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ReCAAP ISC Weekly Report

25 June - 1 July 2019

Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia

OVERVIEW

During 25 Jun -1 Jul 19, one Category 2¹ incident and one attempted incident of armed robbery against ships in Asia were reported to ReCAAP ISC. The Category 2 incident occurred at Taboneo Anchorage, Kalimantan, Indonesia on 23 May 19 when perpetrators armed with knives boarded a bulk carrier, confronted the crew, stole ship stores and escaped. The attempted incident occurred off Pulau Doom, Sorong, Indonesia on 22 May 19 whereby a perpetrator tried to steal the dinghy of a sailing boat. The locations of the incidents are shown below, and description tabulated in the attachment.



Location of the incidents

¹ ReCAAP ISC classifies Category 2 as moderately significant incident. Under this category, the perpetrators are likely to be armed with knives/ machetes and in some incidents armed with guns. The crew are threatened or held hostage temporarily and, in some cases, the crew suffered injury and physical violence but less severe in nature as compared to CAT 1 incident.

SITUATION OF ABDUCTION OF CREW IN THE SULU-CELEBES SEAS


Update on the abduction of crew from two fishing boats on 18 Jun 19

On 18 Jun 19, the ReCAAP ISC issued a Warning, followed by an Incident Alert about the abduction of 10 fishermen from two fishing boats by a group of gunmen in the waters of Lahat Datu, Sabah, Malaysia. On 21 Jun 19, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) reported to the ReCAAP ISC that nine men believed to be the abducted crew were found by the authorities of the Talipao Municipal Police Station at Bgy Kahawa, Talipao, Sulu. The abducted crew was released by the abductors who could have realised that the abducted crew had no money nor anything to give as ransom.

On 24 Jun 19, the abducted crew escorted by police authorities departed Jolo, Sulu for Zamboanga City for a joint debrief by the Philippines authorities. The Southwestern Mindanao of the PCG interviewed the abducted crew and reported to the ReCAAP ISC that nine of the crew from the two fishing boats (instead of 10 crew as early reported) had been abducted. With the release of the nine crew, there is no crew being held in captivity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As the risk of the abduction of crew in the Sulu-Celebes Seas and waters off Eastern Sabah is high as demonstrated by the abduction incident on 18 Jun 19, the ReCAAP ISC reiterates its advisory issued via the *ReCAAP ISC Incident Alert* dated 21 Nov 16 to all ships to reroute from the area, where possible. Otherwise, ship masters and crew are strongly urged to exercise extra vigilance while transiting the area, and report immediately to the Operation Centres of Philippines and Eastern Sabah Security Command (ESSCOM) of Malaysia. The contact details of the Operation Centres of Philippines and ESSCOM of Malaysia (updated by ReCAAP ISC on 3 Jan 19) are as follows:



- 1 Philippine Coast Guard District Southwestern Mindanao**
Tel: +63 998 585 7972
+63 917 842 8446
VHF: Channel 16 with call-sign "NEPTUNE"
Email: hcgdswm@yahoo.com
- 2a Philippine Coast Guard Station, Bongao (Central Tawi-Tawi)**
Tel: +63 998 585 7941
+63 917 842 8402
VHF: Channel 16
Email: cgd_tawi2@yahoo.com
- 2b Philippine Navy - Littoral Monitoring Station (LMS), Bongao, Tawi-Tawi**
Tel: +63 955 714 0153
VHF: Channel 16
Email: jointtaskgroup@gmail.com
- 3 Eastern Sabah Security Command (ESSCOM)**
Tel: +60 89863181/016
Fax: +60 89863182
VHF: Channel 16 with call-sign "ESSCOM"
Email: bilikgerakan_esscom@jpm.gov.my

