

Tankers

Iran moves to tighten control over Strait of Hormuz

New Iranian authority clears way for fees and mandatory insurance payments after the first 60 days of interim peace deal



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian shows the interim peace deal signed by the Washington and Tehran Photo: Scanpix

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The agency asserting Iran's control over the Strait of Hormuz will look to collect fees and mandatory insurance premiums as the price for transiting the key

energy chokepoint.

The Persian Gulf Strait Authority (PGSA) said on Friday that it would not charge tariffs for “security, safety and environmental services” and insurance costs in the first 60 days after an interim peace deal was signed.



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But the statement cleared the way for fees to be collected later.

During the 60 days, the fees “will not be collected from shipowners and will be borne by the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran”, it said.

The interim peace deal this week ended the US blockade of the strait and a phased end to Iran’s.

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But US officials had insisted that they would not accept a future tolling system for the strait. The Iranian statement uses the word “tariffs” instead of tolls.

It also insisted that shipowners seek approval from Iranian authorities 48 hours before making any transit.

“To avoid delays at the entrance or exit of the Strait of Hormuz, it is essential that passing requests, complete with all required information, are submitted at least

48 hours prior to arriving at the strait area,” the PGSA said in a notice posted on social media.

It said that traffic coordination before moving to the strait was “mandatory” because of the presence of mines and to avoid collisions, it said. “Failure to comply shall be the responsibility of the vessel owner,” it said.

The idea for charges for transiting Hormuz has been a hot topic during the crisis and has received backing from major players, including Evangelos Marinakis, if it was an interim path to peace.

As TradeWinds reported this week, the threat of tolls on the global chokepoint has been a consistent topic around reopening.

The moves are likely to be strongly opposed, with 30 countries giving strong backing to freedom of navigation in a paper submitted to the International Maritime Organization.

The paper, backed by countries including Greece, Japan, the United Arab Emirates and Norway, says the stability of vital shipping lanes “including straits used for international navigation” has never been more critical.

It called on the IMO to affirm its commitment that “vital sea lanes remain open, secure and accessible to all”.

The Iranian comments came as a mine was discovered in Hormuz, near the coast of Oman.

Two corridors had been used for ships leaving the Middle East Gulf — one controlled by Iran and the second backed by US air defences closer to Iran.

The comments by the PGSA add to increasing warnings about a swift return to regular traffic.

Transits increased on Friday but remain well below pre-war levels.

Security firms and shipping organisations have advised shipowners not to attempt transits until a new navigation body is in place.

An announcement had been expected on Friday after discussions between shipping bodies, the IMO and coastal states, but has been delayed.

“The IMO is focusing on progressing the evacuation plan to get stranded ships out,” an IMO spokesperson said. “That’s our priority at the moment.”

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