

Executive Director's Report 2023

Centre of Excellence

For information sharing in combating piracy
and armed robbery against ships at sea

VISION

To be the information hub for combating piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia.

MISSION

To enhance regional cooperation through information sharing, capacity building and cooperative arrangements in combating piracy and armed robbery against ships.

CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

For information sharing in combating piracy and armed robbery against ships at sea.



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Executive Director's Foreword



MR. KRISHNASWAMY NATARAJAN

Executive Director, ReCAAP ISC
Former Director General
Indian Coast Guard

I am happy to share the 2023 report. The year in review, has been eventful and progressive for ReCAAP ISC (the Centre).

With the easing of COVID restrictions, the Centre was able to reconnect with our key stakeholders, through the conduct of Capacity Building Programmes for Focal Points, Nautical Forum, Piracy and Sea Robbery Conference, Maritime Roundtable and Dialogue Sessions involving members of the shipping industry, partner organisations, governmental, and non-governmental agencies.

I had the privilege of attending several international maritime security conferences. In these forums, I emphasised the importance of C5I - Cooperation, Collaboration, Coordination, Communication, Commitment, and Information Sharing to synergize the efforts of coastal

States in combating the transnational maritime crimes to ensure safe and secure maritime trade and commerce.

In 2023, there has been no report of piracy incidents on the high seas in Asia and Abduction of Crew for ransom in Sulu-Celebes Seas. The 100 incidents reported in the Asian region are armed robbery (Hit-and-Run) that occurred in the territorial waters, ports and anchorages falling within the coastal States' jurisdiction, a 19% increase compared to 2022. The Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS) remained an area of concern, despite some arrests being made by the littoral States of SOMS.

Majority of the incidents occurred during hours of darkness, with 37% on ships at anchorage/berthed alongside and 63% whilst ships are underway in SOMS. This is an alarm call for the littoral States of SOMS to enhance surveillance efforts and enforce stringent measures, both on land and at sea to prevent miscreants in having a free run.

The Centre attaches utmost importance to the Capacity Building Programmes to upskill the Focal Points/Contact Point on topics like United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), maritime laws, nexus of maritime cybersecurity and terrorism to piracy via lectures conducted by the subject-matter-experts. Cluster meetings were conducted in Cambodia and Thailand, Capacity Building Executive Programme in Australia, Capacity Building Workshop in Bangladesh, and Capacity Building Senior Officers' Meeting in India.

Through these activities, the aspects of expeditious information sharing, establishing point of contacts, timely and accurate reporting

of incidents and response mechanism were deliberated among all maritime stakeholders within the country and in the region, to prevent piracy and armed robbery against ships.

This year, the ReCAAP ISC had engagements with the shipping industry at the Nautical Forum in January, Piracy Conference and Maritime Roundtable in April, Dialogue Sessions with shipping companies in August and November, and Anti-Piracy Forum co-organised with Sarawak and Sabah Shipowners' Association (SSSA) in September.

These engagements provided a platform for the Centre to share situation update on piracy and sea robbery incidents in Asia, and facilitated discussions between shipping companies and law enforcement agencies to enhance information sharing and operational response.

The Centre, in its efforts to reduce the incidents in SOMS, held meetings with Heads of the Republic of Singapore Navy, Singapore Police Coast Guard, Malaysia Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA), Indonesian Coast Guard, and Indonesian Marine Police; and discussed way forward to enhance information sharing, coordinated patrols, and expeditious operational response to unauthorised boardings reported by ships while transiting SOMS.

While the ReCAAP ISC is Asia-focused, it recognises the importance of strengthening linkages with other regional and international maritime organisations, to keep abreast of the trends and insights on the developing maritime security situation that has a bearing on piracy and armed robbery against ships.

In April, the Centre signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Global Maritime Crime Programme (GMCP) of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), to facilitate the exchange of information and materials on trends and threats related to maritime crimes, as well as, piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia.

The Centre has participated in Asia-Pacific Heads of Maritime Safety Agencies Forum (APHoMSA), Heads of Asian Coast Guard Agencies Meeting (HACGAM), Galle Dialogue and Coast Guard Global Summit (CGGS). In these dialogues and conferences, the Centre shared the initiatives and measures instituted to suppress piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia. Also, utilised the opportunity to engage with senior officers of these agencies and key maritime stakeholders.

The ReCAAP ISC aims to constantly reinvent itself to better serve the shipping community as a "Centre of Excellence" for Information Sharing, to remain relevant to prevent piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia. Some of the initiatives by the Centre in 2023 include:

- a) Launching of ReCAAP Data Visualisation Map and Panel (Re-VAMP) for users to correlate different data sets of past and current incidents of piracy and sea robbery in Asia, derive key insights and collate information to make informed risk assessments and institute preventive measures prior to conducting the ship's voyage.
- b) Production of poster containing updated contact details of law enforcement agencies and guidelines for easy reporting

of unauthorised boarding incidents by ships transiting in SOMS for speedy response by the authorities.

c) The Centre launched the enhanced mobile application (M-App) that embraces the latest technology to facilitate seamless sharing of information and to provide a user-friendly incident reporting format for direct reporting to the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) of Coastal States, ReCAAP Focal Points/Contact Point, and ReCAAP ISC.

d) Implemented the IT strategic review to upgrade the current Information Network System (INF) with added fields for incident reporting by Focal Points / Contact Point, issuing of Warnings/Incident Alerts and prompt response by the Focal Points and law enforcement agencies. Further, the upgraded system will facilitate effective data analysis by the Centre and dissemination of periodic reports for the maritime community.

The Centre received good coverage and publicity in print and electronic media both regionally and internationally for its key events and initiatives. The Centre had 1,045 media mentions, which was a 38% increase from 2022. The Centre also garnered 72,484 impressions of social media posts with an increased number of followers from the preceding year.

I take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the ReCAAP member States, law enforcement agencies, and shipping industry for continuing to support the Centre in its endeavour to suppress piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia.

To conclude, combating piracy and armed robbery against ships is the responsibility of the coastal States as no incident at sea can occur without the connection of the land-based groups. It is thus, crucial to involve the land-based agencies, maritime stakeholders, and law enforcement agencies for a synergistic

and coordinated effort to prevent maritime incidents in the nation's waters. The time-tested principles of C5I - Cooperation, Coordination, Collaboration, Communication, Commitment, and Information Sharing among all agencies is the only way forward to achieve 3D's - Detect, Deter and Deal with the ever-increasing maritime challenges to ensure the safety of crew and to bring about incident-free maritime trade and commerce to achieve economic prosperity and growth for all in the Asian region.



Part I : 17th Governing Council Meeting of the ReCAAP ISC

1. Overview

The 17th Governing Council Meeting of the ReCAAP ISC was held in Singapore from 15 to 17 March 2023, with the participation of Governors from the 21 ReCAAP Contracting Parties.

The Council reviewed the Centre's activities of Financial Year (FY) 2022 and deliberated on the workplan for FY 2023 and beyond.

The Council commended the Centre for conducting its planned activities under the three main pillars, namely information sharing, capacity building and cooperative arrangements.

The Council noted the Centre's external engagement with partner organisations in bringing together members of the shipping industry and maritime community as well as regional and international stakeholders, to suppress piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia.

The Council also expressed appreciation to the Centre's effort in the publication of Guide Book on identification of fishing boats in Asian waters and Poster with contact details of MRCC of Asian nations, to encourage timely reporting of incidents and instituting suitable measures.

2. Voluntary Financial Contributions

The Centre received the voluntary contributions by the ReCAAP Contracting Parties for FY 2023 (1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024) as follows:

Contracting Parties	Singapore Dollars	Remarks
Singapore	\$2,085,279.00	Received on 22 Sep 2023
Japan	\$169,010.00	Received on 29 May 2023
South Korea	\$151,765.00	Received on 1 Mar 2023
India	\$132,224.00	USD 100,000 received on 19 May 2023
Norway	\$134,706.30	USD 100,000 received on 8 Mar 2023
Australia	\$88,881.90	AUD 100,000 received on 15 Mar 2023
United States of America	\$68,450.00	USD 50,000 received on 1 Nov 2023
China	\$66,370.00	USD 50,000 received on 14 Mar 2023
The Netherlands	\$28,210.80	EUR 20,000 received on 18 Nov 2022
Total	\$2,924,897.00	

Part II : Information Sharing

1. Overview

Information sharing is one of the key tenets of ReCAAP ISC's efforts in combating piracy and armed robbery incidents. Through incident reporting and information sharing, the Centre endeavours to better equip the shipping community with updated information and analytics that will enable them to enhance their vigilance and institute proper precautionary measures when navigating areas of concern in Asia.

Prevention is better than cure, and therefore is the best form of deterrence. Prevention if not possible, arrest of perpetrators is the next best deterrence to prevent recurrences of unauthorised boarding. The Centre has launched interactive dashboard known as Re-VAMP to provide an insight into the past and current trends, modus-operandi, areas of concern, etc., for the shipping industry to do risk assessment and make informed decision to prevent unauthorised boarding.

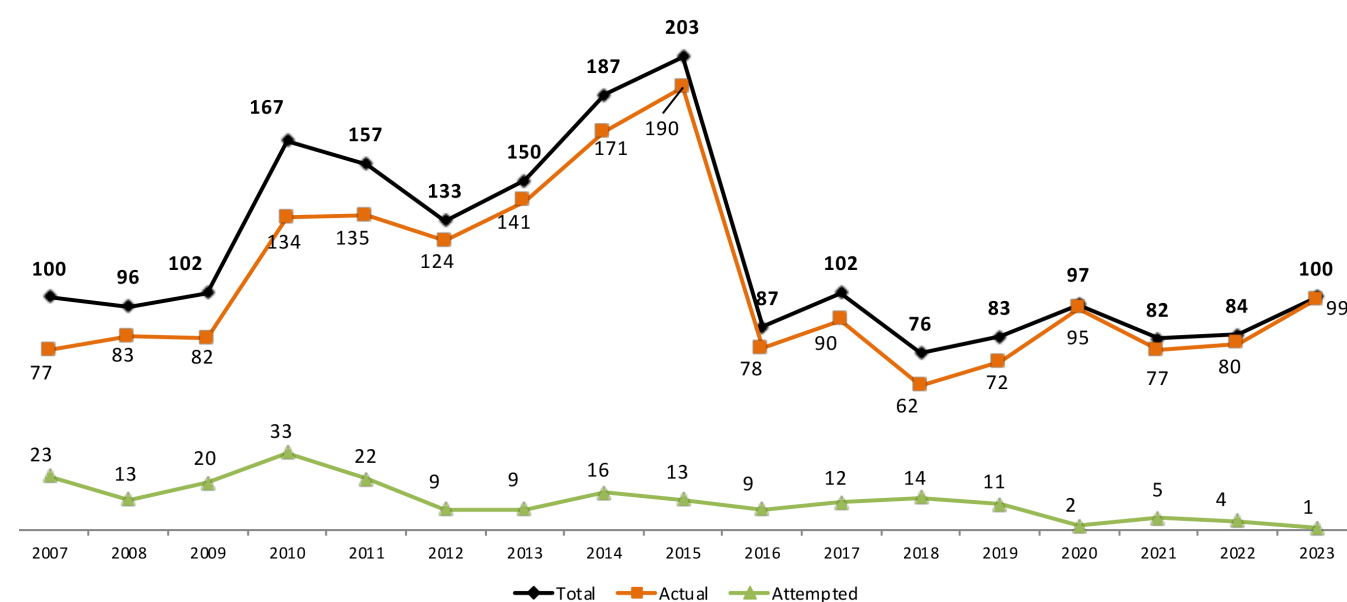
The Centre published guide books, posters and other relevant information, for the shipping industry, aimed at prevention of incidents and enhancing maritime situational awareness so that both the safety of ship crew and their cargo are better protected.

Overall situation

No report of piracy incidents occurred on the high seas in Asia in 2023. All **100 incidents** (99 actual and one attempted incident) were armed robbery against ships (ARAS) occurred in Asia. This marked an **increase of 19%** in terms of the total number of incidents compared to 2022. **Graph 1** shows the total number of incidents reported to the ReCAAP ISC over the 17-year period from 2007-2023.



Graph 1- Total Number of incidents (2007 - 2023)



The Centre is concerned with the continued occurrence of incidents in SOMS, one of the world's busiest and most strategic waterways. Being the convergence point for international shipping, ships transiting this narrow waterway is susceptible to acts of armed robbery.

