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# MONTHLY REPORT

**PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY** **JANUARY 2017**  
**AGAINST SHIPS IN ASIA**

## INCIDENTS OF PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY AGAINST SHIPS IN ASIA IN JANUARY 2017

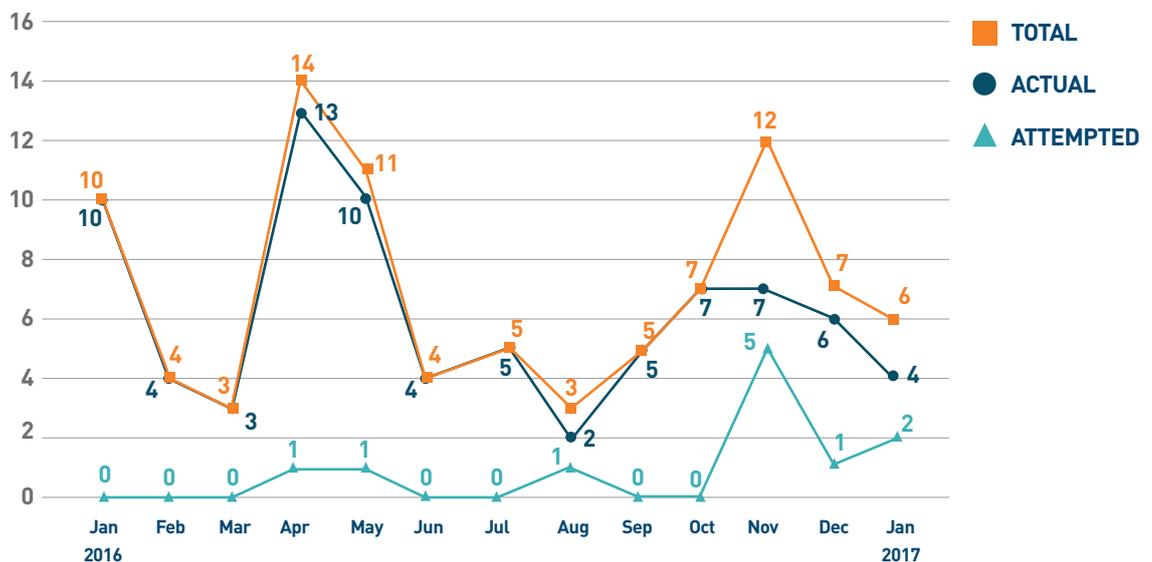
### OVERVIEW

A total of six incidents of armed robbery against ships were reported in Asia in January 2017. No incident of piracy was reported. Of the six incidents, four were actual incidents and two were attempted incidents. Of concern was the continued occurrence of incidents involving the abduction of crew from ships while underway in the Sulu-Celebes Sea and waters off eastern Sabah. In January 2017, one actual incident and one attempted incident involving the abduction of crew were reported.

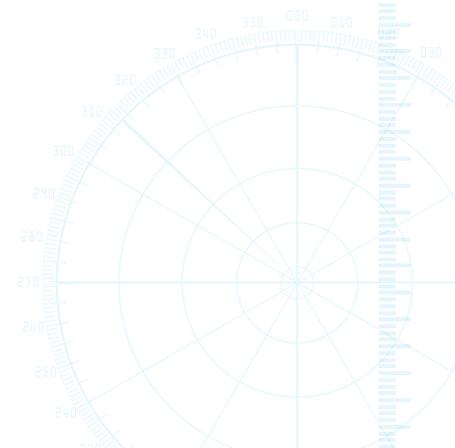
### NUMBER OF INCIDENTS BY MONTH (JANUARY 2016 – JANUARY 2017)

In January 2017, six incidents of armed robbery against ships were reported in Asia. This is a 40% decrease in the total number of incidents compared to January 2016. A total of 10 incidents were reported in January 2016.

On a month-to-month comparison between January 2016 and January 2017 (Graph 1), the number of incidents has fluctuated throughout the period. There has been a continuous decrease in the total number of incidents in the past three months; from 12 incidents in November 2016 to seven incidents in December 2016 and six incidents in January 2017.



