

Report for January 2009

1st January 2009 – 31st January 2009

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Report for January 2009

Executive Summary

In January 2009, two incidents of armed robbery against ships were reported in the Asian region. Both were actual incidents and occurred when the ships were at anchor. The details of these incidents are described in the Annex. Overall, there has been a decrease in the number of incidents reported in January 2009 compared to January 2008. A total of six incidents (five actual incidents and one attempted incident) were reported in January 2008.



Part 1 - Definitions & Methodology Used

1.1 Definitions Adopted by ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre

The definitions of piracy and armed robbery against ships adopted by the ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ISC) are in accordance with the ReCAAP Agreement, wherein:

Piracy, in accordance with Article 101 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), is defined in Article 1 (Definitions) of the ReCAAP as:

- (1) For the purpose of this Agreement, “piracy” means any of the following acts:
 - (a) any illegal act of violence or detention, or any act of depredation, committed for private ends by the crew or the passengers of a private ship or a private aircraft, and directed:
 - (i) on the high seas, against another ship, or against persons or property on board such ship;
 - (ii) against a ship, persons or property in a place outside the jurisdiction of any State;
 - (b) any act of voluntary participation in the operation of a ship or of an aircraft with knowledge of facts making it a pirate ship or aircraft;
 - (c) any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described in subparagraph (a) or (b).

Armed Robbery, in accordance with the Code of Practice for the Investigations of Crime of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships of International Maritime Organisation (IMO) (MSC/Circ. 984, Article 2.2), is defined in Article 1 (Definitions) of the ReCAAP as:

- (2) For the purpose of this Agreement, “armed robbery against ships” means any of the following acts:
 - (a) any illegal act of violence or detention, or any act of depredation, committed for private ends and directed against a ship, or against persons or property on board such ship, in a place within a Contracting Party’s jurisdiction over such offences;
 - (b) any act of voluntary participation in the operation of a ship with knowledge of facts making it a ship for armed robbery against ships;
 - (c) any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described in subparagraph (a) or (b).



Part 1 - Definitions & Methodology Used

1.2 Methodology for Classifying Incidents

1.2.1 To provide some perspective on incidents of piracy and armed robbery, the ReCAAP ISC evaluates the significance of each incident in terms of two factors - the level of violence and the economic loss incurred. The indicators for these two factors are as follows:

- a. Violence Factor.** This factor refers to the intensity of violence in an incident, and the three indicators used to determine this are:
 - (1) Types of weapons used.** Incidents of pirates/robbers who board a ship with no visible weapons are generally deemed as less violent compared to those equipped with pistols, knives, machetes, or other dangerous weapons. In cases where more sophisticated weapons are used, such incidents would be considered more violent.
 - (2) Treatment of the crew.** Incidents where pirates/robbers kill or kidnap crew are deemed to be more violent compared to petty thieves who flee upon being noticed. Other cases could include threatening crew members, assault, or serious injury.
 - (3) Number of pirates/robbers engaged in an attack.** As a rule, an incident where a larger number of pirates/robbers were involved would be considered more significant as having a large capacity (as well as probability) for use of force. A larger number of pirates/robbers may also indicate the involvement of gangs or organised syndicates rather than petty and opportunistic pirates who generally operate in small groups.
- b. Economic Factor.** This factor takes into consideration the type of the property taken from the ship. Cases of theft of cash or personal effects are generally less significant incidents compared to cases where the entire ship is hijacked either for the cargo onboard or theft of the vessel.



Part 1 - Definitions & Methodology Used

1.2.2 Using these indicators, the ReCAAP ISC categorises all incidents into one of the three categories to determine their overall significance.

Category	Significance of Incident
CAT 1	Very Significant
CAT 2	Moderately Significant
CAT 3	Less Significant

1.2.3 This classification of incidents allows the ReCAAP ISC to provide some perspective of the piracy and armed robbery situation in Asia.



