

### OVERVIEW

**Two** incidents of armed robbery against ships in Asia (both CAT 4<sup>1</sup> incidents) were reported to ReCAAP ISC. The incident on 20 Mar occurred on board a tanker while anchored at Belawan Anchorage, Indonesia. The perpetrators managed to board the ship through the anchor chain. The alarm was raised and the perpetrators escaped. Nothing was stolen. The incident on 22 Apr occurred on board a towed barge in the Singapore Strait (SS). Scrap metal was stolen from the barge. In both incidents, the crew members were safe. Details of incidents are shown in table (\*).



Factors	Location	
	Indonesia Belawan Anchorage (1 incident)	Straits of Malacca and Singapore Off Tanjung Ayam, Malaysia (1 incident)
Type of ship	Oil/Chemical/Gas Tanker	Tug boat and Barge
Date/Time	20 March at 0215 hrs	22 April at 0930 hrs
Number of perpetrators	2 perpetrators	Unknown
Weapons carried by perpetrators	Not stated	Not stated
Treatment of crew	No injuries	No Injuries
Significance level	CAT 4	CAT 4
Items stolen	Nothing was stolen	Scrap metal

### AREA OF CONCERN

The ReCAAP ISC is concerned with the continued occurrence of incidents in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS). With this incident, a total of 24 incidents were reported in the SOMS since January 2023. Of these, 23 incidents occurred in the SS, and one incident in the Malacca Strait (MS). 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 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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\* 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) 4 incident is classified as "least significant" in nature. Under this category, the perpetrators are not armed, and the crew not injured.