Graph 1 - Number of incidents (January 2016 to January 2017)



## SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL OF INCIDENTS

Of the four actual incidents reported in January 2017, there were one CAT 1 incident, one CAT 2 incident, one CAT 3 incident and one CAT 4 incident. Of concern was the CAT 1 incident which involved the abduction of three crew from a fishing trawler. Compared to the past four years, the improvement in January 2017 was most apparent in the CAT 4 incidents.

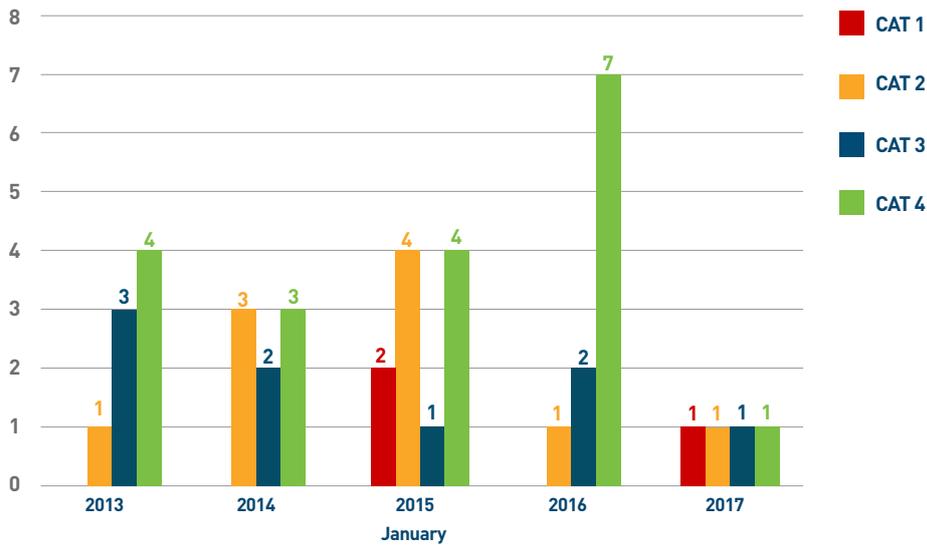
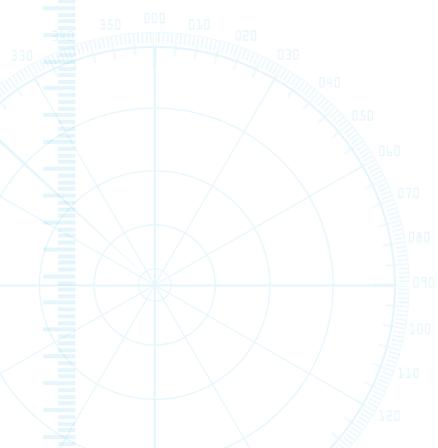
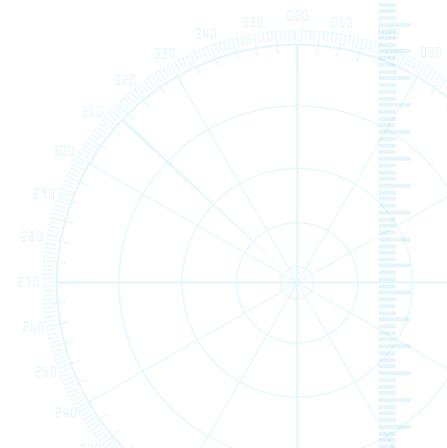


Chart 1 - Significance level of incidents (January of 2013-2017)



