



Website : [www.recaap.org](http://www.recaap.org)  
Tel : +65 6376 3063  
Fax : +65 6376 3066  
Email : [info@recaap.org](mailto:info@recaap.org)

## ReCAAP ISC Weekly Report 22-28 February 2022

### Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia

#### OVERVIEW

During 22-28 Feb 22, three incidents of armed robbery against ships in Asia were reported to the ReCAAP ISC (one CAT 3<sup>1</sup> incident and two CAT 4<sup>2</sup> incidents). All three incidents occurred to ships while underway in the Singapore Strait (SS). Of the three incidents, two incidents occurred in the eastbound lane of the Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) and one incident in the precautionary area of the TSS. The crew was safe in all three incidents.

1. The first incident occurred on 25 Feb to a petroleum/chemical tanker while underway off Nongsa Point, (Indonesia), in the precautionary area of the TSS. Two perpetrators were sighted in the engine room making their exit via the engine room skylight. A search on board the ship was conducted, and the compressor for charging the self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) and the hose for charging the lifeboat compressed air bottles were found missing.
2. The second incident occurred on 26 Feb to a bulk carrier while underway off northwest of Pulau Cula (Indonesia), in the eastbound lane of the TSS. Five perpetrators were sighted at the starboard quarter stern deck. The alarm was raised and crew mustered. The perpetrators escaped in a small boat. One set of welding equipment was reported stolen.
3. The third incident occurred on 28 Feb to a bulk carrier while underway off west of Pulau Cula (Indonesia), in the eastbound lane of the TSS. Three perpetrators armed with knives were sighted roaming on the main deck. The ship alarm was raised and crew mustered. A search on board the ship was conducted and some engine spares were reported stolen.

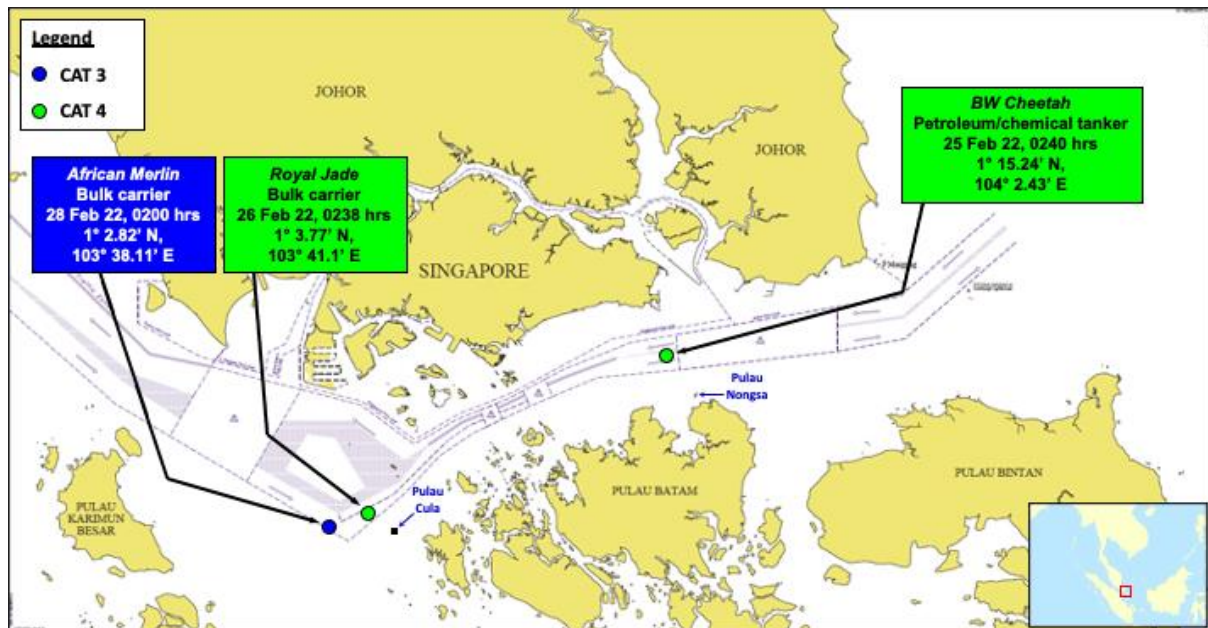
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<sup>1</sup> CAT (Category) 3 incident is 'less significant' in nature. Under this category, the perpetrators are armed with knives/machetes or other items such as sticks or rods. Although the crew can be subjected to duress or threat during the incident, 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.

<sup>2</sup> CAT (Category) 4 incident is classified as "least significant" in nature. Under this category, the perpetrators are not armed, and the crew not harmed. In CAT 4 cases, either nothing is stolen or small items are stolen.

With these three incidents, a total of 13 incidents were reported in the SS since January 2022, comprising nine incidents in the eastbound lane of the TSS, two incidents in the precautionary area, one incident in the westbound lane and one incident outside the TSS.

The locations of the three incidents are shown in map below and detailed description of the incidents tabulated in the attachment.




