

Incident Report: 10/2010

Date/Time of Incident: 27 April 2010 at 2138 hrs (local time)

Location of incident: 4° 44.16' N, 103° 58.06' E

Area Description: Approximately 78 nm off Kuantan, Malaysia

Name and Type of Ship: *PU 2402*/Tug boat

Details of Incident

On 27 April 2010 at about 2138 hrs (local time), Singapore-registered tug boat, *PU 2402* activated their SSAS while underway at position 4° 44.16' N, 103° 58.06' E (approximately 78 nm off Kuantan, Malaysia). *PU 2402* towing Singapore-registered barge, *PU 3309* laden with coal, had departed Sungai Serongga, South Kalimantan on 12 April 2010 for Mahachai, Thailand. See photograph of *PU 2402* towing a barge.



Photographs courtesy of the ship company

Photograph of tug boat, PU 2402



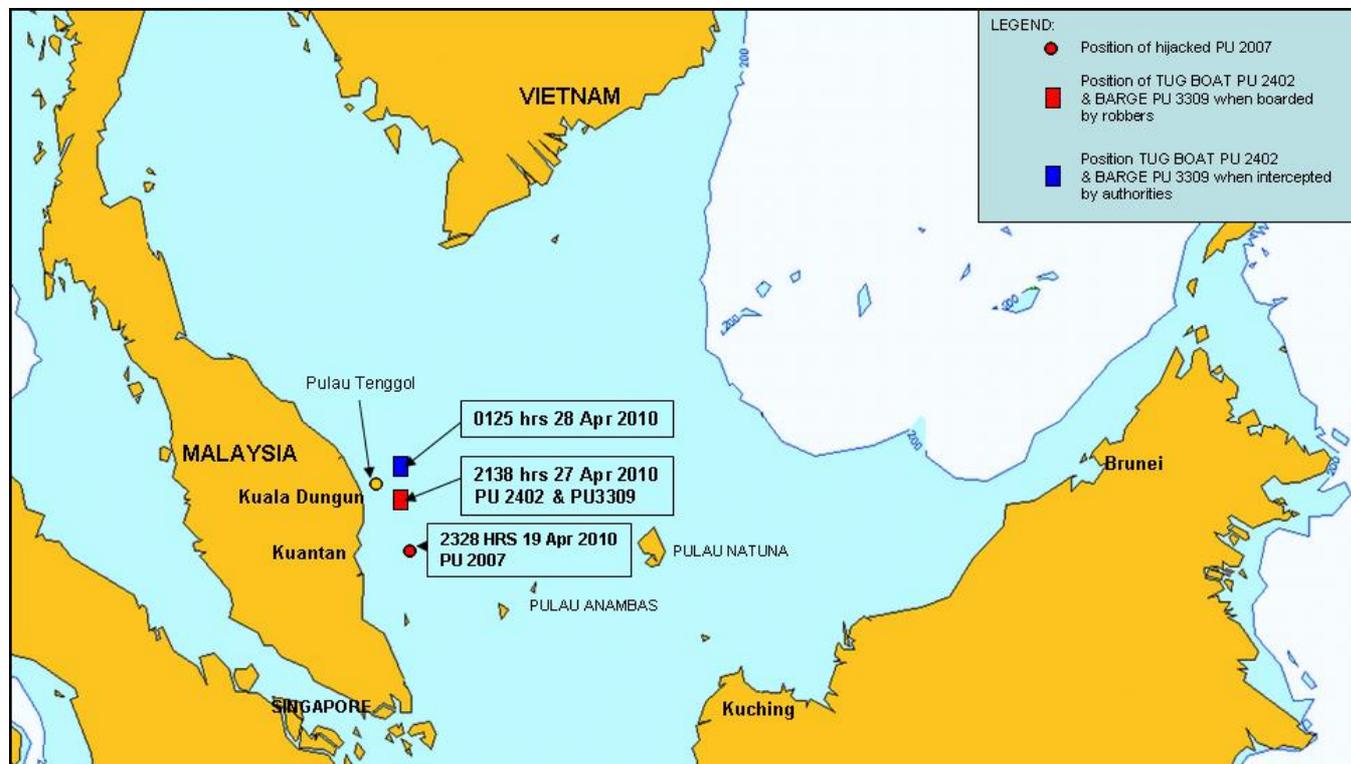
Seven robbers came along the port side of the tug boat in a small boat. Six of the robbers boarded the tug boat while one of them armed with parang (long knife) waited in the small boat. One of the robbers threatened the ship master with a pistol. The ship master managed to activate the ship's SSAS, but was disabled by the robber. All nine crew was led to the ship master's cabin with their hands tied. One by one, the crew was threatened by the robbers with machetes demanding them to hand over their cash and valuables. The entire episode was over in about 30 minutes. The robbers left the tug boat taking with them cash, lap top and the crew's mobile phones. The ship master managed to free himself and untie the rest of the crew.

The Company Security Officer (CSO) of the ship company attempted to establish contact with *PU 2402* but failed. He reported the incident to the Singapore's Port Operation and Control Centre (POCC) which is also the ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore), and the ReCAAP ISC. The ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore) submitted an Incident Report to all the ReCAAP Focal Points, and informed the Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) and the MRCC Putra Jaya about the incident.

The *PU 2402* was last assessed to be heading northerly at about 3 knots. The ReCAAP ISC reported the incident to the Malaysia's Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) who responded immediately by dispatching their vessel to the location of the tug boat.

The MMEA boat intercepted and boarded *PU 2402* at approximately 14.5 nm northeast of Pulau Tenggol (at position 4° 53.1' N, 103° 54.9' E) at about 0125 hrs (local time) on 28 April 2010. The crew was safe and the robbers had already left the tug boat. The tug boat was subsequently escorted to Dungun, Terengganu for investigation. The CSO managed to establish contact with the ship master of *PU 2402* at about 0251 hrs on 28 April 2010 through another of their tug boat, *PU 2406* which was in the vicinity.





Location of Incidents Involving *PU 2402* and *PU 2007*

Reported by

ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore)
CSO of the ship company

Comments by ReCAAP ISC

This incident happened in close proximity to a recent hijacking incident involved *PU 2007* which occurred on 19 April 2010. However, unlike the incident involving *PU 2007*, the robbers involving in *PU 2402* boarded the vessel to steal cash and other personal effects.



The responsiveness of the MMEA in dispatching a vessel to the incident area to render assistance to the crew of *PU 2402* was highly commendable. This incident again demonstrated the close cooperation between the ReCAAP ISC and the MMEA at the operational level. It also featured the collaboration among the ship company, the ReCAAP ISC and the ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore). Timely reporting of the incident enables the MMEA to respond to the incident promptly.

The ReCAAP ISC encourages all ships transiting through the area to be vigilant and look out for suspicious boats operating in the vicinity. In the event of boarding, the ReCAAP ISC urged ship master to report the incident to the nearest coastal State and flag State immediately so that the authorities are able to dispatch their assets to the location of the incident and arrest the culprits. Multi-channel reporting by ship owners and operators to the ReCAAP Focal Point concurrently is also advocated so that Incident Alerts and warnings can be issued by the ReCAAP ISC and Focal Points respectively to cautious other ships operating in the area.