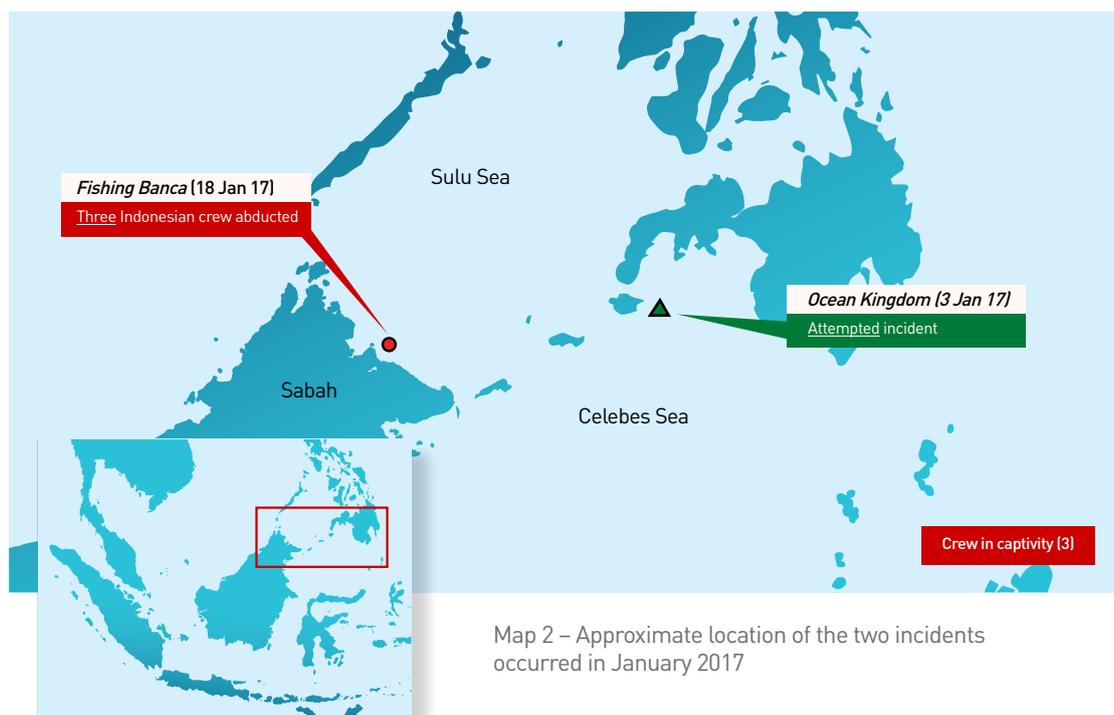
## LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENTS

Refer to Map 1 below for the location of the six incidents reported in January 2017; and the Appendix on page 14-17 for the description of these incidents.



## UPDATE ON SITUATION OF ABDUCTION OF CREW IN THE SULU-CELEBES SEA AND WATERS OFF EASTERN SABAH

Two incidents (comprising one actual incident and one attempted incident) involved the abduction of crew were reported in January 2017. Map 2 below shows the location of the two incidents and refer to the Appendix for the detailed description of these incidents.



### RELEASE OF CREW - UPDATE

***MV Dong Bang Giant 2.*** The ReCAAP Focal Point (Korea) and ReCAAP Focal Point (Philippines) reported to the ReCAAP ISC that the two abducted crew of *MV Dong Bang Giant 2* were released on 14 Jan 17. The ship captain (Korean) and 2<sup>nd</sup> officer (Filipino) were abducted on 21 Oct 16 when the general cargo ship was underway in the vicinity waters of Bongao, Tawi-tawi while enroute to Korea from Australia. Six armed perpetrators abducted the two crew and left the remaining 18 crew (three Koreans and 15 Filipinos) on board.



Photo courtesy of ReCAAP Focal Point (Korea)

## UPDATE ON STATUS OF ABDUCTED CREW

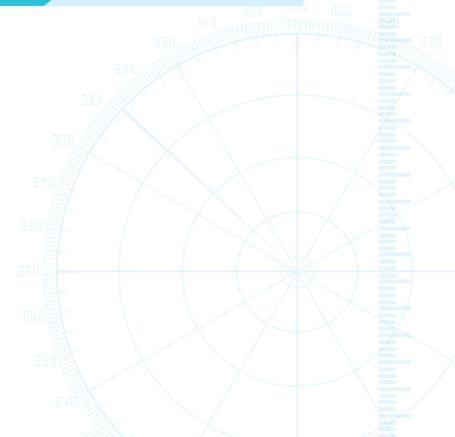
Between March 2016 and January 2017, a total of 11 actual incidents involving the abduction of crew were reported to the ReCAAP ISC. Of these, 51 crew had been abducted during this 11-month period. As of January 2017, 35 crew had been released and 16 are still held in captivity.