To address this issue, the littoral States of SOMS have further enhanced enforcement efforts both on land and at sea. Through initiatives such as the Malacca Strait Patrol (MSP) and the Indonesia-Singapore Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT INDOSIN), there have been strengthened operational coordination and patrolling efforts in the areas, particularly during vulnerable time window.

The authorities, together with ReCAAP ISC have been actively engaging the industry stakeholders, to encourage the adoption of appropriate shipboard security measures and timely reporting of incidents to coastal States.

There is also information sharing among the littoral States on sightings of concentrations of small boats as well as any suspicious activities. Through this multi-prong approaches, the aim is to promote prompt actions on the part of the enforcement agencies. This is evidenced from the last two months of 2023 (November-December) which witnessed a decline of incidents in SOMS, compared to the same period in 2022.

Piracy and Armed Robbery Incidents

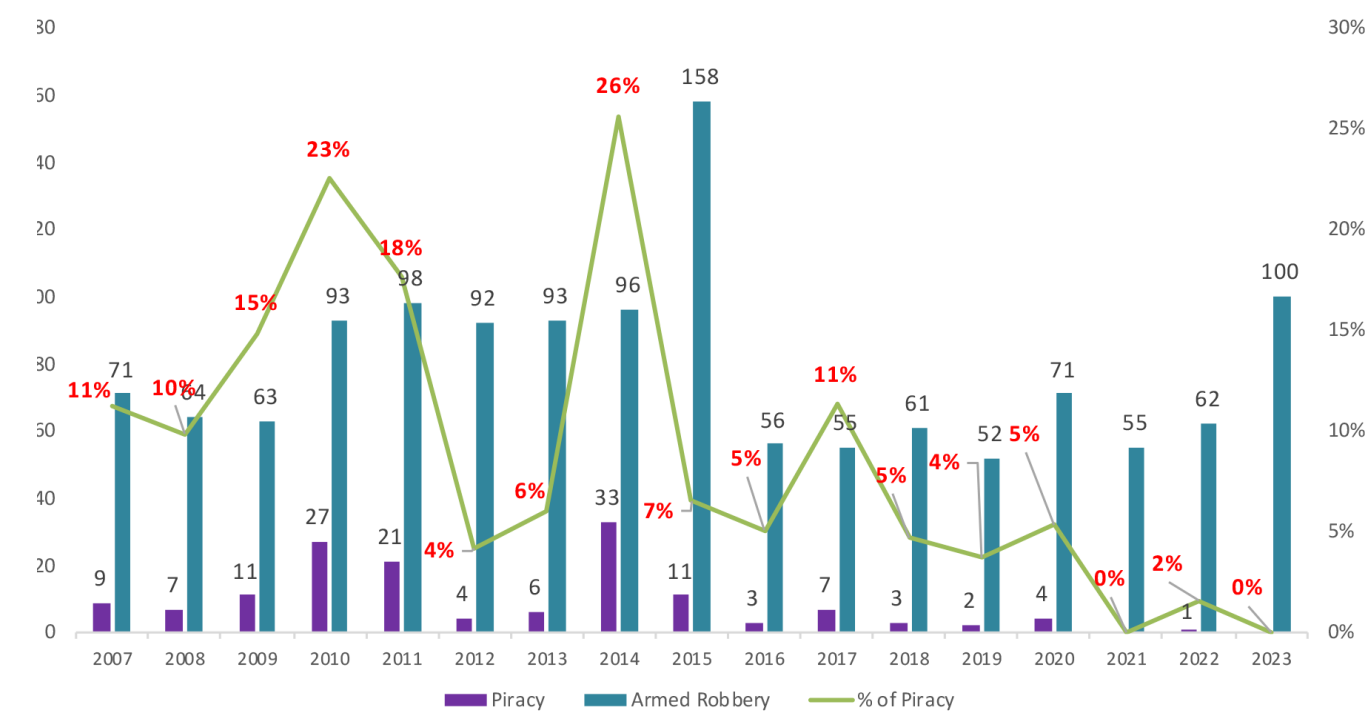
All 100 incidents reported in 2023 were ARAS. No piracy incident was reported.

By definition, piracy takes place on the high seas while ARAS takes place in internal waters, archipelagic waters and territorial seas which are under the jurisdiction of the coastal States. The majority of the incidents reported in Asia were ARAS. Over the 17-year period of 2007-2023, the number of piracy incidents fluctuated each year, with an average of 10% for piracy incidents and 90% for ARAS.

Looking at the last five years (2019-2023), the percentage of piracy incidents has decreased to 2% and ARAS incidents make up 98% of incidents reported in Asia.

Chart 1 shows the number of incidents of piracy versus ARAS for the period of 2007-2023.

Chart 1 - Piracy vs Armed Robbery Against Ships (2007 - 2023)



Significance level of Incidents

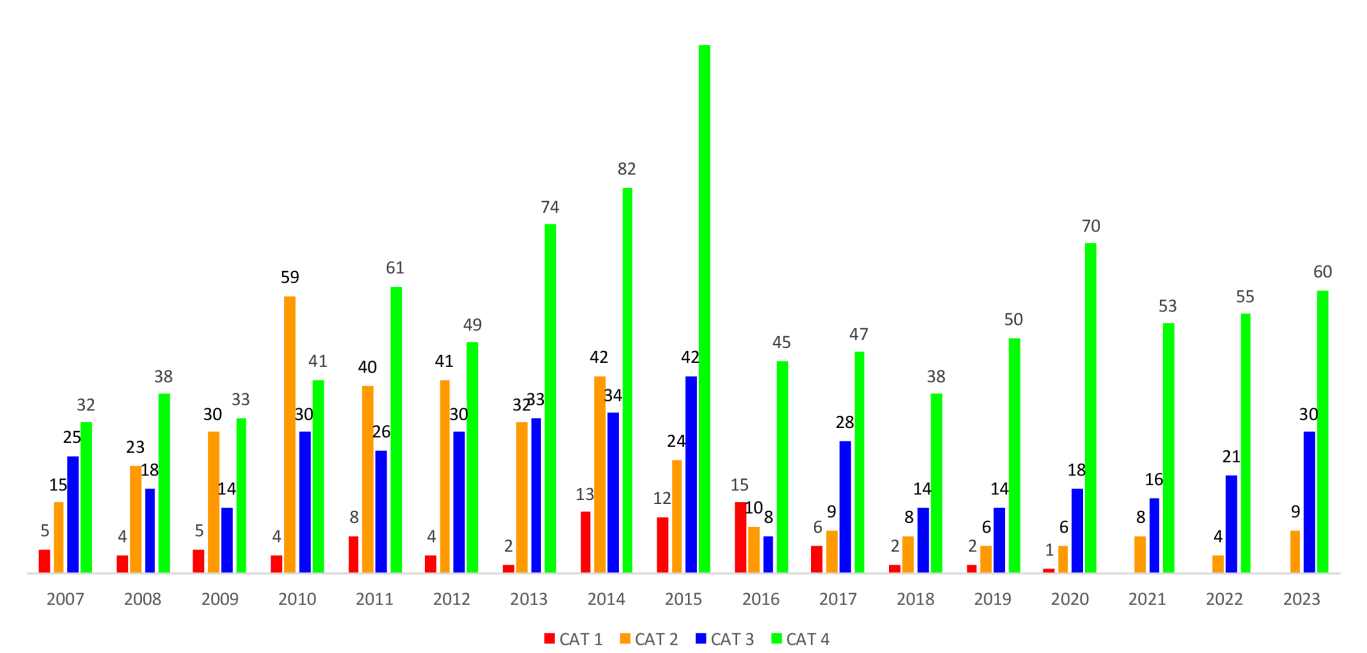
The Centre adopts a categorisation system (CAT 1 to CAT 4) that takes into account the severity level of each actual incident using factors including the level of violence of the perpetrators, the physical and well-being of the crew; and the economic loss incurred by the ship.

In 2023, of the 99 actual incidents, nine were CAT 2, 30 CAT 3 and 60 CAT 4 incidents. There was no CAT 1 incident in 2023.

Consistent with past trends, CAT 4 incidents continue to account for the majority of actual incidents (61%) that involved perpetrators who were not armed and there was no injury to the crew.

Chart 2 shows the significance level of incidents reported during 2007-2023.

Chart 2 - Significance Level of Incidents (2007 - 2023)



Status of Ships

In 2023, 63% (63 incidents) occurred to ships while underway and 37% (37 incidents) occurred to ships while at anchor/berth. All 63 incidents occurred on board ships while underway in SOMS.

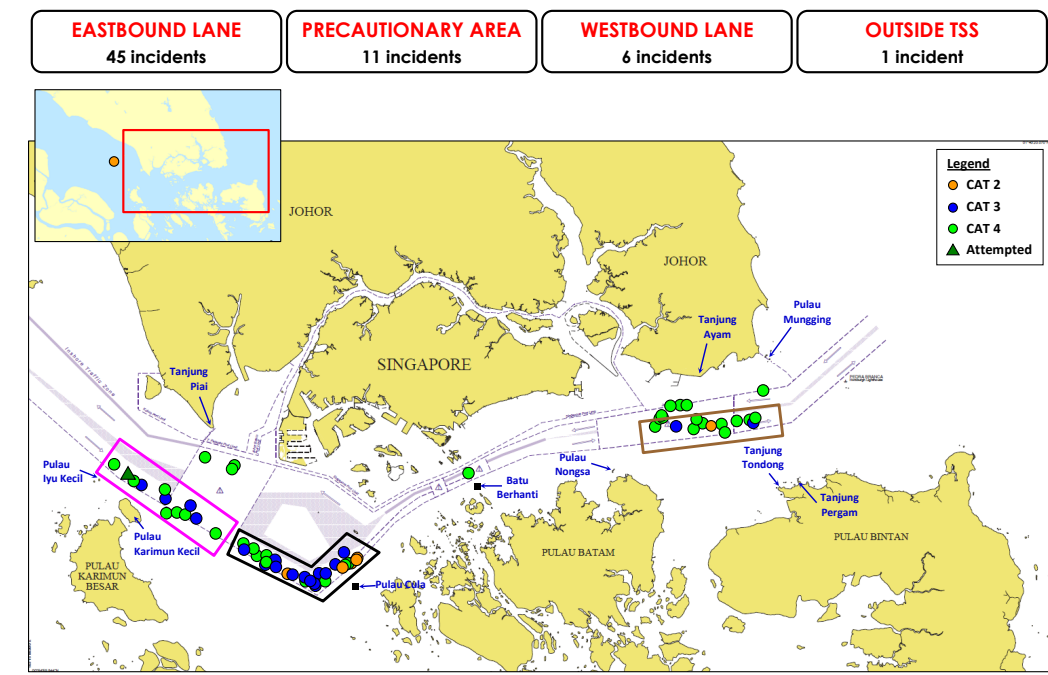
Situation in SOMS

Of the 63 incidents that occurred in SOMS, 58 incidents occurred in the Singapore Strait (SS) and five incidents in the Malacca Strait (MS). Among the 63 incidents, 45 incidents occurred in the eastbound lane of the Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) in the SS, 11 incidents in the precautionary area of TSS, six incidents in the westbound lane of the TSS, and one incident outside of the TSS.

Of specific concern is the cluster of incidents off Pulau Cula; Indonesia. Of the 27 incidents (indicated in black outline), 18 incidents involved armed perpetrators. There were also clusters of incidents off Tanjung Tondong, Bintan Island; Indonesia (indicated in brown outline) and off Pulau Karimun Kecil; Indonesia (indicated in pink outline).

Map 1 depicts the location of these incidents.

Map 1 - Location of Incidents in SOMS – 2023



Situation in Sulu-Celebes Seas

During 2016, there was a spike of the abduction of crew for ransom in the Sulu-Celebes Seas perpetrated by the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG). Through the concerted efforts of the Philippine and Malaysian authorities, no abduction of crew incidents has been reported since January 2020. Also, no crew is currently held in captivity by the ASG.

The measures undertaken by the Philippine Government in Zamboanga, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi, with the conduct of continuous military operations and the dismantling of the support base of the ASG in Sulu archipelago, have brought about the diminished presence of the group through a multi-prong approach involving surrender, arrests, and neutralisation. In this regard, the Philippine Coast Guard, in October 2023, further downgraded the threat of the abduction of crew from ‘MODERATE’ to ‘MODERATE LOW’ which implies that ‘Incidents are unlikely to occur due to perpetrators’ perceived lack of capability to orchestrate an attack. Nevertheless, minimal damages are expected to the vessel and crew in case of an attack’.

