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## ReCAAP ISC Weekly Report 14 - 20 January 2020

### Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia

#### OVERVIEW

During 14-20 Jan 20, four incidents (comprising one CAT 1 incident and three CAT 4 incidents) were reported to ReCAAP ISC.

The CAT 1<sup>1</sup> incident was the first incident of abduction of crew reported in 2020. On 17 Jan 20, five Indonesian crew were abducted from their fishing trawler off Pulau Tambisan, Lahad Datu, Sabah, Malaysia.

The two CAT 4<sup>2</sup> incidents occurred on 18 Jan 20 within an interval of five hours to the same barge towed by a tug boat while underway in the eastbound lane of the Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) in the Singapore Strait.

The other CAT 4 incident occurred last year, on 23 Dec 19, to a ship while anchored at Manila International Container Terminal (MICT), Philippines. With the inclusion of this incident, the total number of incidents in 2019 is 83.

The location of the four incidents is shown in the map below; and detailed description tabulated in the attachment.

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<sup>1</sup> ReCAAP ISC classifies CAT (Category) 1 as incident which is most severe in nature. The incidents mostly involved large numbers of perpetrators; more than 9 men in four out of every 10 incidents; and 4-9 men in other six incidents. The perpetrators are 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 or kidnapped for ransom (as in the abduction of crew in the Sulu-Celebes Seas and waters off Eastern Sabah).

<sup>2</sup> CAT (Category) 4 incident is classified as "least significant" in nature. Under this category, the perpetrators were not armed, and the crew not harmed.



Location of the incidents


## INCIDENT ALERTS

ReCAAP ISC has issued an Incident Alert 01/2020 on 19 Jan 20, on the two incidents involving the barge towed by a tug boat in the eastbound lane of TSS in the Singapore Strait.

ReCAAP ISC has also issued an Incident Alert 02/2020 on 19 Jan 20, on the incident of abduction of crew from a fishing trawler in Lahad Datu, Sabah, Malaysia.

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

As the risk of the abduction of crew in the Sulu-Celebes Seas and waters off Eastern Sabah is high as demonstrated by the recurrence of the abduction incident on 17 Jan 20, the ReCAAP ISC reiterates its advisory issued via 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 the Philippines and ESSCOM of Malaysia (updated by ReCAAP ISC on 3 Jan 19) are as follows:



The map shows the Sulu Sea to the north and the Celebes Sea to the south. Three contact points are marked: 1 (Zamboanga), 2a and 2b (Bongao), and 3 (Lahad Datu).

- 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:bilikgerakan_esscom@jpm.gov.my)

#### Contact details

In the event that the ship master is not able to establish contact with the Operation Centres of the Philippines as listed in the ReCAAP ISC Advisory, he can contact the **Philippine Coast Guard Command Centre** at the following contact details:

Tel: +63-2-5273877 (direct)  
+63-2-527-8481 to 89 (ext: 6136/37)  
+63-917-724-3682 (mobile)  
+63-929-825-3207 (mobile)

Email: [pcgcomcen@coastguard.gov.ph](mailto:pcgcomcen@coastguard.gov.ph)

The ReCAAP ISC advises the shipping industry and ships to enhance their situation awareness by referring to the *Guidance on Abduction of Crew in the Sulu-Celebes Seas and Waters off Eastern Sabah* produced by ReCAAP ISC in July 2019. The Guidance is available at [www.recaap.org](http://www.recaap.org).

#### RECOMMENDATION

The ReCAAP ISC urges ship master and crew to report all incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships to the nearest coastal State and flag State, exercise vigilance and adopt relevant preventive measures taking reference from the *Regional Guide to Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia*.