## EFFORTS BY THE ReCAAP ISC AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

The ReCAAP ISC reiterates its advisory which was issued via the ReCAAP ISC Incident Alert dated 21 November 2016 to all ships to re-route from the area, where possible. Otherwise, ship masters and crew are strongly urged to exercise extra vigilance while transiting the area. All vessels are advised to report to the Philippine authorities and ESSCOM prior entering or passing the Sibutu Passage and Sulu-Celebes Sea. Concerning the reporting centres in the Philippines, Navy-Littoral Monitoring Stations(LMS) based in Bongao, Tawi Tawi, is included in addition to the current Coast Guard District Southern Mindanao Operation Centre based in Zamboanga, as indicated in the Map below.



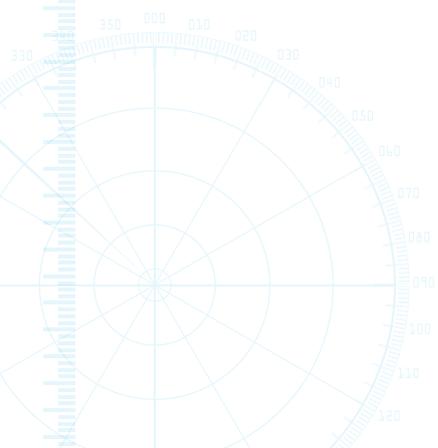
Map 3 – Contact detail and location of the reporting centres



## CONCLUSION

The situation of piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia continued to improve in January 2017. A total of six incidents were reported to the ReCAAP ISC, and this is a 40% decrease in total number of incidents compared to January 2016. No incident involving the hijacking of tanker for theft of oil cargo was reported in January 2017. The ReCAAP ISC commends the littoral States for their enhanced patrols and enforcement efforts, and the shipping industry for their vigilance and implementation of preventive counter-piracy measures.

However, of serious concern was the continued occurrence of incidents involving the abduction of crew from ships while underway in the Sulu-Celebes Sea and waters off eastern Sabah. A total of two incidents were reported in January 2017, comprising one actual incident and one attempted incident. More need to be done to address the situation of abduction of crew, both on land and at sea. The littoral States are to step up patrols and enforcement in the area, and the shipping industry to adopt relevant preventive measures taking reference from the "*Regional Guide to Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia*".



## DEFINITIONS & METHODOLOGY IN CLASSIFYING INCIDENTS

### DEFINITIONS

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

1. “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;

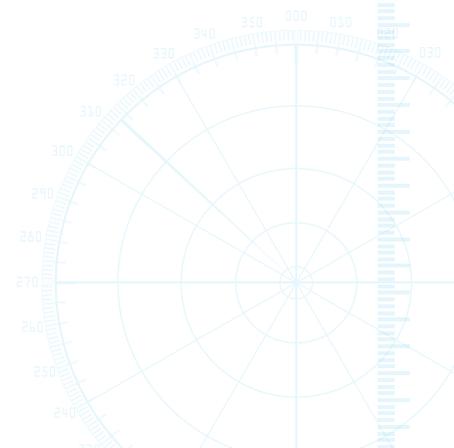
(c) any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described in subparagraph (a) or (b).

**Armed Robbery Against Ships**, in accordance with the Code of Practice for the Investigation of Crimes of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Assembly Resolution A.1025(26), is defined as:

2. “Armed robbery against ships” means any of the following acts:

(a) any illegal act of violence or detention, or any act of depredation, or threat thereof, other than an act of “piracy”, committed for private ends and directed against a ship, or against persons or property on board such ship, within a State’s internal waters, archipelagic waters and territorial sea.

(b) any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described above.



## METHODOLOGY IN CLASSIFYING INCIDENTS

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:

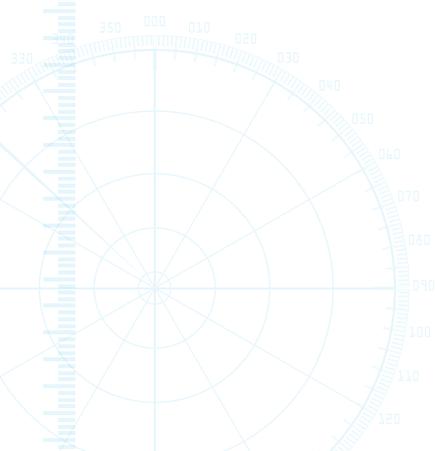
(1) **Type of weapons used.** Incidents of pirates/robbers who board a ship with no visible weapons are generally deemed as less violent compared to those equipped with pistols, knives, machetes, or other dangerous weapons. In cases where more sophisticated weapons are used, such incidents would be considered 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.