With the downgrading of the threat of abduction of crew in the Sulu-Celebes Seas, the Centre reviewed its Advisory with an update that was issued on 18 October 2023, to advise ships to “**exercise vigilance and adopt necessary preventive measures while transiting the area**”. Ships are advised to maintain communication with the authorities and to report all incidents to the Operation Centres of the Philippines and the Eastern Sabah Security Command (ESSCOM).

18 October 2023

Information Sharing Centre

Update of ReCAAP ISC Advisory - Abduction of Crew from Ships in Sulu-Celebes Seas

ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre

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Singapore 138562
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Fax: (65) 6376 3066
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1

General trends of incidents reported between 2007-2023

Based on an analysis of 2,006 incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia during the 17-year period of 2007-2023, the general trends are summarised as follows:

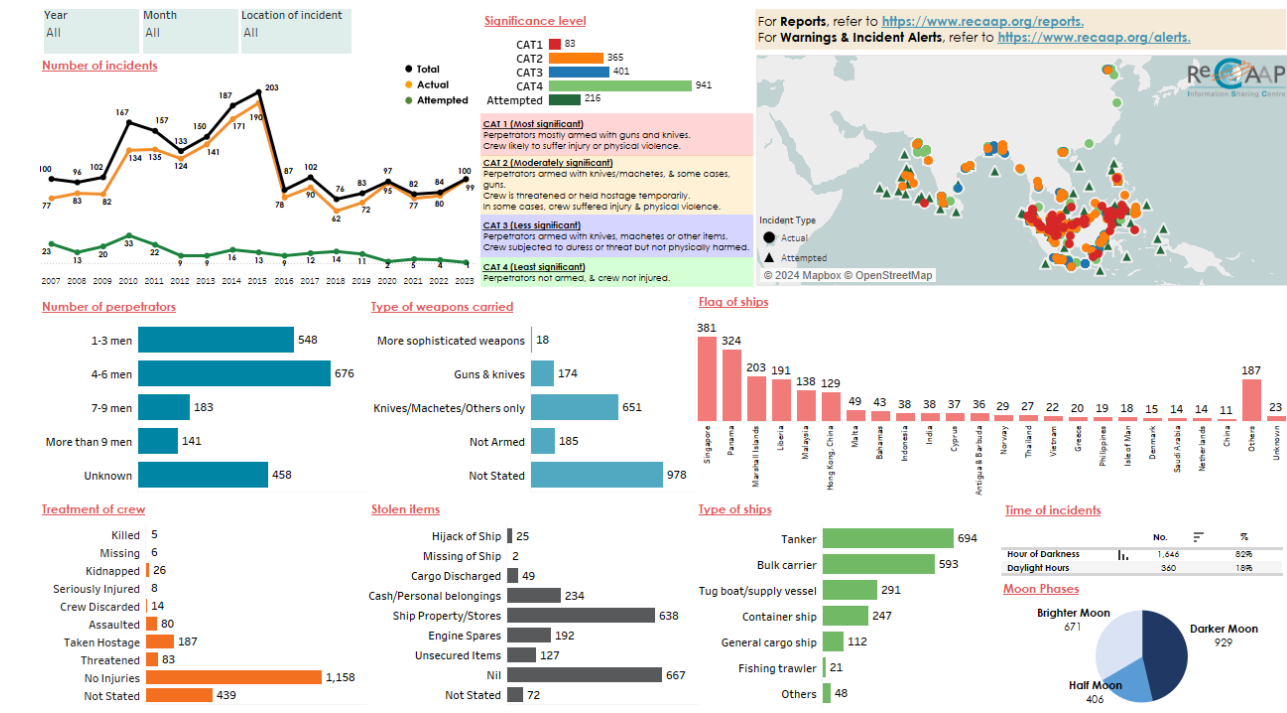
- **34%** incidents involved groups of 4-6 perpetrators and 27% involved 1-3 perpetrators.
- **58%** incidents reported that the perpetrators did not carry weapons or there was no information on weapons carried; while 32% carried knives/machetes and 9% guns and knives.
- **80%** incidents reported crew not injured or there was no information on crew treatment.
- **63%** incidents reported loss of items, while in 33% of incidents nothing was lost. In 4% of cases, losses could not be ascertained. Stolen items included mainly ship stores, personal belongings, and engine spares, ship property/stores and unsecured items.
- **34%** onboard tankers, 30% onboard bulk carriers, 15% onboard tug boats towing barges, 12% onboard container ships, 6% onboard general cargo ships and 3% onboard other ship types.
- **82%** of incidents occurred during hours of darkness, and 18% during daylight hours.

2. ReCAAP Data Visualisation Map and Panel (ReVAMP)

As part of its ongoing efforts to provide timely and accurate information, ReCAAP ISC continued with Phase II of the Data Analytics project in 2023, which involved the fusion of internal data (ReCAAP ISC database) and external factors including moon phases and weather data; to identify the correlation of incidents through the visualisation of patterns and trends. The objective is to analyse the possible linkage between external factors and piracy and armed robbery incidents.

The Centre in November 2023, launched an interactive dashboard for viewing and analysing of past and current incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia. The dashboard, titled Re-VAMP, allows users to correlate different data sets of past and current incidents, and derive insights to make informed risk assessments, institute preventive measures, and to aid ship crew in planning their voyages that factors in the safety aspect. Re-VAMP is available on the ReCAAP ISC website at: www.recaap.org.

ReCAAP Data Visualisation Map and Panel (ReVAMP)



3. Accuracy and Timeliness of Information Sharing and Incident Reporting

Accurate information

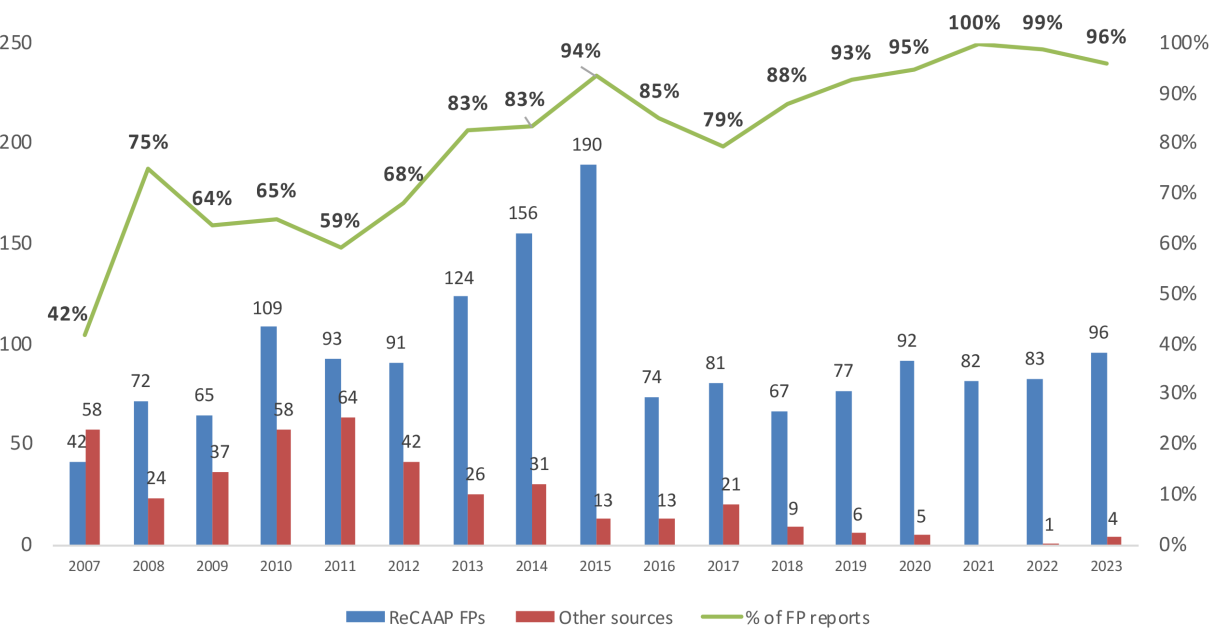
The primary source of information collated by the Centre comes from the Focal Points (FPs) and Contact Point (CP) of ReCAAP via the IFN system. The FPs/CP submit Incident Report (IR) on incidents that occurred within and outside their territorial waters, to the Centre. This is based on reports submitted to FPs/CP by ship masters, shipping companies, local agents and law enforcement agencies.

To ensure the accuracy of information provided, the FPs/CP are required to verify the details when submitting the IRs to ReCAAP ISC. Other sources of information include the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and regional authorities.

Chart 3 shows the number of reports submitted by FPs/CP and other sources between 2007-2023. In 2023, 96 of 100 incidents were reported by FPs/CP and four incidents by other sources, namely IMO and shipping companies.

The FPs/CP are an effective and timely channel for information collection as well as the verification and reporting of incidents to the Centre. It also demonstrates the close working relationship between the sources of information and FPs/CP in terms of information sharing.

Chart 3 - Incidents Reported by FPs vs Other Sources (2007 - 2023)



Timeliness of Reporting

The timeliness of reporting is measured by the interval between the time of incident and the time that IR is submitted by the FPs/CP. During the period of 2007-2023, **32% were submitted within 24 hours**, 26% between 1 and 5 days and 42% submitted beyond 5 days. **Chart 4** shows the number of IRs and timeliness of IRs submitted by FPs/CP to the Centre.

Overall, more than half of the incidents (58%) were reported to the Centre within 5 days of incidents. Delay in sending the IRs will affect the response by the relevant law enforcement agencies as timely reporting will aid the arrests of perpetrators.

Chart 4 - Number of IR Submitted vs Timeliness of Submission (2007-2023)

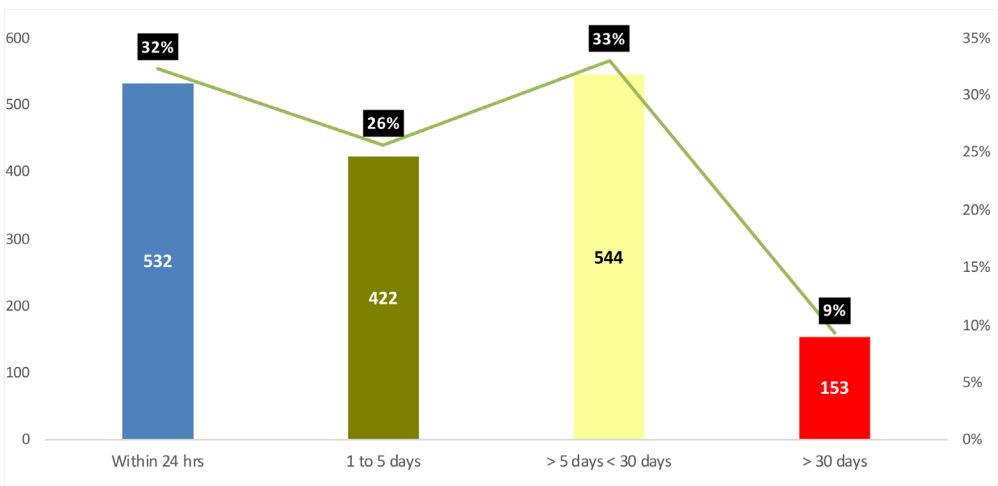
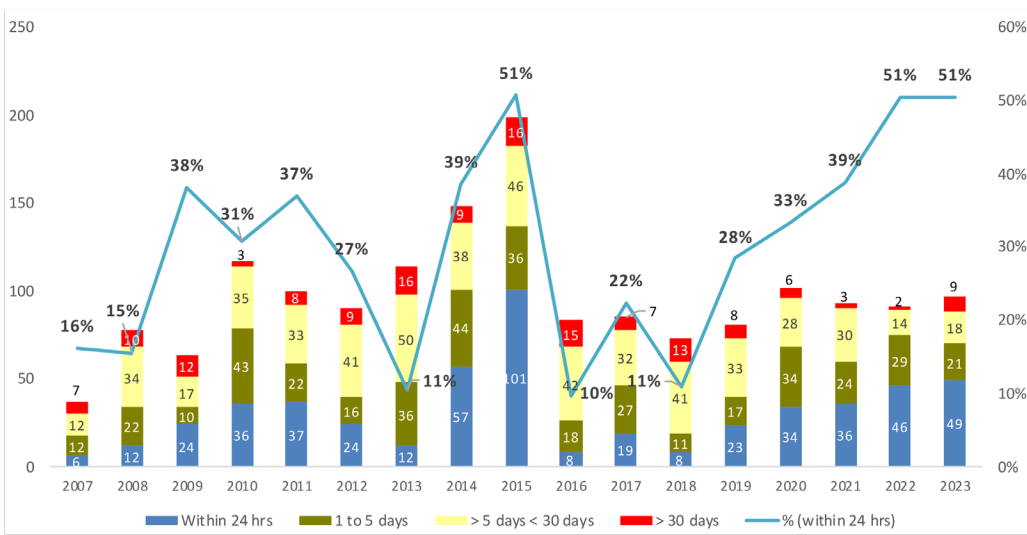


Chart 5 shows the timeliness of IRs submitted by FPs/CP by year, from 2007-2023. In 2023, 51% of the IRs (49 of 97) were submitted within 24 hrs, which is consistent with 2022.