Part 1 - Definitions & Methodology Used

1.3 Note on Maps Used to Depict Location of Incidents

The maps used in the ReCAAP ISC's reports are not drawn to scale and the locations of incidents depicted are therefore approximations.

1.4 Acknowledgements

The ReCAAP ISC makes use of various sources of information in producing its reports. The primary source is the ReCAAP ISC's Information Network System (IFN). Where necessary, the ReCAAP ISC leverages on other secondary sources of information, including those from the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), the International Chamber of Commerce-International Maritime Bureau (ICC-IMB), ship owners/operators and other publicly available sources to facilitate analysis on patterns and trends, and to make recommendations. The ReCAAP ISC makes every effort to acknowledge these sources.



Part 2 - Report for January 2009

2.1 Number and Significance of Incidents

2.1.1 A total of two incidents were reported in January 2009. Both were actual incidents. Compared to January 2008, this was a sizable decrease in the number of reported incidents. In January 2008, a total of six incidents (five actual incidents and one attempted incident) were reported.

	January 2009	January 2008
Actual	2	5
Attempted	0	1
Total	2	6

Table 1 - Actual and attempted incidents during January 2009 and January 2008

2.1.2 The two incidents reported in January 2009 were Category 3 incidents. Details of the incidents are provided in the Annex. In January 2008, there were five actual incidents and all was Category 3 incidents. Please see Table 2 below.

Significance Level	January 2009	January 2008
Category 3 (Less Significant)	2	5
Total	2	5

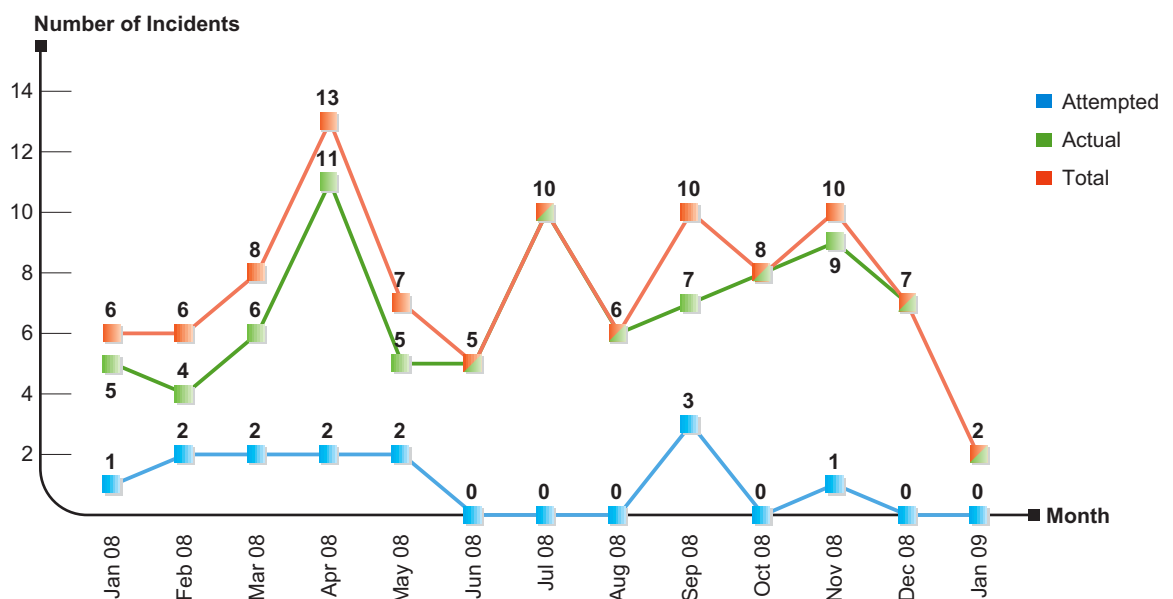
Table 2 - Significance level of actual incidents during January 2009 and January 2008



Report for January 2009

Part 2 - Report for January 2009

2.1.3 Graph 1 shows the number of actual and attempted incidents reported between January 2008 and January 2009. During this period, total activity was highest in April 2008, and lowest in January 2009. The ReCAAP ISC will continue to monitor the total activity pattern.