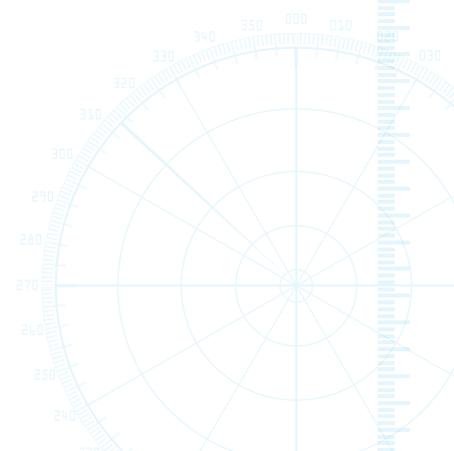
b. **Economic Factor.** This factor takes into consideration the type of the property taken from the ship. Cases of theft of cash or personal effects are generally less significant incidents compared to cases where the entire ship is hijacked either for the cargo on board or theft of the vessel.

Using these indicators, the ReCAAP ISC classifies all incidents into one of the four categories based on a matrix of the indicators of the Violence Factor and Economic Factor. Below is the broad narration of the four Categories.



Category	Description
<b>CAT 1</b>	CAT 1 incidents involved large number of perpetrators; more than 9 men in four out every 10 incidents and 4-9 men in the other six incidents. The perpetrators were mostly armed with guns and knives, and the crew is likely to suffer some form of injury or physical violence such as being assaulted or tied up or threatened. In term of losses, the ship was either hijacked or the cargo on board was stolen, for example siphoning of cargo oil.
<b>CAT 2</b>	Majority of CAT 2 incidents involved 4-9 men who are likely to be armed with knives/machetes and in 1/4 of the incidents, armed with guns. The crew is likely to be threatened or held hostage temporarily to allow the perpetrators to steal the crew's cash and ship's property including engine spares. In a few cases, the crew suffered some form of injury or physical violence but less severe in nature compared to CAT 1 incidents.
<b>CAT 3</b>	The number of perpetrators involved in CAT 3 incidents usually involved groups of between 1-6 men. At times, the perpetrators were armed with knives/machetes/others or other items such as sticks, rods, bats etc. The crew was not harmed, although there were cases of crew subject to duress during the incident but not harmed physically. In almost half of the CAT 3 incidents, the perpetrators were unable to steal anything from the vessel, but in cases where losses were reported, stores and engine spares were the commonly targeted items.
<b>CAT 4</b>	The perpetrators were not armed and the crew not harmed. More than half of CAT 4 incidents involved 1-3 men who escaped empty-handed upon sighted by the crew.

This classification of incidents allows the ReCAAP ISC to provide some perspective of the piracy and armed robbery situation in Asia and to facilitate the maritime community to carry out risk assessment.