Of these, 49 IRs were submitted within 24 hrs, with 47 submitted by Singapore FP, one submitted by Japan FP and one submitted by Thailand FP. There were nine IRs (9%) that were submitted 30 days or more after an incident had occurred.

Chart 5 - Timeliness of Submission of IRs by Year (2007 - 2023)



4. Publications and Reports

To update the maritime and shipping community of the latest piracy and armed robbery situations, ReCAAP ISC produced various reports including periodic and ad-hoc reports. The periodic reports containing the statistics and analytics of the situation, are produced on a weekly and quarterly basis.

The Centre also issues timely updates and alerts in the form of Warnings, Incident Alerts, Advisories and Special Reports, particularly for serious or successive incidents occurring within a particular location.


These are disseminated via email to relevant stakeholders and through the Centre’s digital platforms including website, M-App and social media channels.

Incident Alert

An Incident Alert is issued for a serious or successive incidents at the same location. It is based on verified information of the incident reported by the FP.

In 2023, ReCAAP ISC issued three Incident Alerts to warn the maritime community of the continued occurrence of incidents in the Singapore Strait. The shipping industry were advised to adopt appropriate preventive measures and the littoral States to increase patrols by the law enforcement agencies, particularly in areas of concern.

9 August 2023



Incident Alert

Sea Robbery Incidents in the Singapore Strait

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Singapore 138562
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Periodic Reports

The Centre issues Weekly, Quarterly, Half-Yearly and Annual Reports to provide updates of the piracy and armed robbery situation covering the statistics, modus operandi of the perpetrators, trends of incidents, best practices, and recommendations.



1ST
QUARTER
REPORT
JANUARY – MARCH 2023
PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY
AGAINST SHIPS IN ASIA



HALF
YEARLY
REPORT
JANUARY – JUNE 2023
PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY
AGAINST SHIPS IN ASIA




3RD
QUARTER
REPORT
JANUARY – SEPTEMBER 2023
PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY
AGAINST SHIPS IN ASIA



ANNUAL
REPORT
2023
JANUARY – DECEMBER 2023
PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY
AGAINST SHIPS IN ASIA


Weekly Reports

Information of incidents in the Weekly Reports is also submitted to IMO for inclusion in its database, the Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS).



Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia
Weekly Report (10-16 October 2023)
Infinite Studios, 21 Media Circle, #05-04, (S)138562

OVERVIEW



Legend
● CAT 2
● CAT 3
● CAT 4

TDF Horton VLCC
14 Oct 23, 0100 hrs
1° 32' N, 103° 38.5' E

PS Falcon Tanker
16 Oct 23, 0110 hrs
1° 4.85' N, 103° 42.94' E

Shonan Tanker
24 Aug 23, 0150 hrs
1° 43' N, 101° 20' E

Factors	Location	
	Indonesia Dumai Anchorage, Indonesia (1 incident)	SOMS Off Pulau Cula, Indonesia (2 incidents)
Type of ship	Tanker	(1) VLCC (2) Tanker
Date/Time	24 Aug at 0150 hrs	(1) 14 Oct at 0100 hrs (2) 16 Oct at 0310 hrs
Number of perpetrators	3 men	(1) 4 men (2) 5 men
Weapons	Knives	(1) Not stated (2) Knives and Machetes
Treatment of crew	Not injured	(1) Not injured (2) Assaulted
Items stolen	Engine spares	(1) Some engine spares (2) Ship property/stores
Significance level	CAT 3	(1) CAT 4 (2) CAT 2

AREA OF CONCERN

With the two incidents off Pulau Cula, a total of 59 incidents were reported in the SOMS since January 2023. The ReCAAP ISC is concerned with the continued occurrence of incidents in the SOMS. The Centre advises ships to continue to exercise enhanced vigilance when transiting SOMS; and the littoral States to increase patrols and enforcement in the area.

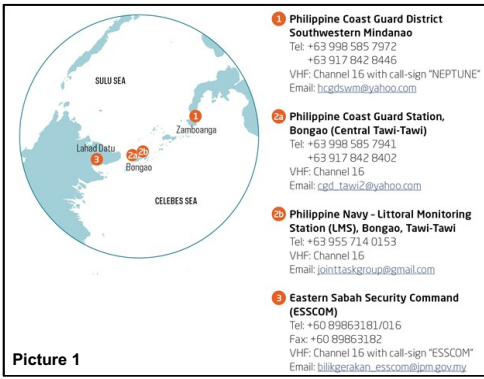
SITUATION OF ABDUCTION OF CREW IN THE SULU-CELEBES SEAS AND WATERS OFF EASTERN SABAH

Downgrading of threat level

- The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), after careful consideration of inputs from stakeholders and counterparts with vital involvement in securing the Sulu-Celebes Seas maritime security measure, recommends the downgrading of the threat on the 'Abduction of Crew for ransom in the Sulu-Celebes Seas' from 'POTENTIALLY HIGH' to 'MODERATE'. The MODERATE threat level implies that 'Incidents are possible to occur but are relatively less severe in nature'.

Update of ReCAAP ISC Advisory

- As the threat of abduction of crew in the Sulu-Celebes Seas has diminished since January 2020 due to successful military operations and robust law enforcement initiatives, the ReCAAP ISC updates its Advisory to all ships to consider re-route from the area as an option based on its prerogative.
- For ships transiting the area, the ship masters and crew are strongly encouraged to exercise extra vigilance and report all incidents immediately to the Operation Centres of the Philippines and Eastern Sabah Security Command (ESSCOM) of Malaysia. The Contact Details of the Operation Centres of the Philippines and ESSCOM of Malaysia are as shown in Picture 1.



Picture 1

1 Philippine Coast Guard District Southwestern Mindanao
Tel: +63 998 585 7972
+63 917 842 8446
VHF: Channel 16 with call-sign "NEPTUNE"
Email: hcgsdswm@yahoo.com

2 Philippine Coast Guard Station, Bongao (Central Tawi-Tawi)
Tel: +63 998 585 7941
+63 917 842 8402
VHF: Channel 16
Email: cgsd_tawi2@yahoo.com

3 Philippine Navy - Littoral Monitoring Station (LMS), Bongao, Tawi-Tawi
Tel: +63 955 714 0153
VHF: Channel 16
Email: jointtaskgroup@gmail.com

4 Eastern Sabah Security Command (ESSCOM)
Tel: +60 89863181/016
Fax: +60 89863182
VHF: Channel 16 with call-sign "ESSCOM"
Email: biligerakan_esscom@pm.gov.my

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ship master and crew are to report all incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships to the nearest coastal State RCC and flag State, referring to the Poster on *Contact Details for Reporting of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia*, exercise vigilance and adopt appropriate preventive measures taking reference from the *Regional Guide 2 to Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia*.

Follow us on:
Contact us at:

W: www.recaap.org
E: info@recaap.org

T: +65 6376 3063

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/recaapisc>
LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/recaap-information-sharing-centre>
F: +65 6376 3066

Table at <https://www.recaap.org/resources/ck/files/Number%20of%20Incidents/2023/List%20of%20Incidents%20for%202023.pdf> for details of the incidents.

1 CAT (Category) 2 incident is 'moderately significant' in nature. Under this category, the perpetrators are likely to be armed with knives/machetes and in some incidents armed with guns. The crew is threatened or held hostage temporarily and, in some cases, the crew suffered injury and physical violence.

2 CAT (Category) 3 incident is 'less significant' in nature. Under this category, the perpetrators are armed with knives/machetes or other items such as sticks or rods. Although the crew can be subjected to duress or threat during the incident, they are not harmed physically. In most CAT 3 cases, nothing is stolen. In cases where losses are reported, stores and engine spares are commonly stolen items.

3 CAT (Category) 4 incident is classified as 'least significant' in nature. Under this category, the perpetrators are not armed, and the crew not injured.

Enhancing Regional Cooperation...

18

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT 2023

19

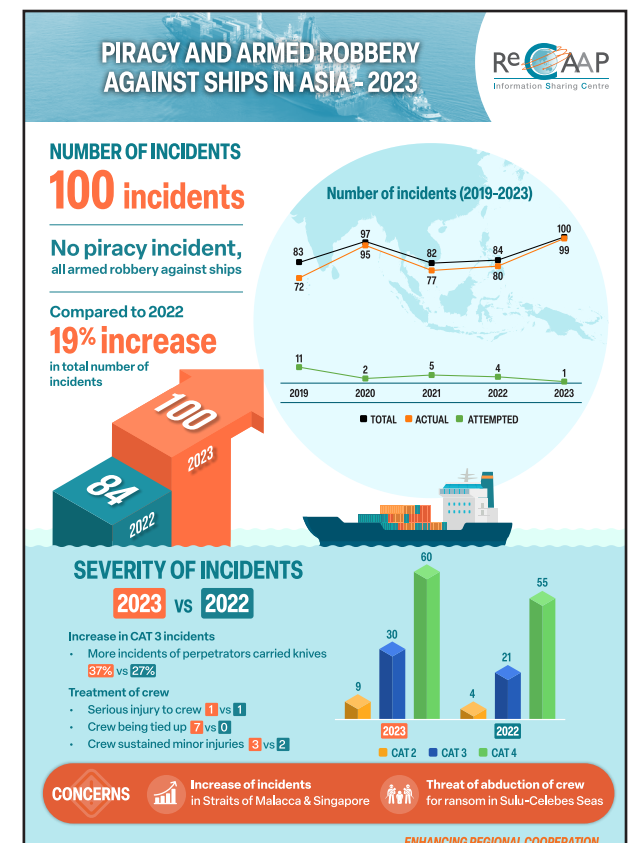
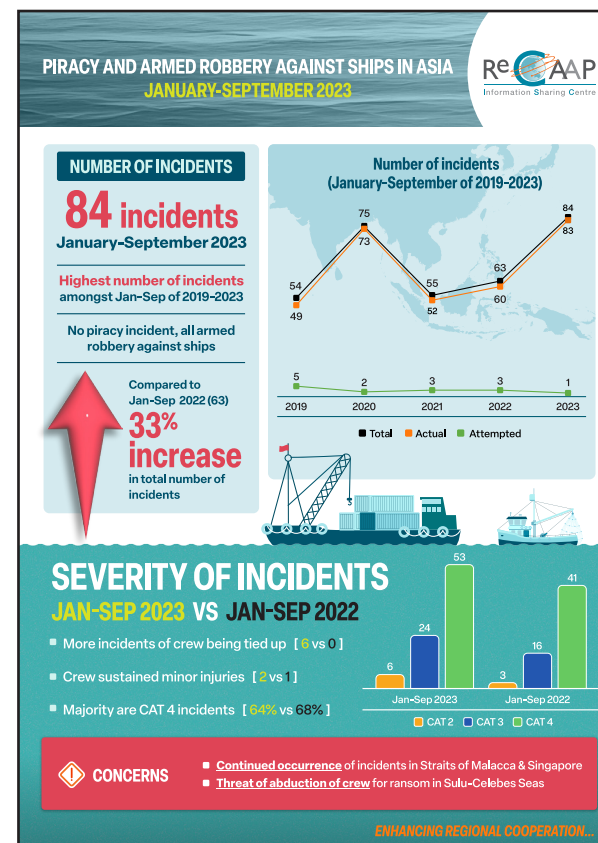
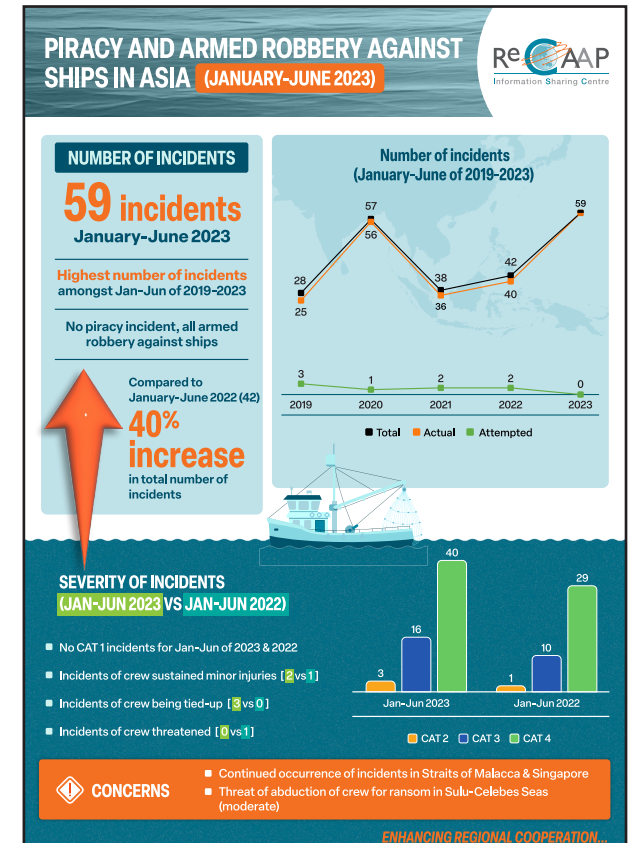
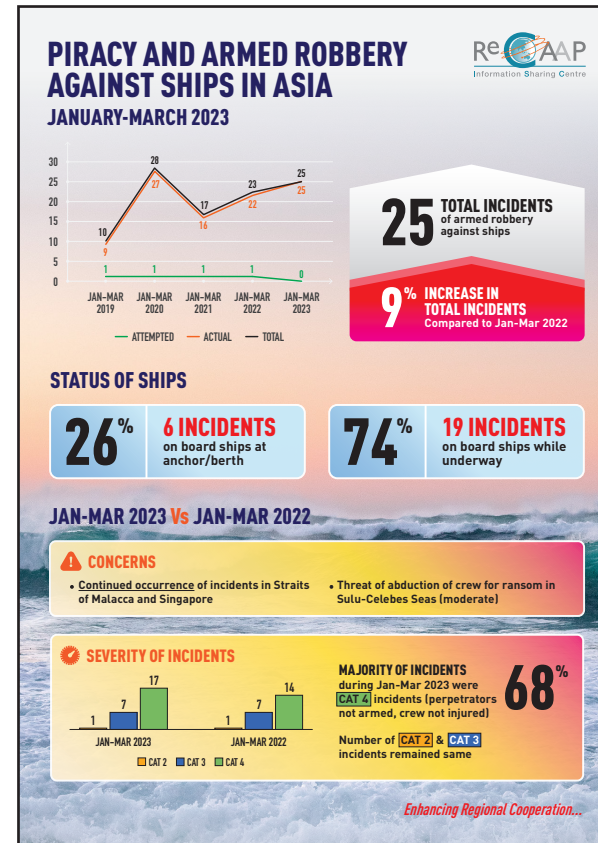
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT 2023