Location of incidents

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

There is no incident of abduction of crew reported since the last incident in January 2020 up to today, and no crew is currently being held in captivity by the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG).

The Philippine and Malaysian authorities continued to conduct pursuit operations and intensify military operations to neutralise the ASG. In 2021, the operations carried out by the Armed Forces of the Philippines had resulted in the neutralisation of some ASG sub-leaders and members. However, as Mundi Sawadjaan (one of the ASG Commanders responsible for the abduction of crew in the Sulu area) is still at large, the threat of abduction of crew from ships remains high, particularly in the areas of Sulu and nearby waters off Tawi-Tawi.

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 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 next page:



The map shows the Sulu Sea to the north and the Celebes Sea to the south. Three numbered locations 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: +632-8-527-8481 (ext: 6136/37)  
+632-998-585-5327 (mobile)  
+632-917-842-8249 (mobile)  
+632-8-527-3877 (fax)  
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  
22-28 February 2022**

	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	
<b>INCIDENTS IN ASIA</b>									
<b>ACTUAL INCIDENTS</b>									
1.	<b>BW Cheetah</b> Petroleum/chemical tanker Liberia 29737 9635834	25/2/22 0240 hrs	1.0° 15.24' N 104.0° 2.43' E  Approximately 4.4 nm northwest of Nongsa Point, Batam Island (Indonesia), in the precautionary area of the Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) in the Singapore Strait (SS).  (SOMS)	While underway, the ship's 3 <sup>rd</sup> engineer and oiler spotted two perpetrators in the engine room making their exit via the engine room skylight. The engineer reported the incident to the bridge. A search on board the ship was conducted with no further sighting of the perpetrators.  During the search, the compressor for charging the self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) and the hose for charging the lifeboat compressed air bottles were found missing. The crew was safe.  [Category 4]	The crew was safe.  The compressor for charging the self- contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) and the hose for charging the lifeboat compressed air bottles were found missing.	A search on board the ship was conducted.  The master reported the incident to the ship's company.	Yes  The master reported the incident to the ship's company.	ReCAAP ISC via ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore)	No information

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
	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
2.	<b>Royal Jade</b> Bulk carrier Panama 35832 9801304	26/2/22 0238 hrs	1.0° 3.77' N 103.0° 41.1' E  Approximately 2.1 nm northwest of Pulau Cula (Indonesia) in the eastbound lane of the TSS in the SS.  (SOMS)	While underway, five perpetrators were sighted at the starboard quarter stern deck. The alarm was raised, and the perpetrators escaped in a small boat. One set of welding equipment was reported stolen.  The crew was mustered and a search on board the ship was conducted. The crew was safe. The master reported the incident to Singapore Vessel Traffic Information System (VTIS) and confirmed that no assistance is required.  A safety navigational broadcast was initiated. The Republic of Singapore Navy's (RSN) Maritime Security Task Force (MSTF) and Singapore Police Coast Guard were notified. Information of the incident was shared with the Indonesian authorities.  The Singapore Police Coast Guard officers boarded the ship for investigation upon her arrival in Singapore.  [Category 4]	The crew was safe.  One set of welding equipment was reported stolen.	Ship alarm was raised and the crew mustered.  A search on board the ship was conducted.  The master reported the incident to Singapore VTIS.	Yes  The master reported the incident to Singapore VTIS.	ReCAAP ISC via ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore)	A safety navigational broadcast was initiated. The RSN's MSTF and Singapore Police Coast Guard were notified. Information of the incident was shared with the Indonesian authorities.  The Singapore Police Coast Guard officers boarded the ship for investigation upon her arrival in Singapore.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
	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
3.	<b>African Merlin</b> Bulk carrier Bahamas 21521 9701267	28/2/22 0200 hrs	1.0° 2.82' N 103.0° 38.11' E  Approximately 4.6 nm west of Pulau Cula (Indonesia), in the eastbound lane of the TSS in the Singapore Strait.  (SOMS)	While underway, three perpetrators armed with knives were sighted roaming on the main deck. The ship alarm was raised and crew mustered.  A search on board the ship was conducted and some engine spares were reported stolen. The perpetrators escaped. The crew was safe. The master reported the incident to Singapore VTIS.  A safety navigational broadcast was initiated. The RSN's MSTF and Singapore Police Coast Guard were notified. Information of the incident was shared with the Indonesian authorities.  The Singapore Police Coast Guard officers boarded the ship for investigation upon her arrival in Singapore.  [Category 3]	The crew was safe.  Some engine spares were reported stolen.	The ship alarm was raised and crew mustered.  The master reported the incident to Singapore VTIS.	Yes  The master reported the incident to Singapore VTIS.	ReCAAP ISC via ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore)	A safety navigational broadcast was initiated. The RSN's MSTF and Singapore Police Coast Guard were notified. Information of the incident was shared with the Indonesian authorities.  The Singapore Police Coast Guard officers boarded the ship for investigation upon her arrival in Singapore.