



Special Report
on
Situation Update
off the Islands of
Anambas, Natuna and Mangkai

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SR 02/2010

Incidents on the Rise off the Islands of Anambas, Natuna and Mangkai

1. Between January 2010 and June 2010, there has been an increase in the number of incidents in the vicinity of the islands of Anambas, Natuna and Mangkai in the South China Sea (SCS) involving ships while underway. A total of 11 incidents comprising nine actual incidents and two attempted incident were reported in the area. Of the 11 incidents, seven incidents (comprising six actual incidents and one attempted incident) occurred off the islands of Anambas and Mangkai, and four incidents (comprising three actual incidents and one attempted incident) occurred off the islands of Natuna and Subi Besar.

Analysis of Incidents

2. The objective of this report is to inform the maritime community of the heightened piracy/sea robbery activities in the vicinity off the islands of Anambas, Natuna and Mangkai in the SCS, and to provide value-added analysis of the situation there.

3. For purpose of analysis, this report focuses on two main locations: the area of concern, i.e. the vicinity of the islands of Anambas and Mangkai; and the area with resurgence of incidents, i.e. the vicinity of the islands of Natuna and Subi Besar. The analysis focuses on three key areas namely, the cluster of incidents, the modus operandi of the pirates/robbers and the susceptible period of year that the incidents occurred.

Incidents in the Vicinity of the Islands of Anambas and Mangkai

4. Since 2008, there has been an increase in the number of incidents off Pulau Anambas, particularly in waters west of Pulau Mangkai extending from Damar, which covers the recommended transit route for vessels heading southeast to the Singapore Straits or vessels heading northwest (refer map). Incidents reported off Anambas Islands mostly occurred along the recommended transit corridor of the SCS. Prior to 2008, two incidents were reported in the area in 2005 and similarly two incidents were also reported in 2007. No incident was reported in 2006.



5. During the period January to December 2008, a total of seven incidents comprising all actual incidents were reported in this region. The number increased to 11 actual incidents in 2009. From January 2010 to 16 June 2010, a total of seven incidents comprising six actual and one attempted incidents had been reported (refer table below).

Period	2008		2009		2010*	
	Actual	Attempted	Actual	Attempted	Actual	Attempted
January to December	7	0	11	0	--	--
January to June	4	0	7	0	6	1

* Data till 16 June 2010

Cluster of Incidents

6. Comparing the incidents reported in 2008, 2009 and 2010, the ReCAAP ISC notes that incidents occurred in 2008 and 2010 were relatively more scattered over a larger area compared to incidents occurred in 2009. See **Annex A** on the cluster of incidents in 2008-2010. In 2008, the incidents involving *Red Wing* and *Medbothnia* on 4 June 2008 occurred at about 38 nm southwest of Pulau Mangkai and about 19 nm northwest of Pulau Mangkai respectively. The most recent incident involving *Trans Pacific* on 12 June 2010 occurred at about 45 nm north of Pulau Mangkai, the furthest incident from Pulau Mangkai reported in the three-year period.

Modus Operandi

7. Although not conclusive, detailed analysis of the incidents indicates the following modus operandi of the pirates/ robbers:

a. All incidents occurred while the ships were under way in the SCS, some in proximity to the islands. The robbers were usually armed with knives, came alongside the victim ship during hours of darkness. They generally used speed boats and boarded vessels from quarters (probably approaching from aft being the blind sector) using rope with grapnel. Most were CAT 2 (moderately significant) incidents which reported loss of cash and properties including the crew's personal belongings.

b. The pirates/robbers did not inflict harm on the crew and escaped after taking cash and property from the crew. Of the 25 incidents reported during 2008-2010, 14 incidents reported that the crew was assaulted, threatened or held hostage until the pirates/robbers made off with their loot.



c. In most incidents, the pirates/robbers operated in groups of seven to eight. Only one incident involving *Iller Trader* reported the involvement of up to 12 robbers.

8. Refer to **Annex B** on the detailed analysis of the modus operandi of incidents reported during 2008-2010.

Susceptible Periods

9. An analysis of incidents reported in 2008-2010 shows that most incidents occurred during the periods between April and June, and between September and November of the year. This somewhat implies that the sea state and weather condition during these periods of the year are conducive to attacks while the ships were underway in the area.

10. In addition, it is noted that incidents tend to occur on consecutive days, on alternate days and even two incidents on the same day. Subject to further verification and investigation, it appears that a mother ship may be used as it was only logical and cost effective to attack more than one ship each time the mother ship was launched. Incidents reported so far indicated that the maximum number of attacks was over a period of three days with three ships being attacked one after another. Refer to **Annex C**.