Graph 1 - Number of incidents from January 2008 to January 2009



Part 2 - Report for January 2009

2.2 Analysis of Incidents in January 2009

2.2.1 Location of Actual and Attempted Incidents

Table 3 shows the location of incidents reported in January 2009 and January 2008. Overall there was a noticeable decrease in the number of reported incidents in January 2009 compared to January 2008. The improvement was most evident in India with no incidents reported in January 2009 compared to two incidents reported there in January 2008. Please see Table 3 below.

	January 2009		January 2008	
	Actual	Attempted	Actual	Attempted
India			2	
Indonesia	1		2	
Straits of Malacca & Singapore				1
Vietnam	1		1	
Total	2		5	1

Table 3 - Location of incidents during January 2009 and January 2008

2.2.2 Weapons Used

Table 4 shows the weapons used by robbers in incidents reported during January 2009 and January 2008. In January 2009, there were no reports on the use of weapons by robbers in the two incidents compared to January 2008 when the use of guns was reported in one of the five incidents.

Incidents in January	Guns	Knives	Not stated/ Nil
January 2009			2
January 2008	1	1	5

Table 4 - Weapons used in actual incidents during January 2009 and January 2008



Part 2 - Report for January 2009

2.2.3 Type of Ships

Table 5 below shows that tankers were involved in the two incidents reported in January 2009. This is in contrast to January 2008 when tug boats and tankers were involved in incidents more frequently than the other type of ships.

Type of Ship	January 2009	January 2008
Container Ship		1
Bulk Carrier		1
Chemical Tanker	1	1
Oil Tanker	1	1
Tug/Barge		2
Total	2	6

Table 5 - Type of ships involved in actual incidents during January 2009 and January 2008

2.2.4 Status of Ships

The two incidents reported in January 2009 occurred when the ships were anchored. Of the five actual incidents reported in January 2008, three incidents involved ships that were anchored and two involved ships that were steaming. See Table 6 below.

	Actual Incidents			Attempted Incidents		
	Berthed	Anchored	Steaming	Berthed	Anchored	Steaming
January 2009		2				
January 2008		3	2			1

Table 6 - Status of ships during incidents in January 2009 and January 2008



Part 2 - Report for January 2009

2.2.5 Time of Incidents

In January 2009, all the incidents occurred during hours of darkness. However, in January 2008, three out of six incidents occurred between early morning to late evening (0600 hrs - 1759 hrs) and the other three incidents occurred during hours of darkness.

	1800 hrs to 2359 hrs	0001 hrs to 0559 hrs	0600 hrs to 1159 hrs	1200 hrs to 1759 hrs
January 2009		2		
January 2008	1	2	2	1

Table 7 - Local time of incidents during January 2009 and January 2008





Map 1: Location of Incidents Reported in January 2009

Legend
Actual CAT 3 ●

Part 3 - Details of Selected Incidents

3.1 Incident in the Port of Vung Tau, Vietnam

- 3.1.1** At about 0415 hrs on 15 January 2009, a tanker was anchored at approximately 10° 14.97'N, 107° 04.02'E, off the outer anchorage of Vung Tau when two robbers boarded the tanker. Please refer to map below for the approximate location of the incident.
- 3.1.2** The duty crew noticed the robbers and raised the alarm. He sounded the ship's whistle and mustered the crew. Upon hearing the alarm, the robbers jumped into the water and escaped with the ship's store in their small boat. There was no report of injury sustained by the crew.



Part 3 - Details of Selected Incidents

Past Incidents

3.1.3 This is the first incident of robbery on board a ship reported at the anchorage of Vung Tau since the beginning of 2009. In 2008, a total of five incidents were reported in the water and surrounding port of Vung Tau compared to three incidents reported in 2007 and one incident in 2006.