**Description of Incidents of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships
25 June – 1 July 2019**

	Ship Name Type of Ship Flag Gross Tonnage IMO Number	Date Local Time of Incident (LT)	Position of the Incident	Details of the Incident	Consequences for crew, ship, cargo	Action taken by the master and crew	Was the incident reported to the Coastal authority? Which one?	Reporting State or International Organization	Coastal State Action Taken
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
INCIDENTS IN ASIA									
ACTUAL INCIDENT									
1.	Odysseas L Bulk carrier Liberia 44180 9597381	23/5/19 1930 hrs	3° 43' S, 114° 26.3' E Taboneo Anchorage, Kalimantan, Indonesia	While at anchor, seven perpetrators armed with knives, boarded the bulk carrier. The duty watchman raised the alarm and the crew mustered. The perpetrators confronted the crew with their knives and stole ship stores before they escaped. The incident was reported to Taboneo Port Control and a patrol boat was dispatched to investigate. All seven perpetrators were later arrested. (Category 2)	Perpetrators confronted crew with their knives. Ship stores stolen.	No information available	Yes Taboneo Port Control	ReCAAP ISC via ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore)	Taboneo Port Authorities dispatched a patrol boat to investigate. All the perpetrators were arrested.
ATTEMPTED INCIDENT									
1.	El Toro Sailing Boat	22/5/19 2305 hrs	0° 53.5' S, 131° 14.4' E Anchorage off Pulau Doom, Sorong, Indonesia	On 22 May 19 at about 2305 hrs, the perpetrator in a fishing boat approached the sailing vessel <i>El Toro</i> that was anchored off Pulau Doom, Sorong, Indonesia and attempted to steal the vessel's dinghy. When the skipper of <i>El Toro</i> saw the perpetrator, he directed a lamp to him and shouted. The	No crew was injured / harmed The perpetrator attempted to steal the dinghy boat	The skipper directed a lamp to the perpetrator and shouted at him	The skipper of <i>El Toro</i> reported the incident to the local authority.	ReCAAP ISC via ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore)	No information available

				perpetrator released the dinghy and escaped.					
Update of the abduction of crew from fishing boats									
1	Fishing boat (with marking SA/2325/F) Malaysia	18/6/19 0245 hrs	5° 2' N, 119° 4' E Approximately 2 nm off Felda Lahat Datu, Sabah, Malaysia	On 18 Jun 19 at about 0245 hrs, about 10 men armed with high powered firearms, believed to be members of the Sulu-based Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) abducted nine crew from two fishing boats. The fishing boats were in the vicinity waters of Lahad Datu, Sabah, Malaysia when the perpetrators boarded the fishing boats from two speed boats. The perpetrators abducted four crew from the first fishing boat and five crew from the second fishing boat; and were sighted in the area of Pondohan, Tabawan, Sitangkai, Tawi-tawi, Philippines at about 0330 hrs on 18 Jun 19. On 21 Jun 19 at about 2200 hrs, the nine abducted crew were released by the abductors at the unnamed shorelines of Sulu Province and the perpetrators sped towards an unknown direction. All abducted crew were later recovered by the police. According to the abducted crew, prior to their release, the perpetrators took away some of their personal belongings such as wrist	Nine crew from two fishing boats were abducted. All nine crew were later released by the abductors. Some of the crew's personal belongings such as wrist watch and cellular phone were stolen.	No information available	Yes Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and Philippine National Police (PNP) units	ReCAAP ISC via ReCAAP Focal Point (Philippines)	Abducted crew were successfully recovered by the police. The abducted crew were brought to Sulu Provincial Police Office for debriefing and a hospital for medical check-up. On 24 Jun 19, they arrived at Zamboanga city for a joint debrief by the Philippines authorities.
2	Fishing boat (with marking SA/5699/C) Malaysia		(Sulu-Celebes Seas)						

				<p>watch and cellular phone.</p> <p>On 24 Jun 19, the abducted crew escorted by police authorities departed Jolo, Sulu for Zamboanga city for a joint debrief by the Philippines authorities.</p>					
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