sites in Iraq. The State Department called on Iraq's government to halt its cooperation with Iran-linked militias.

#### *U.A.E.*

- On May 8, the U.A.E. [engaged](#) two ballistic missiles and three drones over various parts of the country. Three casualties were [reported](#).

#### *Israel*

- On May 8, Israeli prosecutors will [indict](#) three IDF soldiers and one Israeli civilian for spying for Iran.
  - » The three soldiers have maintained contact with Iran-linked agents since before their time serving in the military, and are accused of taking pictures of the Air Force technical school and public facilities. The Iranian contacts also reportedly asked the soldiers to purchase weapons.

#### *Internal Dynamics and Repression*

- On May 8, [Iran](#) hit its 70th straight day of a government-imposed nationwide internet black-out, according to the internet-monitoring group NetBlocks.

## 6. Estimated Casualties of Iranian Operations

- Thirteen U.S. service members have died during Operation Epic Fury.
  - » An Iranian drone attack [killed](#) six U.S. servicemembers at Port Shuaiba in Kuwait on March 1: Maj. Jeffrey O'Brien, 45; Chief Warrant Officer 3 Robert Marzan, 54; Capt. Cody Khork, 35; Sgt. 1st Class Nicole Amor, 39; Sgt. 1st Class Noah Tietjens, 42; and Sgt. Declan Coady (posthumously promoted from specialist), 20.
  - » A U.S. servicemember, Sgt. Benjamin Pennington, 26, was [killed](#) in a March 8 Iranian attack targeting U.S. troops at the Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia.
  - » Six U.S. servicemembers were [killed](#) when a KC-135 aerial refueling aircraft crashed over western Iraq on March 12: Major John A. Klinner, 33; Captain Ariana G. Savino, 31; Technical Sergeant Ashley B. Pruitt, 34; Captain Seth R. Koval, 38; Captain Curtis J. Angst, 30; and Technical Sergeant Tyler H. Simmons, 28.
- At least 400 members of the U.S. military have been [injured](#) thus far in the war.
  - » Ten have been seriously [wounded](#), and at least 354 of the injured have reportedly returned to duty.
  - » At least 15 Americans were [hurt](#) in an Iranian drone strike on Ali Al Salem Air Base in Kuwait on April 6, most of whom were lightly injured.

- » In the March 27 Iranian attack on a U.S. base in Saudi Arabia, at least 15 U.S. service-members were [injured](#), including two who were seriously wounded.
- Since the war began, [at least 47 people have been killed in Israel](#), while over 7,795 have been [injured](#). At least 17 of these [casualties](#) include Israeli soldiers who have been killed while fighting Hezbollah in southern Lebanon.
- Since the war's outbreak, numerous other casualties have been reported:
  - » Iran: At least 3,636 people, including at least 1,221 military personnel, have been [killed](#), with at least 26,500 [wounded](#). *Iran International* reports that over 4,700 security personnel have been [killed](#), including members of the Basij, IRGC, and police forces.
  - » Azerbaijan: Four civilians have been [injured](#).
  - » Bahrain: Three people have [been killed](#), including a [Moroccan contractor](#), and at least 46 people [have been injured](#), including five [Emirati soldiers](#).
  - » Iraq: At least 119 people have been [killed](#), including 20 [people](#) in Iraqi Kurdistan.
  - » Jordan: At least 31 people have [been injured](#).
  - » Kuwait: Two [Kuwaiti navy sailors](#), two [Kuwaiti interior ministry officers](#), two [Kuwaiti civilians](#), and an [Indian national](#) have been killed; over 90 Kuwaiti military [personnel have been injured](#), and eight [civilians](#), including two [medical staff](#), have been wounded.
  - » Lebanon: At least 2,727 people have been [killed](#), and nearly 8,438 have been wounded—figures that do not distinguish between Hezbollah operatives and civilians.
  - » Oman: At least [three people](#) have been killed, and at least 17 have [been wounded](#).
  - » Qatar: Around 20 people have been [wounded](#), and seven were [killed](#) on March 22 in a helicopter crash in Qatari territorial waters due to a technical issue.
  - » Saudi Arabia: Three people have been killed, including a Saudi [national](#) and two [foreign nationals](#), and at least 23 others [have been injured](#).
  - » Syria: At least four people have been [killed](#) in Syria, and several others have been [injured](#).
  - » U.A.E.: 13 people have been [killed](#), and at least 230 have been injured.

