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ReCAAP ISC Weekly Report 26 July - 1 Aug 2022

Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia

OVERVIEW

Three incidents of armed robbery against ships in Asia were reported to the ReCAAP ISC (comprising two CAT 3¹ incidents and one CAT 4² incident) over the past week. All three incidents occurred in the Singapore Strait (SS). Two incidents occurred in the eastbound lane of the Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) on 30 Jul 22 within an interval of two hours, and at close proximity to each other. The third incident occurred on 31 Jul 22 in the westbound lane of the TSS. The crew was safe in all three incidents. Engine spare parts and scrap metals were reported stolen in the incidents.

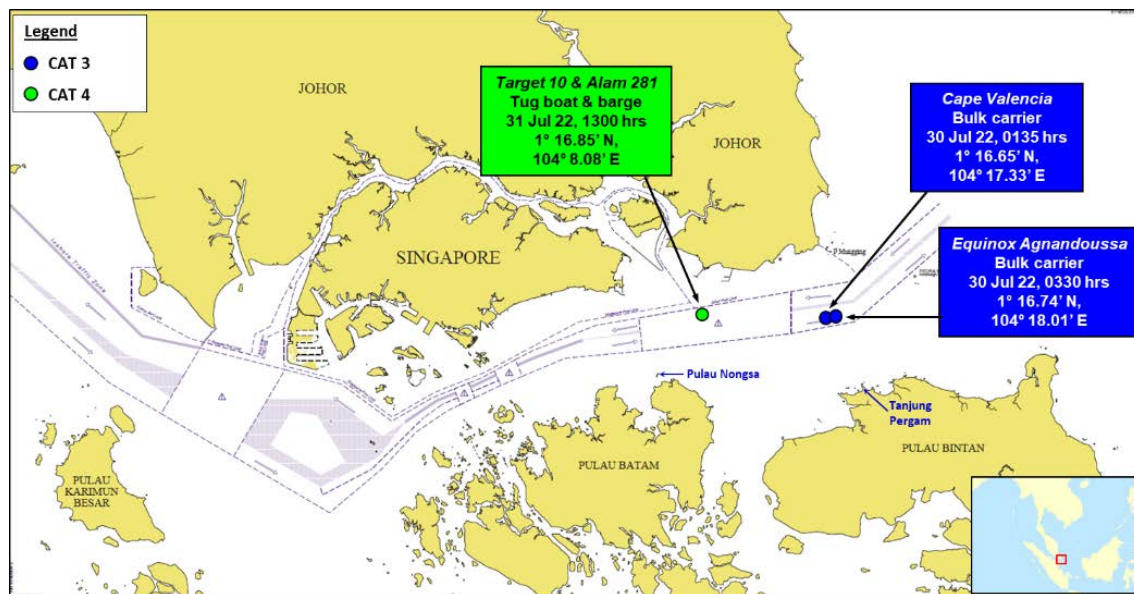
The ReCAAP ISC is concerned with the continued occurrence of incidents in the SS, and has issued an Incident Alert (IA 03/2022) on 1 Aug 22 to alert the shipping community, urge littoral States to increase patrols and enforcement, and advise all ships to intensify vigilance when transiting the area. The IA can be found at www.recaap.org.

With these three incidents, a total of 33 incidents were reported in the SS since January 2022, comprising 23 incidents in the eastbound lane of the TSS, five incidents in the precautionary area, three incidents in the westbound lane and two incidents outside the TSS

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

¹ 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.

² 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.




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 January 2020 up to today, and no crew is currently being held in captivity by the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG).

On 23 Apr 21, the Philippine Armed Forces conducted a military operation against members of the ASG during which one of the ASG leaders responsible for the abduction of crew in the area of Sulu and Tawi-Tawi had managed to escape. However, as the ASG Commanders responsible for the abduction of crew in the Sulu area are still at large and with the persisting presence of remnants of the group, the threat of abduction of crew from ships remains potentially 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 below.



