

# Terms agreed for allowing use of armed guards

THE use of armed guards onboard Italian-flagged ships moved a few steps closer after Defence Minister Ignazio La Russa signed a convention agreement with Confitarma last month.

“Under the terms of the agreement, 10 teams of six military personnel will be available for Italian-registered vessels. The final obstacle is to secure the diplomatic agreements with ports and states in the region for the transit of military personnel and their arms enabling them to join and leave vessels,” said Confitarma president Paolo D’Amico.

“Italian vessels have been trying to use passive defence techniques against pirate attacks, but as these have proven to be ineffective, the only option was to use armed personnel, either military or private, as a defence.”

After applauding Mr D’Amico for “his successful efforts to provide Italian ships with an important deterrent including military protection detachments”, lawyer, Francesco Lauro expressed the hope that “steps still necessary to implement the new legislation would be quickly finalised.

“These are draft rules of engagement and the conclusion of a memorandum of understanding with coastal states where the military detachments shall embark and disembark,” he said.

According to Andrea Dalle Vedove of Assicurazioni Generali, “the mitigation of risk using war risk policies is decreasing in favour of kidnap and ransom insurance, while the use of private armed security is increasing dramatically”.

He added: “The average ransom payment had risen from \$600,000 in 2008 to \$5m in 2011, with the highest so far this year being \$13.5m.” ■

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