

REAL OPEN-SOURCE INVESTIGATION

From a map observation to a sanctioned-tanker identity match

This investigation was conducted manually using public sources: a widely used vessel-tracking platform and the official U.S. OFAC sanctions database. WorldRuler is being designed to automate the same workflow — from map observation and identity resolution to sanctions screening and an evidence-linked alert.

LOCATION	OBSERVATION WINDOW	KEY MATCH
Eastern Mediterranean	July 2026	IMO 9411020 · U.S. OFAC

MANUALLY DISCOVERED · DESIGNED TO BE AUTOMATED BY WORLDRULER

WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED

- 01 · MAP OBSERVATION

While reviewing tanker traffic in the Eastern Mediterranean on a public vessel-tracking platform, two vessels initially appeared close on the map.
- 02 · DETAILED TRACK REVIEW

A detailed track review showed the vessels moving on opposite courses at relatively high speed, with no sustained proximity or coordinated movement. The encounter hypothesis was rejected.
- 03 · INDIVIDUAL SCREENING

Each vessel was then checked separately using its AIS profile and permanent IMO number, with the official U.S. OFAC sanctions database used for screening.
- 04 · NO SANCTIONS MATCH FOR THE FIRST VESSEL

The first vessel matched its displayed public identity and was not found in the sanctions list reviewed. No connection to BRATSK, coordinated movement, ship-to-ship activity, or wrongdoing was established from the available data.
- 05 · BRATSK RAISED QUESTIONS

The second vessel was transmitting as BRATSK, a Russian-flagged crude oil tanker with IMO 9411020 and MMSI 273250630.
- 06 · HULL PHOTOGRAPH CONTRADICTED AIS

A public photograph on the vessel profile showed the name NS BURGAS still painted on the hull. The AIS name and the visible hull marking did not match.
- 07 · IMO-BASED IDENTITY RESOLUTION

The permanent hull identifier IMO 9411020 connected the current BRATSK profile to the former identity NS BURGAS.
- 08 · U.S. SANCTIONS MATCH

A search of the official OFAC database by IMO returned NS BURGAS under the RUSSIA-EO14024 program.
- 09 · IDENTITY CHANGES CONFIRMED

The unchanged IMO linked the current profile to the sanctioned record despite changes of name, flag, and MMSI. Public catalogues also list designations by the UK, EU, Canada, Switzerland, New Zealand, Ukraine, and Australia (2024–2026).

VISUAL EVIDENCE

The public vessel photograph shows the former name still painted on the hull.

The AIS profile was transmitting BRATSK, while the hull photograph displayed NS BURGAS. This visible mismatch supported the IMO-based identity resolution.



OBSERVED MISMATCH

AIS identity: BRATSK | Name visible on hull: NS BURGAS

Permanent identifier: IMO 9411020

WHY IT MATTERS

Names, flags, and MMSI numbers can change. The IMO number remains tied to the hull and connected the current BRATSK profile to the sanctioned NS BURGAS record.

EVIDENCE CHAIN

One hull. Two identities. One permanent identifier.

FIELD	SANCTIONS RECORD	CURRENT AIS PROFILE	STATUS
IMO	9411020	9411020	MATCH
Name	NS BURGAS	BRATSK	CHANGED
Flag	Gabon	Russian Federation	CHANGED
MMSI	626378000	273250630	CHANGED
Hull marking	NS BURGAS	profile transmits BRATSK	MISMATCH

ASSESSMENT

U.S. sanctions match with shadow-fleet risk indicators

BRATSK, IMO 9411020, matches the vessel listed by OFAC under its former name NS BURGAS. The current AIS name, flag, and MMSI differ from the sanctions record, while a public photograph still shows NS BURGAS on the hull. Detection confidence: High — the permanent IMO number is unchanged across the current profile and the official record; the hull photograph provides additional visual support. "Shadow fleet" is an analytical risk classification.

THE REAL WORKFLOW · DESIGNED TO BE AUTOMATED

Map observation	→ Track geometry and vessel behaviour reviewed
Apparent proximity	→ Opposite courses and high speed identified; encounter hypothesis rejected
Individual vessel screening	→ IMO-based identity and sanctions checks performed
Identity discrepancy	→ Change-of-identity alert
Hull photograph	→ Analyst-added supporting evidence
Findings	→ Evidence-linked alert and AI-assisted brief

LIMITS OF THE FINDING

The initial proximity was examined and rejected on detailed track review. The first vessel was not found in the sanctions list reviewed; no ship-to-ship transfer, coordinated activity, or wrongdoing by that vessel was established from the available data. AIS identifiers can be inaccurate, and sanctions status should be rechecked as of the date of use. This case does not determine that a specific unlawful act occurred. Automation status: this case was discovered and verified manually; the automated platform is currently in development.