

For immediate release

PRESS STATEMENT

Nautical Forum 4/13

1. The ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ISC), Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) and Singapore Shipping Association (SSA) jointly organised the Fourth Nautical Forum on 10 January 2013 afternoon at the STI Auditorium, Capital Towers, Singapore.

2. The main objective of this Forum was to bring together the ReCAAP ISC, MPA and members of the shipping industry to share on the findings of the piracy and sea robbery situation in Asia for 2012. It also facilitated a dialogue session to solicit recommendations and suggestions to bring about closer cooperation among stakeholders so to further mitigate piracy and sea robbery situation in Asia.

3. Mr Yoshihisa Endo, Executive Director of the ReCAAP ISC, announced in his Opening Remarks that the downward trend continues in 2012 since 2010 with 128 incidents of piracy and armed robbery reported in Asia. This translates to a marked 18% decrease as compared to 2011 when 157 incidents were reported. The decrease was the largest year-on-year improvement since 2010. He credited the stakeholders for this improvement and iterated the importance of cooperation between the governmental agencies and the industrial partners.

4. Assistant Director of ReCAAP ISC, Ms Lee Yin Mui presented a detail analysis on the incidents reported in 2012. She reported that that the incidents were generally less severe compared to 2011 with a 50% decrease in Category 1 (very significant) incidents from 8 in 2011 to 4 in 2012. There were also improvement in the South China Sea and the Straits of Malacca and Singapore involving vessels while underway which saw a 60% and 50% decrease respectively as compared to 2011. The case study was on one of the three incidents involving illegal siphoning of marine gas oil at the Forum. This incident also involved hijacking and crew being abandoned. Though unfortunate, the timely reporting by the company, good response and cooperation among the ReCAAP ISC, Information Fusion Centre (IFC) and the authorities led to the vessel recovered, crew rescued and pirates arrested.

6. One of the highlights of the Forum was the launch of "*Tug Boats and Barges (TaB) Guide*". The Guide, jointly produced the ReCAAP ISC and IFC, is aimed to assist the tug boat owners and operators in enhancing their security measures.

7. Acknowledging the importance of shared responsibility of amongst stakeholders including governments and the shipping industry in the fight against piracy, Captain M. Segar, Assistant Chief Executive (Operations) of MPA, emphasised that, "It is only with diligent, timely and accurate reports, we can have a strong partnership to combat piracy and robbery, so I would urge you to provide accurate information such as the vessel's details, position and details of the pirates or robbers." He also commended the ReCAAP ISC for playing an important role in providing governments and the industry with timely and accurate information crucial to the ongoing battle against piracy and sea robbery in Asia. He assured that MPA will continue to expend all efforts to address the issue of piracy and sea robbery in Asia, and will render assistance to the industry in whatever way possible.

8. Executive Director of SSA, Mr Daniel Tan was pleased to note the improved situation of piracy and armed robbery situation in Asia for 2012. He reiterated the importance of adopting best practices and anti-piracy measures. He also urged the coastal states to exert a strong political will to eradicate piracy by ensuring their waters are safe and secure for the navigation of ships and free from the risks of sea robbery attacks.

9. The guest speakers at the Forum were from the Asian Shipowners' Forum (ASF) and Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA). This was the second time an Official from MMEA speaking at this series of Forums since 2012 which demonstrated the good operation level linkages between the MMEA and the ReCAAP ISC.

10. The Forum concluded with an active Q&A session of engagements between the six-member panel and some 120 participants dominated by company representatives holding senior position. The deliverables of Forum were the practical suggestions and invaluable exchanges that further endorsed the need to cooperate closely for it is a shared responsibility.

The ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre

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