3.1.4 All incidents reported in 2008 were cases of petty theft targeting at ship's stores and unsecured items like ropes on the deck of the ships. These incidents were:

- a. Incident involved the LPG tanker, *Chelsea Bridge* on 21 April 2008
- b. Incident involved the crude oil tanker, *Garden City River* on 1 July 2008
- c. Incident involving the chemical tanker, *Rengganis* on 30 July 2008
- d. Incident involving the container ship, *Sumire* on 13 October 2008
- e. Incident involving the general cargo ship, *BBC Orinoco* on 29 November 2008

Observations

3.1.5 The ReCAAP ISC notes the similarities in the modus operandi of the robbers in the incidents reported in 2008. Typically, the robbers came alongside the ship in a boat when the ship was at anchor. They climbed up the ships using grapnel and ropes, and stole ropes and unsecured ship's stores from the deck. Upon detected, they jumped overboard and escaped in their boats taking with them the stolen items. Operating between 2000 hrs and 0600 hrs under the cover of darkness, they normally fled upon detected and did not hurt the crew.

3.1.6 Three of the five incidents reported in 2008 involved tankers, one incident involved a container ship and one involved a general cargo ship. There is no evidence to suggest that the robbers specifically targeted a particular type of ship. The incidents were believed to be opportunistic in nature. No crew was injured in all the incidents.



Part 3 - Details of Selected Incidents

Recommendations

- 3.1.7** The ReCAAP ISC advises ship masters to strengthen watch keeping and surveillance when their ships are at anchor in the surrounding waters and port of Vung Tau during hours of darkness.
- 3.1.8** Ship masters are encouraged to report all incidents of piracy and armed robbery to the nearest RCC, coastal or port state authorities, whichever appropriate, immediately after an actual or attempted attack. This enables the authorities to take immediate action to investigate the incident. It also allows the authorities to issue precautionary warning to ships operating in the vicinity to be on lookout for suspicious boats and persons.



Part 4 - Observations for January 2009

- 4.1** The number of reported incidents of armed robbery against ships in the Asian region in January 2009 has decreased compared to January 2008. Overall, the following observations can be made for incidents reported in January 2009:
- a.** In January 2009, there were two actual incidents compared to January 2008 when there were five actual incidents and one attempted incident. This is the lowest number of incidents reported during the one-year period (January 2008 to January 2009).
 - b.** Both incidents reported in January 2009 were Category 3 (less significant) incidents. This is similar to January 2008 where all the five actual incidents were also Category 3 (less significant) incidents.
 - c.** The two incidents reported in January 2009 involved tankers and occurred when the ships were anchored.
 - d.** The incidents occurred during hours of darkness.



Annex

DETAILS OF INCIDENTS IN JANUARY 2009

Actual Incidents

S/N	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, IMO No., GT	Date Time	Location of Incident	Status of Ship	Details of Incident	Reporting Agency	Significance Level (classified by the ReCAAP ISC)
1.	Tanker	15/01/2009 0415 hrs	10° 14.97'N 107° 04.02'E Vung Tau Outer Anchorage, Vietnam	Anchored	Two robbers boarded the tanker while at anchor. The duty crew noticed the robbers and raised the alarm. He sounded the ship's whistle and mustered the crew. Upon hearing the alarm, the robbers jumped into the water and escaped with the ship's store in their small boat. There was no report of injury sustained by the crew.	IMO	CAT 3
2.	Chemical Tanker	29/01/2009 0345 hrs	06° 10.4'S 108° 25.5'E Balongan Anchorage, Indonesia	Anchored	Four robbers boarded the ship and tried to enter the accommodation quarters but were noticed by the duty crew who raised the alarm. Upon hearing the alarm, the robbers jumped into their boat and escaped. The ship master broadcast a security alert message to all ships in the vicinity.	IMO	CAT 3