## CONTACT DETAILS OF RECAAP FOCAL POINTS / CONTACT POINT

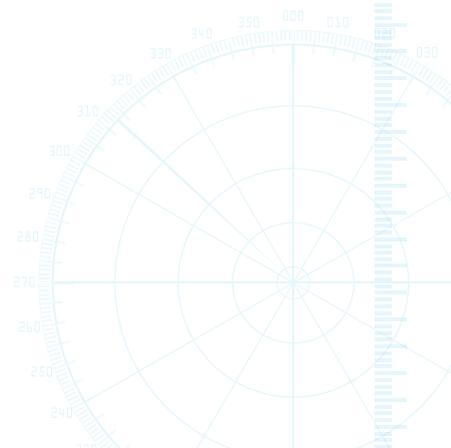
Country & Agency In Charge	Point of Contact	
	Phone No	Fax Number
<b>Australia (ReCAAP Focal Point)</b>		
Australian Maritime Border Operations Centre (AMBOC) Maritime Border Command (MBC) E-mail: <a href="mailto:amboc@border.gov.au">amboc@border.gov.au</a>	+61-2-6275-6000	+61-2-6275-6275
<b>Bangladesh</b>		
Department of Shipping E-mail: <a href="mailto:cns@dos.gov.bda">cns@dos.gov.bda</a>	+88-02-9553584	+88-02-9587301
<b>Brunei</b>		
Brunei Police Marine Email: <a href="mailto:kasnol.kincho@police.gov.bn">kasnol.kincho@police.gov.bn</a>	+673-8836495	+673-2774000
<b>Cambodia</b>		
Merchant Marine Department E-mail: <a href="mailto:mmd@online.com.kh">mmd@online.com.kh</a>	+85-5-2386-4110	+85-5-2386-4110
<b>China</b>		
China Maritime Search and Rescue Centre (Beijing) Email: <a href="mailto:cnmrcc@mot.gov.cn">cnmrcc@mot.gov.cn</a>	+86-10-6529-2218 +86-10-6529-2219 +86-10-6529-2221	+86-10-6529-2245
Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (Hong Kong) Email: <a href="mailto:hkmrcc@mardep.gov.hk">hkmrcc@mardep.gov.hk</a>	+85-2-2233-7999 +85-2-2233-7998	+85-2-2541-7714
<b>Denmark</b>		
Danish Maritime Authority (DMA) Email: <a href="mailto:ReCAAP-FP-DK@dma.dk">ReCAAP-FP-DK@dma.dk</a>	+45-9137-6000	+45-9137-6001

Country & Agency In Charge	Point of Contact	
	Phone No	Fax Number
<b>India</b>		
MRCC (Mumbai) Coast Guard Region (West) Mumbai – India Email: <a href="mailto:indsar@vsnl.net">indsar@vsnl.net</a> <a href="mailto:icgmrcc_mumbai@mtnl.net.in">icgmrcc_mumbai@mtnl.net.in</a> <a href="mailto:mrcc-west@indiancoastguard.nic.in">mrcc-west@indiancoastguard.nic.in</a>	+91-22-2431-6558 +91-22-2438-8065	+91-22-2433-3727 +91-22-2431-6558
<b>Japan</b>		
Japan Coast Guard (JCG) Ops Centre Email : <a href="mailto:jcg-op@mlit.go.jp">jcg-op@mlit.go.jp</a>	+81-3-3591-9812 +81-3-3591-6361	+81-3-3581-2853
<b>Republic of Korea</b>		
Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries Operations Centre Email: <a href="mailto:piracy@gicoms.go.kr">piracy@gicoms.go.kr</a>	+82-44-200-5895 to 98	+82-44-200-5886 to 88
<b>Laos</b>		
International Relations Department Ministry of Public Security Email: <a href="mailto:Ketkeo_pmc@yahoo.com">Ketkeo_pmc@yahoo.com</a> <a href="mailto:svongdeuane@yahoo.com">svongdeuane@yahoo.com</a>	+856-21-970 151	+856-21-212505 +856-21-212547
<b>Myanmar</b>		
MRCC Ayeyarwaddy (Myanmar Navy) Email: <a href="mailto:mrcc.yangon@mptmail.com.mm">mrcc.yangon@mptmail.com.mm</a>	+95-313-1650	+95-1202-417
<b>Netherlands</b>		
Dutch Coastguard Maritime Information Centre (MIK-NL) Email: <a href="mailto:mik-nl@kustwacht.nl">mik-nl@kustwacht.nl</a>	+31-223-658-101	+31-223-658-358
<b>Norway</b>		
Norwegian Maritime Authority Email: <a href="mailto:morten.alsaker.lossius@sjofartsdir.no">morten.alsaker.lossius@sjofartsdir.no</a>	+47-5274-5000 +47-5274-5130	+47-5274-5001