Description of Incidents of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships 17-23 October 2023									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
INCIDENTS IN ASIA									
ACTUAL INCIDENTS									
1.	Maersk Valencia Container ship Singapore Panama 18327 9344954	18/10/23 1030 hrs	5.0° 48.5' N, 118.0° 5.0' E Container Terminal, Sandakan, Sabah.	While at berth, the master reported that a petty theft incident occurred onboard the ship while she was berthed at Sandakan container terminal in Sabah. The ship had arrived earlier at the container terminal for cargo operations on 17 October and departed from the berth at 1030 hrs on 18 October to Sandakan anchorage. After arriving at the anchorage, the ship crew carried out a routine launching test of the rescue boat and discovered its outboard engine was missing. A search was conducted onboard upon the discovery, with no sighting of perpetrator. The engine was last seen onboard by the crew during a safety and security patrol on 18 October, while the ship was at the container terminal. Apart from the reported missing item, the crew were safe and not injured. The master did not notify the Malaysian authorities of the incident as the loss was discovered after vessel departed from the terminal.	Outboard engine was reported missing. The crew was safe.	The master reported the incident to the company. A search onboard was conducted with no further sightings of the perpetrators.	No.	ReCAAP ISC via ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore)	Information not available
				[Category 4]					

1 | Page

Single-sheet summary

The Centre also produced single-sheet summaries that are infographics with the inclusion of graphs, charts and maps to provide key highlights of incidents, based on the Centre's Quarterly Reports.



Poster on Contact Details of Rescue Co-ordination Centres (RCCs) of Littoral States in SOMS

To facilitate the timely reporting of sea robbery incidents by ship masters and quick response by concern authorities of coastal States, ReCAAP ISC, on 7 November 2023, published a poster containing updated contact details of law enforcement agencies of the littoral States of the SOMS. The poster also outlines preventive measures which ship masters should adopt before entering the SOMS, and actions to be taken in the event the ship is boarded by perpetrators. The poster is available on the ReCAAP ISC website at www.recaap.org

Guidelines & Reporting of Incident by Vessels – Straits of Malacca & Singapore

REPORTING OF INCIDENTS (attack/unauthorised boarding/robbery)

1. Vessels transiting in traffic separation scheme from Sector 6 to Sector 9 in Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS) to report incidents (of piracy or sea robbery or unauthorised boarding) to VTS authorities on VHF channels (see Fig. 1).

2. In addition, vessels to report to the Littoral States of SOMS (Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore) for quick response by authorities, as indicated in Chart below -

Fig. 1 - Reporting of incidents in Sectors 6-9

SECTOR	VHF CHANNELS	VTS AUTHORITIES
Sector 6	VHF 88	JOHOR VTS
Sector 7	VHF 73	SINGAPORE VTS
Sector 8	VHF 14	SINGAPORE VTS
Sector 9	VHF 10	SINGAPORE VTS

GUIDELINES

1. Planning voyage - Preparation

a. Identify areas of concern
b. Make Ship Security Plan (SSP) based on risk/threat assessment
c. Plan passage to prevent attack/unauthorised boarding
d. Maintain updated list of reporting channels of coastal State enforcement agencies
e. Carry out briefing and conduct drill to familiarize crew with SSP and Vessel Hardening Plan (VHP)

2. Measures to be instituted - When sailing

a. Maximise alertness and enhance vigilance
b. Close all doors and hatches to prevent access to compartments
c. Maintain best speed to prevent unauthorised boarding
d. Master to regularly update the crew on prevailing security situation
e. Alert duty watch when entering areas of concern and maintain communication with the shipping company

3. Response and report - When boarded

a. Sound alarm, maintain calm, do not confront or resist the perpetrators
b. Report immediately to MRCC/VTS, and coastal State enforcement agency on contact details provided /indicated
c. Muster and head count of crew, and well-being of crew and treatment meted out by perpetrators
d. Report loss/damage to ship's property

4. Collection of evidence and investigation - Post boarding

a. Cooperate with local/coastal State authorities for investigation
b. Provide evidence and information about the perpetrators to enforcement agencies, including photos, CCTV footage and videos, if available

MALAYSIA

Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) (Johor Bahru)

Tel: +60 7 219 9402
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Fax: +60 7 227 9285
Email: pusopjohor@mmea.gov.my

SINGAPORE

Port Operations Control Centre (POCC)

Tel: +65 6226 5539
+65 6325 2493
Fax: +65 6227 9971
+65 6224 5776
Email: pocc@mpa.gov.sg

INDONESIA

Indonesian Coast Guard (BAKAMLA) - Contact Centre Western Zone (Pulau Batam)

Tel: +62 813 6387 7299

Regional Marine & Air Police of Riau (Pulau Batam)

Tel: +62 822 8372 3721

OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

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MMEA

Tel: +60 38 943 4001,
+60 38 995 7201,
+60 19 261 1833
Fax: +60 38 941 4527
Email: pomairhq@mmea.gov.my

INDONESIA (Jakarta)

BAKAMLA

Tel: +62 895 6003 00846 (Maritime Incident Reporting),
+62 821 2518 9898,
+62 021 1503 21 (General Purposes Reporting)
Email: puskotad@bakamla.go.id (Maritime Incident Reporting),
contactcenter@bakamla.go.id (General Purposes Reporting)

Marine & Air Police Corp

Tel: +62 813 1000 1950
Email: pencegahanpencuriandikapal@gmail.com,
monitoringcenter.korpolaairud@gmail.com

Part III : Capacity Building

1. Overview

The Capacity Building pillar is one of the main stays of the Centre’s mission. ReCAAP ISC conducts regular capacity building activities to enhance the knowledge and confidence of Focal Point officers in submitting timely and accurate incident reports via the IFN. The activities also provide an opportunity for the Focal Point officers from different regions and countries to interact, sharing experiences, updating Point of Contact, building trust and confidence and lasting friendship, in furthering regional cooperation to combat piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia.

The Centre has achieved the mandated mission through the conduct of the Capacity Building activities in 2023. The activities conducted are:

2. Focal Point Training Programme

The Centre conducted the 7th Focal Point Training Programme (FPTP) from 16 to 18 January. The programme aimed to familiarise the new Focal Point officers with the roles and responsibilities of the ReCAAP Focal Points and the Centre. Further, the programme also addressed on incident reporting and verification, engagement efforts with the shipping community and other maritime stakeholders. Focal Point officers had hands-on training using IFN system on different scenarios of piracy and armed robbery situation.

The FPTP participants from nine ReCAAP member States (Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, India, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam) and Contact Point Hong Kong also visited the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore’s (MPA) Port Operations Control Centre (POCC) and

the Republic of Singapore Navy Information Fusion Centre (IFC) to learn how Singapore authorities manage maritime security incidents and shipping traffic along the Singapore Strait.

3. Cluster Meeting – Cambodia

The Centre and Cambodia Focal Point (Merchant Marine Department) co-hosted a Cluster Meeting in Phnom Penh, Cambodia from 23 to 25 May. The meeting was attended by the Focal Point officers from Cambodia, Thailand, Vietnam, and Laos. A total of 60 participants from the Cambodian authorities; comprising General Department of Waterway-Maritime Transport and Ports, Ministry of Public Works and Transport, National Committee of Maritime Security, Cambodian Port Authorities and Maritime Police, and Royal Cambodian Navy as well as the shipping industry attended the meeting.

Participants learned the measures instituted by Cambodia’s Port Authorities to strengthen security in its ports and anchorages, and also on how the ReCAAP Focal Points can cooperate with the Cambodian Marine Police, Navy and Port Authorities to fight maritime crimes and strengthen maritime security in regional waters. There was a group discussion session, where participants deliberated on ways to strengthen existing laws and response mechanisms to deal with the maritime crimes.



4. Cluster Meeting – Thailand

The Centre and Thailand Focal Point (Royal Thai Navy) co-hosted a Cluster Meeting in Bangkok, Thailand from 11 to 13 July. A total of 58 participants from the Royal Thai Navy, Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thai Marine Department, Thai Shipowners’ Association, ReCAAP Focal Points officers from Cambodia, Myanmar, Singapore, and officers from the MMEA and Indonesia Coast Guard (BAKAMLA), attended the meeting.

The Thai authorities shared how they cooperate with neighbouring countries to deal with the emerging maritime security concerns, while Focal Points deliberated on ways to strengthen existing mechanisms of cooperation, collaboration, coordination and communication to prevent maritime crimes.



5. Capacity Building Virtual Lectures

The Centre organised two Capacity Building Virtual Lectures for Focal Point officers in 2023.

The first virtual lecture on “Maritime Cybersecurity Nexus to Piracy” was conducted on 5 July. The lecture was delivered by Senior Consultant Justin Zhou from the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore and Professor Stephen McCombie from NHL Stenden University of Applied Science.

The second virtual lecture on “Maritime Terrorism Nexus to Piracy: Implications to Southeast Asia”, was delivered on 15 November, by Dr Jolene Jerard, Executive Director, Centinel, a public safety and management consultancy.