**Description of Incidents of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships  
14-20 January 2020**

	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 coastal authority? Which one?	Reporting State or International Organization	Coastal State Action Taken
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>INCIDENTS IN ASIA IN 2020</b>									
<b>ACTUAL INCIDENTS</b>									
1.	<b>SSK 00543</b> Fishing trawler Malaysia	17/1/20 1500 hrs	5° 29.0' N, 119° 3.0' E  4.24 nm Northwest of Pulau Tambisan, Lahad Datu, Sabah, Malaysia	<p>The Philippine Coast Guard reported to ReCAAP ISC that six gunmen dressed in black suits with masks used a grey speedboat with twin engine (40 HP) and abducted eight crew from a Malaysia-registered fishing trawler (with marking <i>SSK 00543</i>). The fishing trawler was later found abandoned and with no crew on board on 17 January 2020 at about 1500 hrs at approximately 4.24 nm off Pulau Tambisan, Lahad Datu, Sabah, Malaysia. On 18 January 2020, the Malaysian authorities reported that they had recovered three of the eight missing crew in the vicinity of Lahad Datu, Sabah. The Philippine authorities were conducting maritime patrols in the area, particularly near the Sulare island (which was believed to be the staging area of the perpetrators).</p> <p>The Philippine and Malaysia authorities are stepping up their patrol efforts, conducting pursuit operations and intensifying its military operation to locate the five abducted Indonesian crew.</p> <p align="right">(Category 1)</p>	Five crew were abducted.	-	Yes	ReCAAP ISC via ReCAAP Focal Point (Philippines)	The Philippine and Malaysia authorities are stepping up their patrol efforts, conducting pursuit operations and intensifying its military operation to locate the five abducted Indonesian crew.

	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 coastal authority? Which one?	Reporting State or International Organization	Coastal State Taken	State Action
2.	<b>Kim Hock Tug 9</b> Tug boat Singapore 4430 9767120  <b>LKH 2882</b> Barge	18/1/20 1129 hrs	1° 11.73' N, 103° 52.72' E  In the eastbound lane of the Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) in the Singapore Strait  (SOMS)	While underway, six to seven perpetrators were sighted on board the barge, <i>LKH 2882</i> being towed by tug boat, <i>Kim Hock Tug 9</i> . The perpetrators escaped in two to three sampans upon seeing another tug boat, <i>Kim Hock Virgo</i> approaching them. The master of <i>Kim Hock Tug 9</i> reported the incident to Singapore Vessel Traffic Information System (VTIS). The crew was not injured. Some scrap metal was stolen.  (Category 4)	The crew was not injured  Some scrap metal was stolen from the barge.	The master reported incident to Singapore VTIS.	Yes  Singapore VTIS	ReCAAP ISC via ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore)		
3.	<b>Kim Hock Tug 9</b> Tug boat Singapore 4430 9767120  <b>LKH 2882</b> Barge	18/1/20 1551 hrs	1° 15.35' N, 104° 3.24' E  In the eastbound lane of the Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) in the Singapore Strait  (SOMS)	At about 1551 hrs on the same day of 18 Jan 20, seven perpetrators were sighted on the barge, <i>LKH 2882</i> . Two Singapore Police Coast Guard craft were despatched to intercept. The perpetrators fled in their sampans upon seeing the PCG craft. The crew was not injured. Several pieces of scrap metal were stolen.  (Category 4)	The crew was not injured.  Several pieces of the scrap metal were stolen from the barge.	The master reported the incident to Singapore VTIS.	Yes  Singapore VTIS and Singapore Police Coast Guard	ReCAAP ISC via ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore)	Two Singapore Police Coast Guard craft were despatched to intercept. At 1735 hrs, the Police Coast Guard boarded the tug boat and barge for investigation.	

	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 coastal authority? Which one?	Reporting State or International Organization	Coastal State Action Taken
<b>INCIDENTS IN ASIA IN 2019</b>									
<b>ACTUAL INCIDENT</b>									
1	<b><i>MV Kwonloon Bay</i></b> Container ship Liberia 53453 9280861	23/12/19 1522 hrs	14° 35.4' N, 120° 56.4' E  Manila International Container Terminal (MICT), Philippines	While at anchor, an unknown number of perpetrators boarded the ship through the hawse pipe and broke the padlock of the forecastle store. They stole three pieces of the cleaning apparatus for storage area and one compressed air breathing apparatus. The crew only realised the theft incident when he was cleaning the tank. The incident was reported to the Coast Guard Station Manila whose personnel boarded the ship to conduct inquiry and investigate. The crew was safe.  (Category 4)	The crew was not injured.  The padlock of the forecastle store was broken.  Three cleaning apparatus for storage area and one compressed air breathing apparatus were stolen.	The incident was reported to Coast Guard Station Manila.	Yes  Coast Guard Station Manila	ReCAAP ISC via ReCAAP Focal Point (Philippines)	The Coast Guard Station Manila personnel boarded the ship to conduct inquiry and investigate.