

OVERVIEW

Two incidents of armed robbery against ships in Asia (both CAT 4¹ incidents) were reported to ReCAAP ISC. One incident occurred on board a bulk carrier while anchored at Phu My Anchorage, Vietnam, on 19 May. Paint were stolen from the ship. The other incident occurred to a bulk carrier while underway in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS) on 26 May. One breathing apparatus set was stolen. The crew members were safe in both incidents. Details of incidents are shown in table (*).



Factors	Location	
	Singapore Strait	Vietnam
	Off Pulau Iyu Kecil, Indonesia (1 incident)	Phu My Anchorage, Vietnam (1 incident)
Type of ship	Bulk carrier	Bulk carrier
Date/Time	26 May at 0207 hrs	19 May at 2345 hrs
Number of perpetrators	Not known	Not known 1 small boat
Weapons	Not stated	Not stated
Treatment of crew	No injuries	No Injuries
Significance level	CAT 4	CAT 4
Items stolen	One breathing apparatus set	100 litres of paint

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 occurred on 26 May, a total of 41 incidents were reported in the SOMS since January 2023. 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.



1 Philippine Coast Guard District Southwestern Mindanao
Tel: +63 998 585 7972
+63 917 842 8446
VHF: Channel 16 with call-sign "NEPTUNE"
Email: hcgdsww@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) 4** incident is classified as "least significant". Under this category, the perpetrators are not armed, and the crew not injured.