The map shows the Sulu Sea to the north and the Celebes Sea to the south. Contact point 1 is located near Zamboanga. Contact points 2a and 2b are located near Bongao. Contact point 3 is located near 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
- 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: bilanggerakan_esscom@jpm.gov.my

Contact details

In the event, the ship master or crew is unable to establish contact with the Operation Centres of the Philippines as listed in the ReCAAP ISC Advisory, they 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: pcqcomcen@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.

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 2 to Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia*.

**Description of Incidents of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships
26 July - 1 Aug 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	
INCIDENTS IN ASIA									
ACTUAL INCIDENTS									
1.	Cape Valencia Bulk carrier Panama 92758 9578684	30/7/22 0135 hrs	1.0° 16.65' N 104.0° 17.33' E Approximately 5.97 nm northwest of Tg Pergam, Bintan Island (Indonesia), in the eastbound lane of the Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) in the Singapore Strait (SS). (SOMS)	While underway, the ship crew sighted four unauthorised personnel armed with knives, of whom two were in the engine room and two were in the mess room. Ship's alarm was raised and crew mustered. A search in the accommodation and engine room spaces was conducted with no further sighting of the perpetrators. Some engine spare parts were reported missing. The crew was safe and accounted for. The master reported the incident to VTIS East and the company security officer. The ship did not require further assistance. The ship had departed Singapore and was bound for Beilun, China. 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. [Category 3]	The crew was safe. Some engine spare parts were reported stolen	The ship's alarm was raised and crew mustered. A search on board was conducted. The master reported the incident to Singapore VTIS East.	Yes The master reported the incident to the Singapore VTIS East.	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.

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.	Equinox Agnandoussa Bulk carrier Cayman Islands 33232 9503988	30/7/22 0330 hrs	1.0° 16.74' N 104.0° 18.01' E Approximately 5.73 nm northwest of Tg Pergam, Bintan Island (Indonesia), in the eastbound lane of the TSS in the SS. (SOMS)	While underway, the ship crew sighted three unauthorised personnel armed with knives, of whom one was in the engine room and two were on deck. Ship's alarm was raised and crew mustered on navigation bridge. No injury was reported. The master reported the incident to VTIS East and the company security officer. The ship departed Singapore and was bound for Xingang, China. A safety navigational broadcast was initiated. The RSN's MSTF and Singapore Police Coast Guard were notified of the incident. Information of the incident was shared with Indonesian authorities. The master requested to return to Singapore for Singapore Police Coast Guard to conduct a search on board and investigate the incident. At about 0922 hrs, Singapore Police Coast Guard completed their search on board and found no unauthorised personnel on board the ship. Some engine spare parts were found missing. [Category 3]	The crew was safe. Some engine spare parts were reported stolen. The ship deviated back to Singapore.	Ship alarm was raised and the crew mustered. A search on board was conducted by the Singapore Police Coast Guard with no further sighting of the perpetrators. The master reported the incident to Singapore VTIS East and deviated the ship back to Singapore.	Yes The master reported the incident to Singapore VTIS East.	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.

	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	
3.	Target 10 Tug boat Malaysia 188 9826926 Alam 281 Barge	31/7/22 1300 hrs	1.0° 16.85' N 104.0° 8.08' E Approximately 3.7 nm south of Tanjong Setapa, Johor (Malaysia), in the westbound lane of the TSS in the SS. (SOMS)	While underway, six perpetrators were sighted on board the barge and were seen stealing scrap metals from the barge. Ship's alarm was raised and crew mustered. The master reported the incident to VTIS East and requested for assistance to chase the perpetrators from the barge. The master subsequently reported that all perpetrators had left the barge in three small boats heading towards Pulau Batam, Indonesia. No injury was reported. The tug boat & barge were en-route from Kota Kinabalu, East Malaysia to Port Klang, Malaysia. A safety navigational broadcast was initiated. The RSN's MSTF and Singapore Police Coast Guard were notified of the incident. Information of the incident was shared with Malaysian and Indonesian authorities. [Category 4]	The crew was safe. Scrap metals were reported stolen.	The ship alarm was raised and crew mustered. The master requested the VTIS East to chase the perpetrators from the barge. The master reported the incident to Singapore VTIS East.	Yes The master reported the incident to Singapore VTIS East.	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 Malaysian and Indonesian authorities.