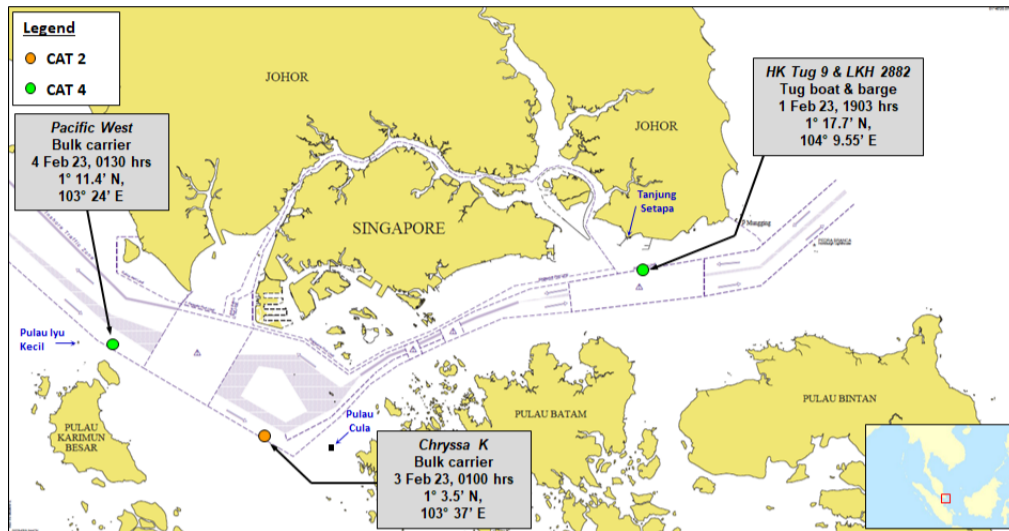


OVERVIEW

Three incidents of armed robbery against ships in Asia (one CAT 2¹ and two CAT 4²) were reported to ReCAAP ISC. All three incidents occurred on board ships while underway in the Singapore Strait on 1 Feb, 3 Feb and 4 Feb. Scrap metal was stolen from the barge on tow in one incident, auxiliary engine parts were stolen from a bulk carrier in the second incident, and nothing was stolen in the third incident. In one of the incidents, the duty oiler was tied, while the crew was not injured in the other two incidents. Details of incidents are shown in table (*).



Factors	Location		
	Singapore Strait		
	Off Tanjung Setapa, Malaysia (1 incident)	Off Pulau Cula, Indonesia (1 incident)	Off Pulau Iyu Kecil, Indonesia (1 incident)
Type of ship	Tug boat & barge	Bulk carrier	Bulk carrier
Date/Time	1 Feb at 1903 hrs	3 Feb at 0100 hrs	4 Feb at 0130 hrs
Number of perpetrators	3 in a small boat	9	4
Weapons	Not stated	Long knives	Not armed
Treatment of crew	No injuries	Duty oiler was tied	No injuries
Significance level	CAT 4	CAT 2	CAT 4
Items stolen	Scrap metal	Auxiliary engine parts	Nothing was stolen

AREA OF CONCERN

The ReCAAP ISC is concerned with the continued occurrence of incidents in the Singapore Strait. With the three incidents reported during this period, a total of **seven** incidents were reported in the Singapore Strait since January 2023. The Centre advises ships to continue to exercise enhanced vigilance when transiting the Singapore Strait; and the littoral States to increase patrols and enforcement in the area.

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

Downgrading of threat level

- The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), after careful consideration of inputs from stakeholders and counterparts with vital involvement in securing the Sulu-Celebes Seas maritime security measure, recommends the downgrading of the threat on the 'Abduction of Crew for ransom in the Sulu-Celebes Seas' from 'POTENTIALLY HIGH' to '**MODERATE**'. The MODERATE threat level implies that '**Incidents are possible to occur but are relatively less severe in nature**'.

Update of ReCAAP ISC Advisory

- As the threat of abduction of crew in the Sulu-Celebes Seas has diminished since January 2020 due to successful military operations and robust law enforcement initiatives, the ReCAAP ISC updates its Advisory to all ships to **consider re-route from the area as an option based on its prerogative**.
- For ships transiting the area, the **ship masters and crew are strongly encouraged to exercise extra vigilance 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 in Picture 1.



1 Philippine Coast Guard District Southwestern Mindanao
Tel: +63 998 585 7972
+63 917 842 8446
VHF: Channel 16 with call-sign "NEPTUNE"
Email: hcgdswwm@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

Picture 1

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ship master and crew are to report all incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships to the nearest coastal State and flag State, referring to the Poster on the *Contact Details for Reporting of Incidents of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia*, exercise vigilance and adopt appropriate preventive measures taking reference from the *Regional Guide 2 to Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia*.

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Contact us at: E: info@recaap.org T: +65 6376 3063 F: +65 6376 3066

* Table at <https://www.recaap.org/resources/ck/files/Number%20of%20Incidents/2023/List%20of%20Incidents%20for%202023.pdf> for details of the incidents.

¹ **CAT (Category) 2** incident is moderately significant. Under this category, the perpetrators are likely to be armed with knives/machetes and in some incidents armed with guns. The crew is threatened or held hostage temporarily and, in some cases, the crew suffered injury and physical violence.

² **CAT (Category) 4** incident is classified as "least significant". Under this category, the perpetrators are not armed, and the crew not injured.