## 7. Threats, Condemnations, and Statements from Iranian Officials

- On May 8, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi [posted](#) a statement on X, writing, “Every time a diplomatic solution is on the table, the U.S. opts for a reckless military adventure. Is it a crude pressure tactic? Or the result of a spoiler once again duping POTUS into another quagmire?”
  - » He added, “Whatever the causes, [the] outcome is the same: Iranians never bow to pressure and diplomacy is always the victim.”
  - » Foreign Minister Araghchi also noted, “the CIA is wrong. Our missile inventory and launcher capacity are not at 75% compared to Feb 28. The correct figure is 120%.”

## 8. International Response

- On May 8, Secretary Rubio [raised](#) concerns about U.S. allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) denying the American military access to their bases, stating, “If one of the main reasons why the US is in NATO is the ability to have forces deployed in Europe that we could project to other contingencies, and now that’s no longer the case, at least when it comes to some NATO members, that’s a problem, and it has to be examined.”

- » He noted that President Trump “hasn’t made those decisions yet,” regarding a response to NATO member states denying the United States access to their bases.
- On May 8, the Emirati-based outlet *The National* [reported](#) on May 8 that Russia is objecting to a U.S.-Bahraini advanced draft United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolution regarding the situation in the Strait of Hormuz.
  - » Russia reportedly accused the draft resolution of being “one-sided” against Iran and ignoring the situation’s “root cause,” U.S. and Israeli actions.
- On May 8, Saudi Arabia’s Deputy Minister for Public Diplomacy, Rayed Krimly, [said](#) in an X post that “The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia continues to stand in support of de-escalation and avoiding escalation, as well as negotiations and the efforts undertaken regarding them.” He added, “caution must be exercised with what is attributed in the media to anonymous sources—some of which are claimed to be Saudi—in a manner that contradicts that.”
- On May 8, China’s foreign ministry [expressed concern](#) after the deck on the Marshall Islands-flagged *JV Innovation* tanker, which had [broadcast](#) on its Automatic Identification System (AIS) the term “CHINA OWNER & CREW,” [caught fire](#) after coming under attack near the Strait of Hormuz earlier on May 4.
  - » The May 4 incident is the first reported attack on a Chinese ship since the beginning of the conflict.
- *The Economist* [reported](#) on May 7 that Russia prepared a proposal to provide Iran with long-range satellite-controlled drones, 5,000 short-range fiber-optic drones, and training to employ both types of drones.
  - » *The Economist* estimated that this proposal was prepared during the first six weeks of the Iran war.

## 9. JINSA Resources

- Giran Ozcan, [Iranian Attacks on Iraqi Kurdistan Threaten a Vital U.S. Partnership](#), May 7, 2026
- Yoni Tobin, [Turning Tides: U.S. Blockade Enforcement Exceeds Iranian Evasion](#), May 1, 2026
- Hussein Aboubakr Mansour, [The UAE’s OPEC Exit: Strategic Implications for the Gulf Order](#), April 29, 2026
- Ari Cicurel, [Iron Dome Deployment to U.A.E. Showed Abraham Accords Defense Potential](#), April 28, 2026
- Michael Makovsky, PhD, and Blaise Misztal, [The Iranian People: America’s Most Powerful Weapon](#), April 26, 2026
- Hussein Mansour, [The Emirati Moment: The U.A.E.’s Strategic Cycle and the Iran War](#), April 24, 2026
- Michael Makovsky, PhD, and Blaise Misztal, [In Defense of the War, And How to Finish It](#), April 17, 2026