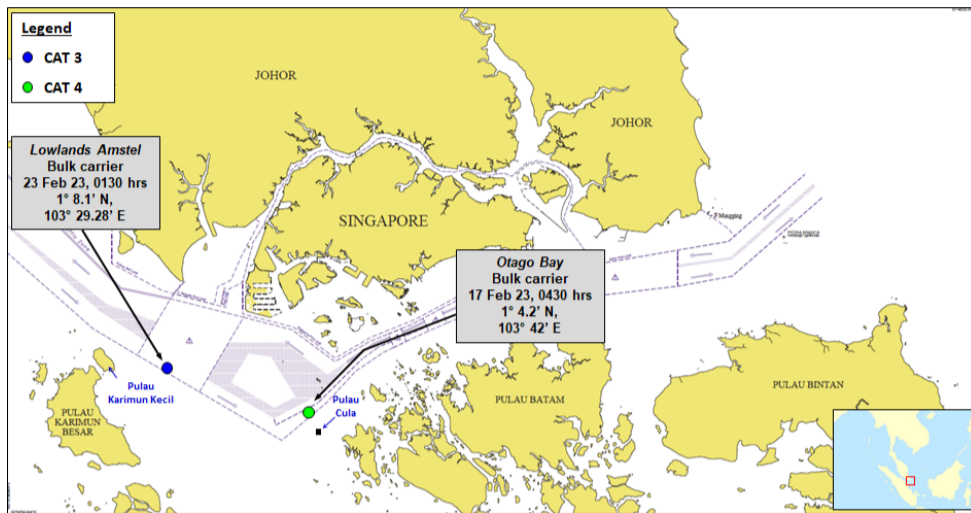


OVERVIEW

Two incidents of armed robbery against ships in Asia (one CAT 3¹ incident and one CAT 4² incident) were reported to ReCAAP ISC. Both incidents occurred on board bulk carriers while underway in the Singapore Strait. The perpetrators were armed with knives in the CAT 3 incident, and they threw spanners at the crew, resulting in minor injury sustained by the motorman and 3rd engineer. Scrap items were stolen from the ship. In the CAT 4 incident, there was unauthorized entry into the engine room and auxiliary engine spare parts were stolen. The crew members were not injured during the incident. Details of incidents are shown in table (*).



Factors	Location	
	Singapore Strait	
	Off Pulau Cula, Indonesia (1 incident)	Off Pulau Karimun Kecil, Indonesia (1 incident)
Type of ship	Bulk carrier	Bulk carrier
Date/Time	17 Feb at 0430 hrs	23 Feb at 0130 hrs
Number of perpetrators	Unknown	6 perpetrators
Weapons	Not stated	Knives
Treatment of crew	No injuries	Motorman sustained injury to hand & 3 rd engineer with minor injury to head
Significance level	CAT 4	CAT 3
Items stolen	Auxiliary engine spare parts	Scrap items

AREA OF CONCERN

The ReCAAP ISC is concerned with the continued occurrence of incidents in the Singapore Strait. With these two incidents, a total of 12 incidents were reported in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS) 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.



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.

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 injured.