

### OVERVIEW

Three actual incidents of armed robbery against ships (one CAT 2<sup>1</sup>, one CAT 3<sup>2</sup> and one CAT 4<sup>3</sup>) in Asia were reported to ReCAAP ISC. Of the three incidents, one occurred on 24 Aug 23 to a tanker while anchored at Dumai Anchorage, Indonesia. The other two incidents occurred on 14 Oct 23 to a VLCC, and on 16 Oct 23 to a tanker, while they were underway in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS). Details of incidents are shown in table (\*).



Factors	Location	
	Indonesia	SOMS
	Dumai Anchorage, Indonesia (1 incident)	Off Pulau Cula, Indonesia (2 incidents)
Type of ship	Tanker	(1) VLCC (2) Tanker
Date/Time	24 Aug at 0150 hrs	(1) 14 Oct at 0100 hrs (2) 16 Oct at 0310 hrs
Number of perpetrators	3 men	(1) 4 men (2) 5 men
Weapons	Knives	(1) Not stated (2) Knives and Machetes
Treatment of crew	Not injured	(1) Not injured (2) Assaulted
Items stolen	Engine spares	(1) Some engine spares (2) Ship property/stores
Significance level	CAT 3	(1) CAT 4 (2) CAT 2

### AREA OF CONCERN

With the two incidents off Pulau Cula, a total of 59 incidents were reported in the SOMS since January 2023. The ReCAAP ISC is concerned with the continued occurrence of incidents in the SOMS. The Centre advises ships to continue to exercise enhanced vigilance when transiting SOMS; and the littoral States to increase patrols and enforcement in the area.

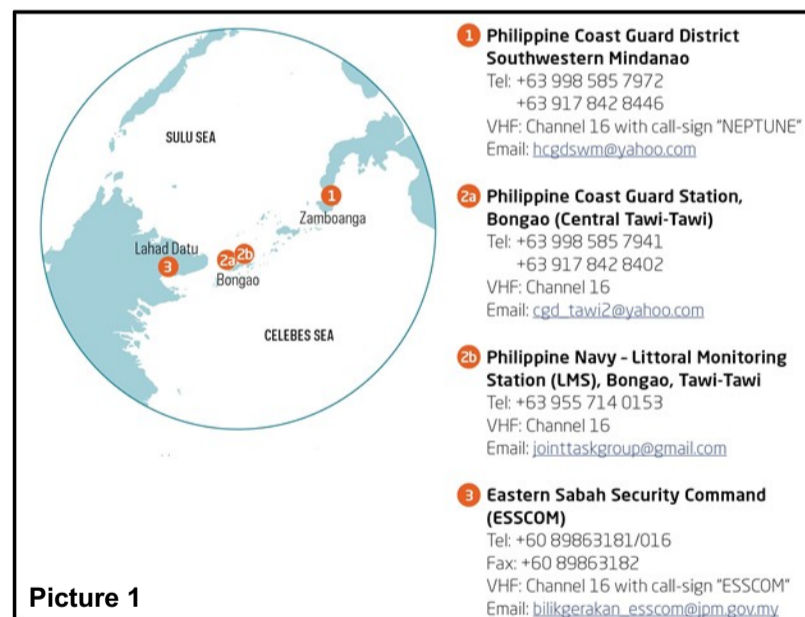
### SITUATION OF ABDUCTION OF CREW IN THE SULU-CELEBES SEAS AND WATERS OFF EASTERN SABAH

#### 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.



Picture 1

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Ship master and crew are to report all incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships to the nearest coastal State RCC and flag State, referring to the Poster on *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: <a href="mailto:info@recaap.org">info@recaap.org</a>	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.

<sup>1</sup> CAT (Category) 2 incident is 'moderately significant' in nature. 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.

<sup>2</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>3</sup> CAT (Category) 4 incident is classified as 'least significant' in nature. Under this category, the perpetrators are not armed, and the crew not injured.