Country & Agency In Charge	Point of Contact	
	Phone No	Fax Number
<b>Philippines</b>		
Philippine Coast Guard PCG Action Centre-MRCC (Manila) Email: <a href="mailto:pcg_cg2@yahoo.com">pcg_cg2@yahoo.com</a> <a href="mailto:cg2@coastguard.gov.ph">cg2@coastguard.gov.ph</a> <a href="mailto:isc.cg2@coastguard.gov.ph">isc.cg2@coastguard.gov.ph</a>	+63-917-533-9595 +63-922-839-9513 +63-2-527-3877 +63-2-527-8481 to 89 (ext: 6136/37) +63-917-724-3682 (Text Hotline) +63-2-527-8481 loc6122	+63-2-527-3877
Coast Guard District South Western Mindanao (CGDSWM) Email: <a href="mailto:hcgdswm@yahoo.com">hcgdswm@yahoo.com</a>	+63 929689 4129 +63 916626 0689 VHF: Channel 16 with call sign "ENVY"	
<b>Singapore</b>		
Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore Port Operations Control Centre (POCC) Email: <a href="mailto:pocc@mpa.gov.sg">pocc@mpa.gov.sg</a>	+65-6226-5539 +65-6325-2493	+65-6227-9971 +65-6224-5776
<b>Sri Lanka</b>		
Sri Lanka Navy Operations Room / MRCC (Colombo) Email: <a href="mailto:nhqdno@navy.lk">nhqdno@navy.lk</a> <a href="mailto:nhqdno@yahoo.com">nhqdno@yahoo.com</a>	+94-11-244 5368 +94-11-221 2230/31	+94-11-244 1454 +94-11-244 9718
<b>Thailand</b>		
Royal Thai Navy Maritime Information Sharing Centre (MISC) Email: <a href="mailto:miscdutyofficer@misc.go.th">miscdutyofficer@misc.go.th</a>	+66-2475-4532	+66-2475-4577
<b>United Kingdom</b>		
National Maritime Information Centre Operations Centre Email: <a href="mailto:nmic-group@mod.uk">nmic-group@mod.uk</a>	+44 2392-211951	+44 2392-212024 Please indicate "FAO NMIC – A leg" if send via fax

Country & Agency In Charge	Point of Contact	
	Phone No	Fax Number
<b>United States</b>		
USCG Rescue Coordination Center Alameda (RCCAlameda) Email: <a href="mailto:rccalameda@uscg.mil">rccalameda@uscg.mil</a>	+1-510-437-3701	
<b>Vietnam</b>		
Vietnam Coast Guard Email: <a href="mailto:vietnamcoastguard@gmail.com">vietnamcoastguard@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:vietnamfocalpoint@yahoo.com.vn">vietnamfocalpoint@yahoo.com.vn</a>	+84-4-3355-4378	+84-4-3355-4363

Correct as at 2 Dec 2016



## DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENTS

### Actual Incidents

■ CAT 1  
 ■ CAT 2  
 ■ CAT 3  
 ■ CAT 4

S/N	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, GT, IMO No.	Date Time	Location of Incident	Details of Incidents
1	<i>Silver Express</i> Tanker Panama 26900 9380099	07/01/17 2250 hrs	13° 44.20' N, 121° 02.07' E  Batangas Alpha anchorage, Philippines	<p>While at anchor, the duty watch spotted two perpetrators armed with long knives on board the tanker during routine inspection. He reported the incident immediately. One of the perpetrators noticed the duty watch and chased him with a knife. The duty watch ran towards the accommodation and locked all access door while the master raised the alarm. The perpetrators escaped with ship stores including an airline valve cap, a forecandle bell and three fire hydrant caps. The incident was reported to the PCG, who immediately conducted maritime patrol in the vicinity.</p> <p><b>[ReCAAP Focal Point (Philippines)]</b></p>
2	<i>Name not Available</i>	16/01/17 0325 hrs	22° 06.60' N, 091° 44.40' E  Chittagong outer anchorage, Bangladesh	<p>While at anchor, an unidentified number of perpetrators boarded the ship and stole 15 drums of paint which is about 20 litres each.</p> <p>Upon receipt of information about the incident via VHF, the Bangladesh Coast Guard (BCG) immediately dispatched Coast Guard Ship (CGS) <i>Tawhid</i> with a boarding team to conduct investigation. The Special Section of the CG force recovered all drums of paint and one high pressure jet machine.</p> <p><b>[ReCAAP Focal Point (Bangladesh)]</b></p>