6. IFN Table Top Exercise

The IFN Table Top Exercise, was conducted from 5 to 7 September. A total of 34 officers from 12 ReCAAP Focal Points and one Contact Point participated. The exercise familiarised Focal Point and Contact Point officers with the process of submitting Incident Reports and Amplified Reports via the IFN. Lessons learnt were collated, reviewed and disseminated to all Focal Points and Contact Point.

7. Capacity Building Executive Programme

The ReCAAP ISC and Australia Focal Point (Australia Border Force) co-hosted a Capacity Building Executive Programme in Sydney, Australia from 25 to 29 September. A total of 24 participants from the Australia Border Force, Department of Home Affairs, Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security, 12 ReCAAP Focal Points (Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Laos, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam, and United States), as well as the MMEA and BAKAMLA, attended the meeting.

The Centre presented the latest sea robbery situation in the SOMS, and shared case studies on theft of scrap metal from barges. Focal Points updated on the situation of piracy and sea robbery in their waters, efforts to address unauthorised boarding, and the arrest and prosecution of perpetrators. The Centre also conducted group discussions on the topics of maritime security and ways to strengthen cooperation to fight piracy and other transnational maritime crimes. Academics delivered lectures on legal issues related to piracy and armed robbery against ships.



8. Capacity Building Workshop

The ReCAAP ISC and Bangladesh Focal Point co-hosted a Capacity Building Workshop in Dhaka, Bangladesh from 24 to 27 October. The workshop was attended by coast guards, navies and maritime law enforcement agencies from 11 ReCAAP Focal Points (Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Myanmar, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, United Kingdom, United States and Vietnam), as well as the BAKAMLA and MMEA. Representatives from the Bangladesh Ministry of Shipping, Port Authority, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh Coast Guard and Navy, and the Ship Owners' Association also attended the workshop.



ReCAAP Focal Points shared their countries' efforts in suppressing piracy and sea robbery in their ports, anchorages and territorial waters. In addition, Focal Points took part in a training session and Table Top Exercise to familiarise themselves with using the IFN system.



9. Capacity Building Senior Officers' Meeting

The ReCAAP ISC and India Focal Point co-hosted a Capacity Building Senior Officers' Meeting (CBSOM) in Gandhinagar, India from 11 to 15 December. The meeting was attended by senior naval and coast guard officers from 14 ReCAAP Focal Points (Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Laos, Myanmar, Philippines, Sri Lanka, South Korea, Thailand, UK and Vietnam), as well as representatives from the Indian Navy, National Maritime Security Council, National Maritime Foundation, Ports and the Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR).

Participants were updated on the latest situation of piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia. ReCAAP Focal Point officers shared how their countries are strengthening maritime security measures in their ports, anchorages and territorial waters to prevent and combat maritime crimes. There were also deliberations on ways which maritime authorities can work together with ship masters and shipping companies to improve the timeliness of incident reporting, and how cooperation can be enhanced between land and maritime agencies to prevent piracy and sea robbery incidents.



Part IV : Cooperative Arrangements

1. Overview

No single agency alone can address the transnational maritime crime of piracy and armed robbery against ships. Collective effort and shared responsibility among the concerned stakeholders are necessary and important towards the fight against this maritime crime. Over the past 17 years, the Centre has established an extensive network of partnership with international organisations, shipping associations and academia. With the easing of COVID restrictions, the Centre participated in various regional and international conferences, partnering with international organisations, shipping industry and universities/think tanks in organising conferences, nautical forums, making guidebooks and posters for the shipping industry. It is through these activities, the Centre expands its information sharing network, disseminate accurate and timely information of piracy and sea robbery incidents, issue warnings, incident alerts and advisories to wide audience, and profile the ReCAAP ISC as a successful model of regional cooperation.

2. Engagements with Indonesia and Malaysia

Indonesia

With the ease of travel restrictions in 2023, the ED-ISC on 17 May, visited Vice Admiral TNI Dr Aan Kurnia, then Head of BAKAMLA at its headquarters, Police Brigadier General M. Yassin, Director of Indonesia Marine Police, and COL Edward Indharmawan, Head of Marine and Air Police Corps at the Marine Police headquarters.



At the sideline of the High-Level Meeting (HLM) of the 19th HACGAM in Istanbul, Turkiye, the ED-ISC, on 7 September, engaged Rear Admiral Tatit E. Witjaksono, Executive Secretary of BAKAMLA. On 31 October, he also had a meeting with the Vice Admiral Irvansyah, the new Chief of BAKAMLA at the CGGS in Tokyo, Japan.

The operational cooperation between the Centre and the maritime agencies of Indonesia (mainly BAKAMLA) have been good and cordial. The Centre during the year, extended invitations to Indonesia Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) to invite BAKAMLA for all the capacity building activities.

In 2023, the engagement with Indonesia includes:

- a. On 17 January, Nautical Forum, Singapore,
- b. Piracy and Sea Robbery Conference, Singapore, on 27 April (morning); and participated in the panel discussion on 'Engagement with regional law enforcement agencies in partnership to ensure safe and secure seas'
- c. Maritime Roundtable, Singapore, on 27 April (afternoon); and participated in the discussion on 'Criticality of timely and accurate reporting – Assessment'
- d. 10-14 July, Cluster Meeting, Thailand
- e. 25-29 September, Capacity Building Executive Programme, Australia
- f. 24-27 October, Capacity Building Workshop, Bangladesh.
- g. 11-15 December, Capacity Building Senior Officers' Meeting, India

Meeting with Director for ASEAN Political Security Cooperation, MFA

The ED-ISC on 16 May 2023, met Director for ASEAN Political Security Cooperation, Mr Roy Rolliansyah Soemirat, to discuss the work of ReCAAP ISC, and measures to enhance the operational cooperation with BAKAMLA, and attending the ASEAN Coast Guard Forum as an observer.

Meeting with Chief of BAKAMLA

The ED-ISC visited BAKAMLA headquarters on 17 May, and interacted with Vice Admiral TNI Dr Aan Kurnia, Chief of BAKAMLA to discuss the areas of operational cooperation between BAKAMLA and the ReCAAP ISC in information sharing, incident verification and efforts towards addressing the situation of robbery incidents in the SOMS.



Meeting with Director, Indonesia Marine Police (IMP), and Head of Marine and Air Police Corps

ED-ISC on 17 May, met Police Brigadier General M. Yassin, Director, Indonesia Marine

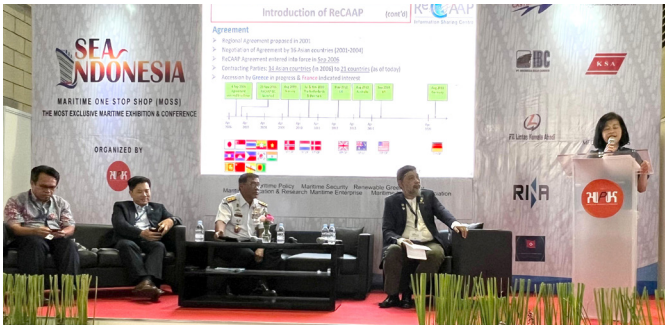
Police, and COL Edward Indharmawan, Head of Marine and Air Police Corps at the Marine Police headquarters. The discussion focused on the continued occurrence of incidents in the Singapore Strait, and efforts by Indonesian authorities to address the situation. The ED-ISC requested IMP to step up surveillance and patrols particularly in the areas of the Philip Channel, off Tanjung Pergam and Pulau Bintan. COL Yassin responded that there were IMP assets in these areas, and instructed his officers to follow up. However, he also shared the challenges encountered in patrolling the area off Pulau Bintan due to the rough weather conditions.

Meeting with Director of Marketing, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Indonesia

ED-ISC on 17 May, met Mr Erwin Dwiwana, Director of Marketing, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Directorate General of Product Competitiveness at his office. The aim of the visit was to know more about the work of the Ministry on fisheries and how the information can be used for the Centre's analysis of the possible correlations between the fishing communities and incidents of sea robbery.

Sea Indonesia – 2023 Maritime One Stop Shop (MOSS)

The Centre participated in 'Sea Indonesia – 2023 Maritime One Stop Shop' from 15-17 May in Jakarta, Indonesia. As part of MOSS, a two-day Conference was held on 15 to 16 May 2023. The Centre delivered a presentation on 'Maritime Security,' at the Conference together with speakers from BAKAMLA and IFC.



Malaysia

At the sideline of the HLM of the 19th HACGAM and CGGS, the ED-ISC met VADM Datuk Saiful Lizan, Acting Director General of MMEA, appreciated their efforts in arresting the perpetrators and discussed on ways to enhance operational cooperation and measures introduced to encourage timely reporting of incidents by ship masters.

In 2023, the engagement with Malaysia includes:

- a. 10-14 July, Cluster Meeting, Thailand
- b. 14 September, Anti-Piracy Forum, Sibul, Sarawak, East Malaysia
- c. 25-29 September, Capacity Building Executive Programme, Australia
- d. 24-27 October, Capacity Building Workshop, Bangladesh
- e. 11-15 December, Capacity Building Senior Officers' Meeting, India

3. Engagements with Multi-lateral Regimes including International Organisations

14th Nautical Forum

The Centre on 17 January, in conjunction with the release of Annual Report (AR) 2022, organised its 14th Nautical Forum. At the Forum, the Centre presented highlights of the AR, while BAKAMLA and Singapore Police Coast Guard shared on efforts to suppress sea robbery in their waters, and the Philippine Coast Guard on the situation in the Sulu-Celebes Seas. A panel discussion was conducted to discuss the cooperation among littoral States and shipping industry to prevent sea robberies incidents in the Singapore Strait.

The Nautical Forum was attended by about 150 participants from the shipping companies, international and regional shipping associations, diplomatic community (ReCAAP Contracting Parties and other countries), regional authorities and academia.



Focal Point Training Programme (FPTP)

The 7th FPTP was held from 16 to 18 January, with a view to enhance capacity of the ReCAAP Focal Points/Contact Point and its staff. The participants were from Focal Points of nine Contracting Parties (Bangladesh, Brunei,

Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam). The objective of the programme is to induct FP/CP staff on the roles and responsibilities of ReCAAP FPs/CP. Topics shared in the programme includes the ReCAAP Agreement and roles of ReCAAP ISC with respect to the three pillars of ReCAAP ISC – Information Sharing, Capacity Building and Cooperative Arrangements. The Centre shared with the participants on the IFN System as the key platform for information sharing. The Centre also took this opportunity to enhance the participants' knowledge on piracy and armed robbery against ships under Maritime Safety Committee in specific, and areas like UNCLOS, IMO and Maritime Security (MARSEC) in general.



Lecture at GRIPS

On 16 February, the Centre delivered a virtual lecture to the students of 'Maritime Safety & Security Policy Programme'. The programme is jointly offered by the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS) and Japan Coast Guard. Six trainees, comprising one participant each from India, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Indonesia, and two from Japan, attended the lecture, which includes the introduction of ReCAAP, the Centre's activities, and the latest situation of piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia.

17th Governing Council Meeting

The Centre held its 17th Governing Council Meeting at Hilton Singapore Orchard from 15 to 17 March. The Governors from ReCAAP's 21 Contracting Parties, as well as representatives from shipping associations, academia and international organisations, attended the three-day meeting. The ReCAAP Governors discussed ways to strengthen regional cooperation to combat piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia, and deliberated on the workplan and strategic direction of the Centre for FY 2023.



Engagement with Towage Operators

The Centre was invited on 24 March, to participate in an engagement session with Singapore-registered tug boat operators. Organised by the MPA, also a ReCAAP Focal Point, the aim of the session was to raise awareness on situation of sea robberies in the SS and stress the importance of ship security. The engagement is for the law enforcement agencies to understand the challenges faced by the operators in safeguarding their ships against sea robberies and discuss ways to address these challenges. The Centre presented on the trend of incidents involving tug boats and barges in the Singapore Strait and recommended measures to adopt to prevent boarding by the perpetrators.



Singapore Maritime Week

The Centre organised following activities during the Singapore Maritime Week 2023:

(a) **Piracy and Sea Robbery Conference.** The ReCAAP ISC on 27 April, organised the Piracy and Sea Robbery Conference, supported by The Baltic and International Maritime Council (BIMCO), the International Association of Independent Tanker Owners (INTERTANKO) and S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) at Marina Bay Convention Centre. The conference discussed the trends and analytics of the piracy and sea robbery incidents in Asia, addressed emerging and potential concerns and encouraged collaborative efforts by all stakeholders to ensure safe and secure seas for the maritime community. For the first time, the Conference focused on panel discussions; with the theme of *Partnership* – between the shipping industry (Panel 1) and the regional law enforcement agencies (Panel 2) to discuss trends, modus operandi of perpetrators and best practices. The Conference was attended by over 100 personnel from the maritime community.



(b) **Maritime Roundtable.** This is the second Maritime Roundtable, jointly organised by ReCAAP ISC and RSIS that convenes industry leaders, senior commanders, academia, and subject-matter-experts on the topic “Criticality of Timely and Accurate Reporting”. It was a closed-door discussion among 15 speakers from the maritime community on the importance of timely and accurate reporting, the challenges encountered to achieve these requirements, and the ways forward to resolve it.



(c) **SEA Asia.** The Centre participated in the SEA Asia exhibition from 25-27 April 2023. Our exhibition booth introduced visitors to the roles and activities of ReCAAP ISC.

ASA International Shipping Forum

The ED-ISC, on 26 April, participated in a panel discussion on “Safe Shipping” organised by the Asian Shipowners’ Association (ASA). He shared the work processes of the Centre with its 21 Focal Points, regional law enforcement agencies and the shipping industry to enhance information sharing on piracy and sea robbery incidents, to facilitate the timely and accurate reporting which can lead to arrest of perpetrators and keep the waters safe for seafarers.



MoU with UNODC

The ReCAAP-ISC and UNODC Global Maritime Crime Programme (GMCP) signed a MoU on 28 April, to strengthen cooperation between the two organisations in combating maritime crime and piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia. Under the MoU, ReCAAP ISC and UNODC GMCP agreed to exchange information and material on threats and trends related to transnational maritime crimes including piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia. The MoU will also facilitate reciprocal representation by the ReCAAP ISC and UNODC GMCP at meetings, forums and activities convened by either party.



On 28 Apr 2023, signed a MoU with the UNODC-GMCP to strengthen cooperation.

19th Working Level Meeting of HACGAM

Representatives from the Centre participated in the Working Level Meeting of the 19th HACGAM that was conducted online from 3 to 5 May. At the Working Group meeting on “Preventing and Controlling Unlawful Acts at Sea”, it was highlighted that the information of incidents should be timely and accurate, with geographical locations to enable expeditious response by the appropriate agencies.

IMO 107th Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) Meeting

The 107th Session of the International Maritime Organisation’s MSC was conducted from 31 May to 9 June in London, United Kingdom. The Centre submitted a document on the progress of work done by the ReCAAP ISC and situation of piracy and sea robbery incidents in Asia. The Centre delivered an intervention on the latest situation at the plenary of the MSC.

23rd APHoMSA Forum

The ED-ISC attended 23rd APHoMSA Forum from 5-8 June in Sydney, Australia. He presented the latest statistics on piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia, and shared the work of ReCAAP ISC as a “Centre of Excellence” for Information Sharing, providing the maritime community with timely and accurate information.



9th UNODC Contact Group Meeting

The 9th UNODC Contact Group Meeting on the Sulu-Celebes Seas was held in Medan, Indonesia from 20-21 June. During the meeting, the Centre updated on the latest situation of piracy and sea robbery in Asia, and trends of incidents of abduction of crew for ransom in the Sulu-Celebes seas. Organised by the UNODC GMCP, the meeting was attended by the representatives from the coast guard and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines. The participants discussed the maritime crime situation in their respective areas of responsibility, and the maritime law enforcement operations taken to address the areas of concern.

1st Dialogue Session with the Shipping Industry

The ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre on 2 August, held its first dialogue with representatives of global and regional shipping associations, shipping companies based in Singapore and Malaysia, and local maritime law enforcement agencies. The participants shared case studies, lessons learnt and proposals on how they address the maritime threats. The speakers at the dialogue session come from a tug boat company, the MPA Singapore, IFC and Singapore Police Coast Guard. The tug boat company shared its experience of the perpetrators in small boats, boarded the barge and transferred scrap metal into their boats.

The dialogue comes on the back of a 50% increase in sea robbery incidents in the SOMS from January to July 2023. It focused on efforts to strengthen cooperation to fight sea robbery in the SOMS by the shipping industry, law enforcement agencies and ReCAAP ISC. Some of the issues raised during the dialogue include the need for cooperation in information sharing among the littoral States, adoption of technology on board ships to detect and deter perpetrators, and management of crew fatigue to ensure crew alertness and vigilance.

To mitigate acts of sea robbery, shipping companies need to work closely with the law enforcement agencies of the littoral States, share information on suspicious vessels, and report actual and attempted boarding of their vessels in a timely and accurate manner to the nearest coastal State RCC.



Anti-Piracy Forum

The ReCAAP ISC, together with SSSA, on 14 September 2023, co-organised the ReCAAP ISC-SSSA Anti-Piracy Forum 2023 in Sibul, Sarawak (East Malaysia). The Centre provided an update on the increasing number of incidents of theft of scrap metal from barges, transiting Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) of SOMS. The Philippine Coast Guard, the ReCAAP Focal Point updated on the abduction of crew for ransom in the Sulu Celebes Seas. Local ship owners shared their experiences from being robbed at sea, including perpetrators' modus operandi. During the forum, members from the tug boat industry discussed preventive measures for illegal boarding with the local and regional law enforcement agencies.

Galle Dialogue

ReCAAP ISC participated in the 11th Galle Dialogue in Colombo from 11-12 October. The international maritime conference was organised by Sri Lanka Navy and hosted by the Ministry of Defence. To mark the 75th year

of independence of Sri Lanka, the theme of the conference was "Emerging New Order in the Indian Ocean". Leaders of regional navies, international organisations and academia attended the conference and deliberated on matters of strategic interest in the Indian Ocean region, such as the use of natural resources, impact on the environment, security issues and the economy. ED-ISC on 11 October 2023, held a bilateral meeting with RADM P Vithana, Director General Sri Lanka Coast Guard. And on 12 October 2023, he called on VADM Priyantha Perera, Commander of the Sri Lanka Navy.



19th High-Level Meeting (HLM) of HACGAM, Istanbul, Turkiye

The ReCAAP ISC Executive Director and the Centre's team participated in the HLM of the 19th HACGAM, from 5 to 8 September, held in Istanbul, Turkiye. At the plenary, ED-ISC's presented the key features of ReCAAP, activities of ReCAAP ISC, the situation of piracy and sea robbery in Asia and the Centre's achievements.

3rd Coast Guard Global Summit (CGGS) 2023, Tokyo, Japan

The ED-ISC participated in the 3rd CGGS, from 30 October to 2 November, held in Tokyo, Japan. At the plenary, ED-ISC's presented the key features of ReCAAP, activities of ReCAAP

ISC, the situation of piracy and sea robbery in Asia and the Centre's way forward.



2nd Dialogue Session with Shipping Industry

The ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre ISC on 7 November, held its second dialogue with representatives of global and regional shipping associations, shipping companies based in Singapore and local maritime law enforcement agencies. The Centre has published a new poster on contact details of RCC and operation centres of the littoral States in SOMS; and launched the interactive dashboard (Re-VAMP) for the shipping community to derive trends and insights to make better risk assessment and informed decision for safe voyage through areas of concern. Participants included the Asian Shipowners' Association, Singapore Shipping Association, BIMCO and INTERTANKO, and other shipping companies operating from Singapore.





Part V : Profiling and Branding ReCAAP ISC

The Centre has continued its efforts for more effective and efficient dissemination of information, periodic reports, alerts, warnings and advisories via ReCAAP ISC website, mobile application and on social media platforms Twitter and LinkedIn. Various meetings with key partners and visits to the Centre took place during 2023.

1. Engagements with Stakeholders

The Centre continues to foster close collaboration, communication and cooperation with its key stakeholders, so as to strengthen collective efforts in combating piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia.

The team at ReCAAP ISC, led by ED-ISC met various stakeholders to discuss measures in combating piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia, so as to ensure the safe traverse of seafarers and the protection of cargo onboard ships.



On 13 January 2023, ED-ISC introductory visit to Yangon, Myanmar Focal Point.



On 6 February 2023, call on HE P Kumaran, High Commissioner of India to Singapore.



On 9 February 2023, interaction with Ms Catherine Wong, Director General, Southeast Asia Directorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Singapore.



On 23 February 2023, call on HE Dr Azfar bin Mohamad Mustafar, High Commissioner of Malaysia to Singapore.



On 23 February 2023, call on HE Medardo Antonio G. Macaraig, Philippine Ambassador to Singapore.



On 3 March 2023, call on Mr Casey Mace, Deputy Chief of Mission, the United States Embassy.



On 7 March 2023, call on HE Georgios Degoritis, Greek Ambassador to Singapore.



On 8 March 2023, call on Mr Zhang Xumin, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of People's Republic of China in Singapore.



On 10 March 2023, call on HE Ahmed Thasmeen Ali, High Commissioner of Maldives in Singapore.



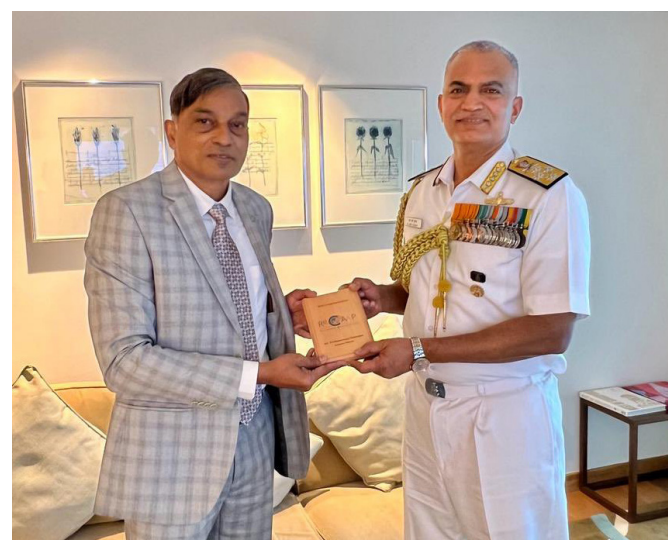
On 21 June 2023, meeting with HE Allaster Cox, Australian High Commissioner to Singapore.



On 18 July 2023, meeting with Mr Terry Gibson, Director of the UK Maritime Domain Awareness Programme, Lead for UK MDAT-GoG and UK Maritime Trade Operations.



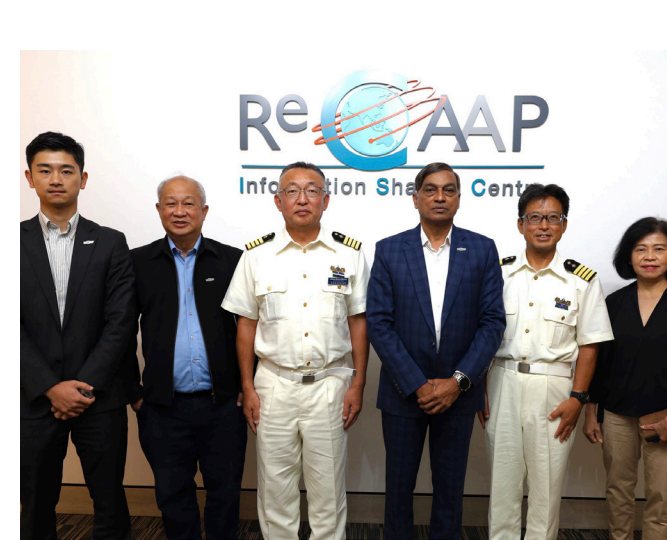
On 28 April 2023, signed a MoU with the UNODC-GMCP to strengthen cooperation.



On 1 May 2023, call on Admiral R Hari Kumar, Chief of the Naval Staff, Indian Navy in Singapore.



On 18 July 2023, meeting with Mr Richard Maloney, US Department of State and Contact Person for SE Asia at ReCAAP ISC.



On 18 July 2023, visit by the Commanding officer of Japan Coast Guard training vessel Kojima 2 to ReCAAP ISC.



On 3 May 2023, visit by Vice Admiral Priyantha Perera, Commander of the Sri Lanka Navy to ReCAAP ISC.