## Actual Incidents

■ CAT 1  
 ■ CAT 2  
 ■ CAT 3  
 ■ CAT 4

S/N	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, GT, IMO No.	Date Time	Location of Incident	Details of Incidents
3	<i>Fishing Banca</i> Fishing Trawler Malaysia Bow No.: 838/4F	18/01/17 1730 hrs	06° 05' N, 118° 18' E  Approximately 25 nm east of Matanal Point, Sibago Island, Basilan Province, Philippines	<p>While underway, nine perpetrators armed with guns boarded the trawler from a grey speed boat. They abducted three Indonesian crew and fled towards Sulu in the speed boat. The local residents of Bakungan Island, Taganak reported the incident to the PCG and local police. While conducting maritime patrol in the area, the PCG stationed in Taganak spotted the abandoned fishing trawler drifting in the vicinity waters of Bacungan Island, Tawi-tawi. The PCG towed the fishing trawler and turned over to Taganak Municipal Office together with several fishing paraphernalia and navigational equipment.</p> <p><b>[ReCAAP Focal Point (Philippines)]</b></p>
4	<i>Jaya Crystal</i> Tug boat Singapore 2763 9594212	23/01/17 1000 hrs	21° 12' N, 091° 43' E  Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh	<p>While underway, multiple small boats approached tug boat, <i>Jaya Crystal</i> which was towing another ship, <i>EL Hadj</i>. The master immediately contacted the Chittagong Port Control and Bangladesh Coast Guard on Channel 12 and Channel 16 to request for assistance. Meantime, <i>Jaya Crystal</i> performed zigzag manoeuvres in an attempt to deter the small boats from approaching. However, the master sighted a number of the perpetrators climbing onto <i>EL Hadj</i>, and set fire on board the ship. The small boats left the area after the Bangladesh Navy arrived at the location of the incident.</p>

## Actual Incidents

■ CAT 1
 ■ CAT 2
 ■ CAT 3
 ■ CAT 4

S/N	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, GT, IMO No.	Date Time	Location of Incident	Details of Incidents
				<p><i>Jaya Crystal</i> began to fight the fire on the port quarter of <i>EL Hadj</i> but was interrupted when the master had to manoeuvre both ships into deeper waters to prevent grounding.</p> <p>The crew was not injured and nothing was stolen.</p> <p><b>[ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore)]</b></p>

## Attempted Incidents

S/N	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, GT, IMO No.	Date Time	Location of Incident	Details of Incidents
5	<i>Ocean Kingdom</i> Container ship Antigua and Barbuda 7541 9202091	03/01/17 1500 hrs	06° 37.70' N, 122° 44.40' E  Approximately 25 nm east of Matanal Point, Sibago Island, Basilan, Philippines	<p>While underway, two white and yellow speed boats, each with two and three perpetrators armed with guns and long rifles, approached the container ship. While approaching, one of the perpetrators in one of the boats made a hand signal to stop and then increased its speed abruptly to 14 knots while the other speed boat proceeded towards the stern of the ship with one perpetrator attempted to climb onto the container ship. The master conducted a zig-zag manoeuvring which resulted in swaying of the rudder and propeller that created some intermittent waves which forced the perpetrator to abort his attempt to board the ship.</p>

## Actual Incidents

■ CAT 1
 ■ CAT 2
 ■ CAT 3
 ■ CAT 4

S/N	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, GT, IMO No.	Date Time	Location of Incident	Details of Incidents
				<p>The perpetrators fired continuously at the ship which resulted in multiple bullet shots at the bridge area and different parts of the ship. The crew was not injured. The incident was reported to the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) Station at Zamboanga who coordinated with the Naval Forces Western Mindanao in dispatching boats to the location.</p> <p>The DA-BFAR Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) vessel --3009, which is under the operational control (OPCON) of the PCG that was operating in the vicinity, was directed to proceed to the area. In addition, the Search and Rescue Vessel (SARV)-3503, Tug Boat (TB)-271 and DA-BFAR MCS-3006 were also dispatched to the area.</p> <p><b>[ReCAAP Focal Point (Philippines)]</b></p>
6	Great Sailor Chemical tanker Vietnam 9419 9183477	06/01/17 0123 hrs	01° 14.83' N, 104° 06.02' E  Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS)	<p>While underway in the eastbound lane of the Singapore Strait, an unknown number of perpetrators in a small fast moving craft attempted to board the tanker. The master took evasive action, raised alarm and shone the spot light at the small craft. Upon realising that they had been detected, the unknown craft aborted the boarding attempt.</p> <p><b>[ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore)]</b></p>



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