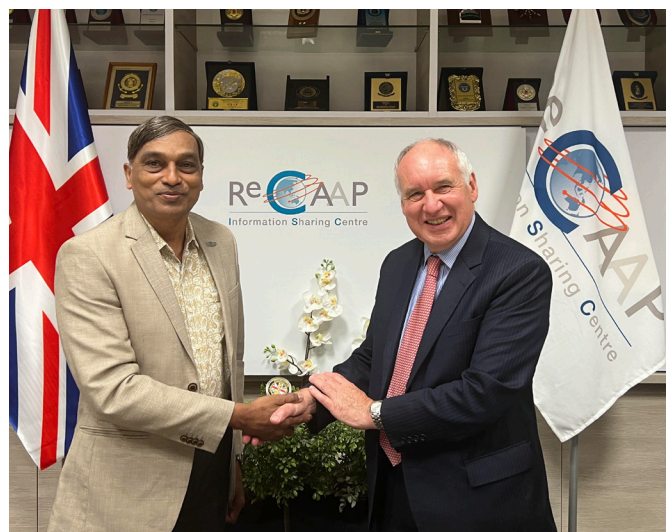
On 17 May 2023, call on Vice Admiral Dr Aan Kurnia, Chief of Indonesian Coast Guard in Jakarta, Indonesia.



On 21 July 2023, call on HE P Kumaran, High Commissioner of India to Singapore.



On 15 August 2023, call on Rear Admiral Sean Wat, Chief of the Republic of Singapore Navy.



On 18 August 2023, call by Mr Malcolm Brown, the United Kingdom Governor.



On 22 August 2023, call on HE Dr Shilpak Ambule, High Commissioner of India to Singapore.



On 7 September 2023, bilateral meeting with Yang Shaogang, Vice Director General of Guangdong China Maritime Safety Administration at the sideline of 19th HACGAM in Istanbul, Türkiye.



On 28 August 2023, visit by the Director-General of South Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to ReCAAP ISC.



On 7 September 2023, bilateral meeting with Rear Admiral Tatit E. Witjaksono, Executive Secretary of BAKAMLA at the sideline of 19th HACGAM in Istanbul, Türkiye.



On 7 September 2023, bilateral meeting with DG Rakesh Pal, Director General Indian Coast Guard at the sideline of 19th HACGAM in Istanbul, Türkiye.



On 7 September 2023, bilateral meeting with Commandant ISHI Shohei of Japan Coast Guard at the sideline of 19th HACGAM in Istanbul, Türkiye.



On 7 September 2023, bilateral meeting with Rear Admiral Ashraful Hoq Chowdhury, Director General Bangladesh Coast Guard at the sideline of 19th HACGAM in Istanbul, Türkiye.



On 7 September 2023, bilateral meeting with Vice Admiral Datuk Saiful Lizan bin Ibrahim, Acting Director General of MMEA at the sideline of 19th HACGAM in Istanbul, Türkiye.



On 7 September 2023, bilateral meeting with Rear Admiral Ahmet Kendir of Turkish Coast Guard Commandant at the sideline of 19th HACGAM in Istanbul, Türkiye.



On 7 September 2023, bilateral meeting with Rear Admiral Pujitha Vithana of Sri Lanka Coast Guard at the sideline of 19th HACGAM in Istanbul, Turkiye.



On 6 October 2023, visit by Dr Phillip Belcher, Marine Director, INTERTANKO to ReCAAP ISC.



On 31 October, ED-ISC interacts with the Honourable Prime Minister of Japan, Mr Fumio Kishida at the 3rd CGGS.



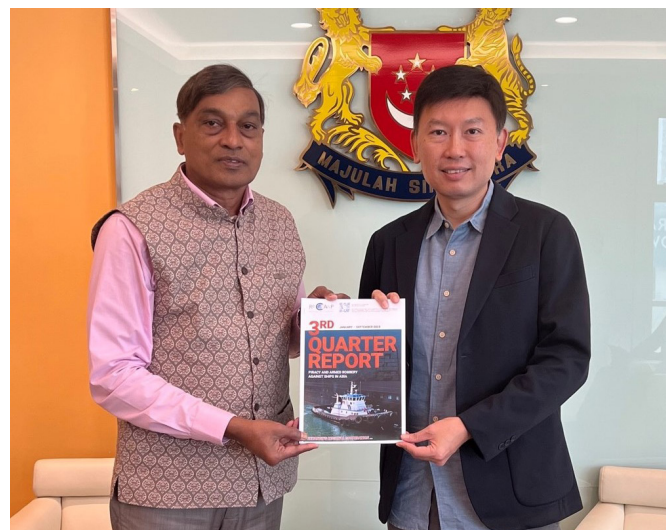
On 7 September 2023, bilateral meeting with Major General Tran VAN THO, Commander of Vietnam Coast Guard Region 1, at the sideline of 19th HACGAM in Istanbul, Turkiye.



On 11 October 2023, meeting with RADM P Vithana, Director General of Sri Lank Coast Guard.



On 12 October 2023, call on VADM Priyantha Perera, Commander of the Sri Lanka Navy.



On 9 October 2023, call on Mr Chee Hong Tat, Acting Minister of Transport, Singapore.



On 5 October 2023, call on Her Excellency, Iwona Piórko, Ambassador to the European Union to Singapore.



On 16 October 2023, meeting with officials from the United Nations Institute for Training and Research.



On 17 October 2023, Visit by delegation from Next JenV, Ministry of Justice and Security, Netherlands.



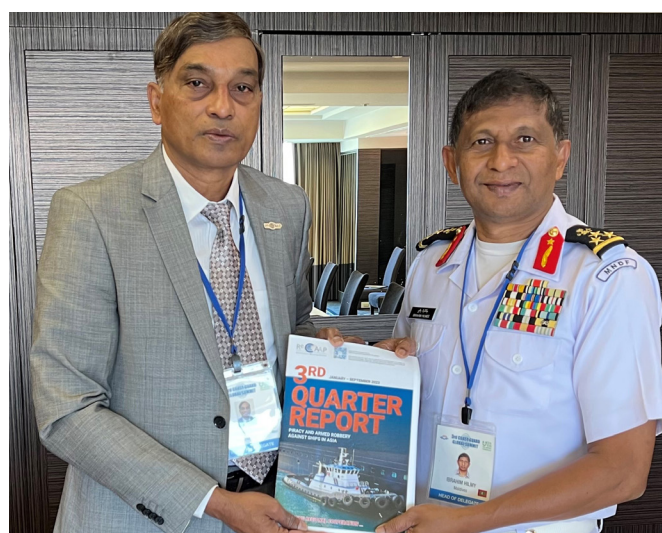
On 31 October 2023, meeting with Major General Zhen Liu, Deputy Director of China Coast Guard.



On 31 October 2023, meeting with HE Hideo Ishizuki, ReCAAP Governor for Japan.



On 5 December 2023, visit by RADM Adachi Motonori and members of the Japan Coast Guard.



On 1 November 2023, meeting with Brigadier General Ibrahim Hilmy, Vice-Chief of Maldives National Defence Force.



On 1 November 2023, meeting with Mohamed Jama, Executive Director of Somali Coastguard Resources & Research Centre.



On 1 November 2023, meeting with Rear Admiral Brendan McPherson, ReCAAP Governor for United States of America.



On 2 November 2023, call on Mr Keiji Tsuchiya, Vice President of Japanese Shipowners' Association.

2. Digital Outreach

In 2023, ReCAAP ISC utilised its website and social media channels to update stakeholders on the Centre's events and initiatives, as well as to disseminate incident alerts, periodic reports and analysis on piracy and sea robbery incidents in Asia. The shipping and maritime community was also kept abreast of the latest sea robbery incidents in Asia via ReCAAP ISC's mobile application.

From January to December 2023, an average of 2,491 users visited the ReCAAP ISC website every month. For the year 2023, the Centre's social media posts on Twitter and LinkedIn generated 23,927 impressions and 48,557 impressions respectively.

3. Media Reports and Outreach

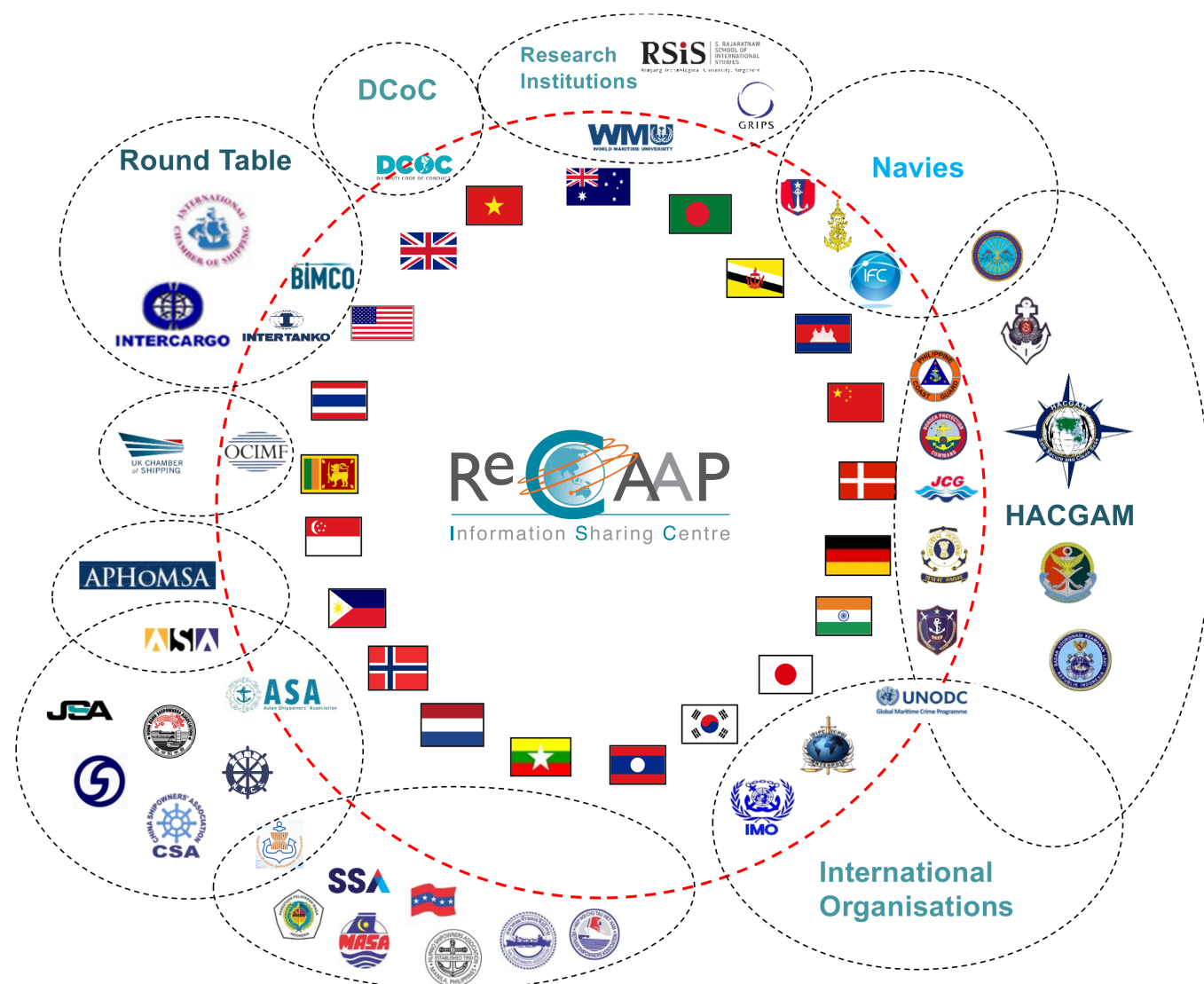
ReCAAP ISC held media briefings in January 2023 and July 2023 to share the latest situation of piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia with journalists and analysts.

By issuing press releases throughout the year, the Centre kept stakeholders informed on its events and activities. These include the Nautical Forum, Piracy Conference and Maritime Roundtable, Dialogue sessions with the shipping industry and various Capacity Building activities co-organised with ReCAAP Focal Points.

We also actively publicised new initiatives such as the ReCAAP interactive dashboard "Re-VAMP", Poster for Incident Reporting in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore, and the enhanced ReCAAP ISC mobile application.

As a result of these efforts, the Centre earned 1,045 mentions in traditional/online media in 2023, a 38% increase over 2022.

ReCAAP ISC Network



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Infinite Studios

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www.ReCAAP.org

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