11. Given that the incidents occurred on consecutive days and the close proximity of the incidents with each other, it appears that the same group of pirates/robbers was likely to be involved in the incidents.

Incidents in the Vicinity of the Islands of Natuna and Subi Besar

12. There has been a resurgence of incidents reported off Pulau Natuna and Pulau Subi Besar. Four incidents (comprising three actual incidents and one attempted incident) have been reported in the area between 10 June 2010 and 16 June 2010 (refer to map in **Annex D**). The incidents involving *JK Galaxy* and *Okrim Leader* occurred within an interval of two hours on 10 June 2010 followed by incidents onboard *Kota Damai* on 15 June 2010 and onboard *Kota Dahlia* on 16 June 2010. No incidents were reported off Pulau Subi Besar in 2008 and 2009. The last known incident, an attempted one was reported in May 2006.



Recommendations by ReCAAP ISC

13. With the heightened piracy/sea robbery activity off the islands of Anambas, Natuna and Mangkai, the ReCAAP ISC recommends that vessels transiting through the vicinity to adopt adequate anti-boarding measures, especially at the quarters. Enhanced watch-keeping is also recommended in the aft sector/otherwise blind sector to enable early detection of pirates/robbers. Vessels may utilize CCTV cameras to monitor activities on the poop deck from the watch-keeping post.

14. Early detection of a possible boarding is the most effective deterrent measure. In addition the crew should be adequately exercised on anti-piracy/sea robbery measures as stipulated in guidebook on Industry Best Management Practices.

15. With the resurgence of incidents off Pulau Subi Besar, the ReCAAP ISC advised ship masters to adopt precautionary measures and heighten vigilance when transiting the area.

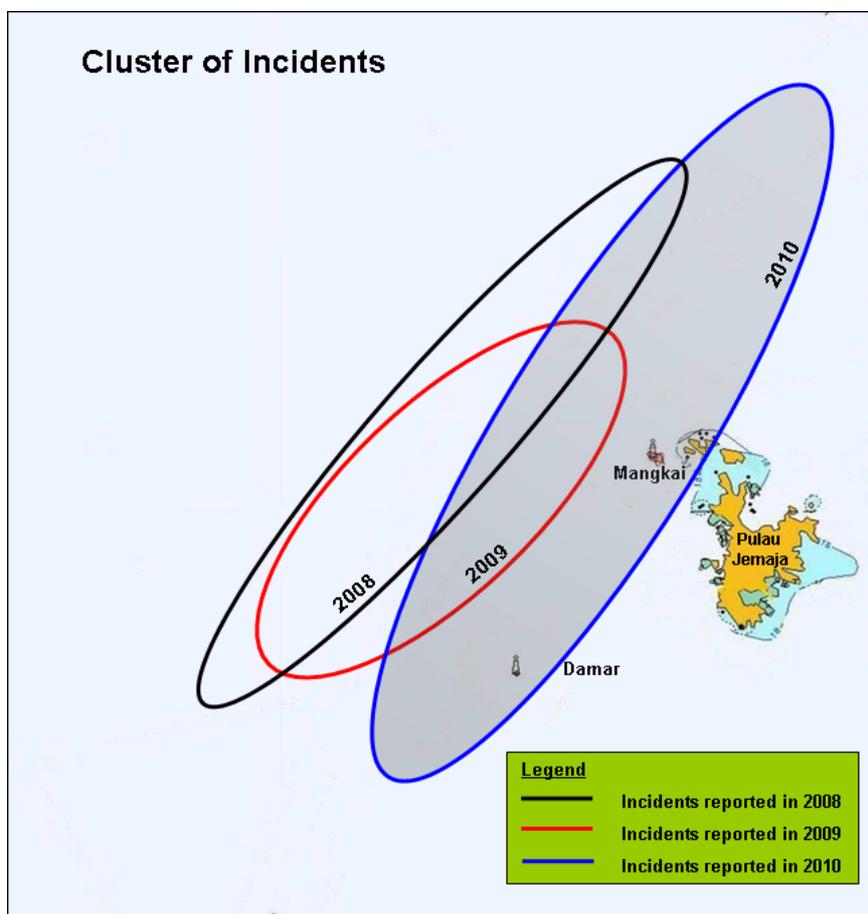
16. The ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre strongly urges ship masters to report all incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships to the Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) of the coastal State immediately. Ship owners and operators are to report the incidents to the ReCAAP Focal Points. The contact details of the ReCAAP Focal Points are shown in **Annex E**.



Annex A

Cluster of Incidents Reported in 2008, 2009 and 2010

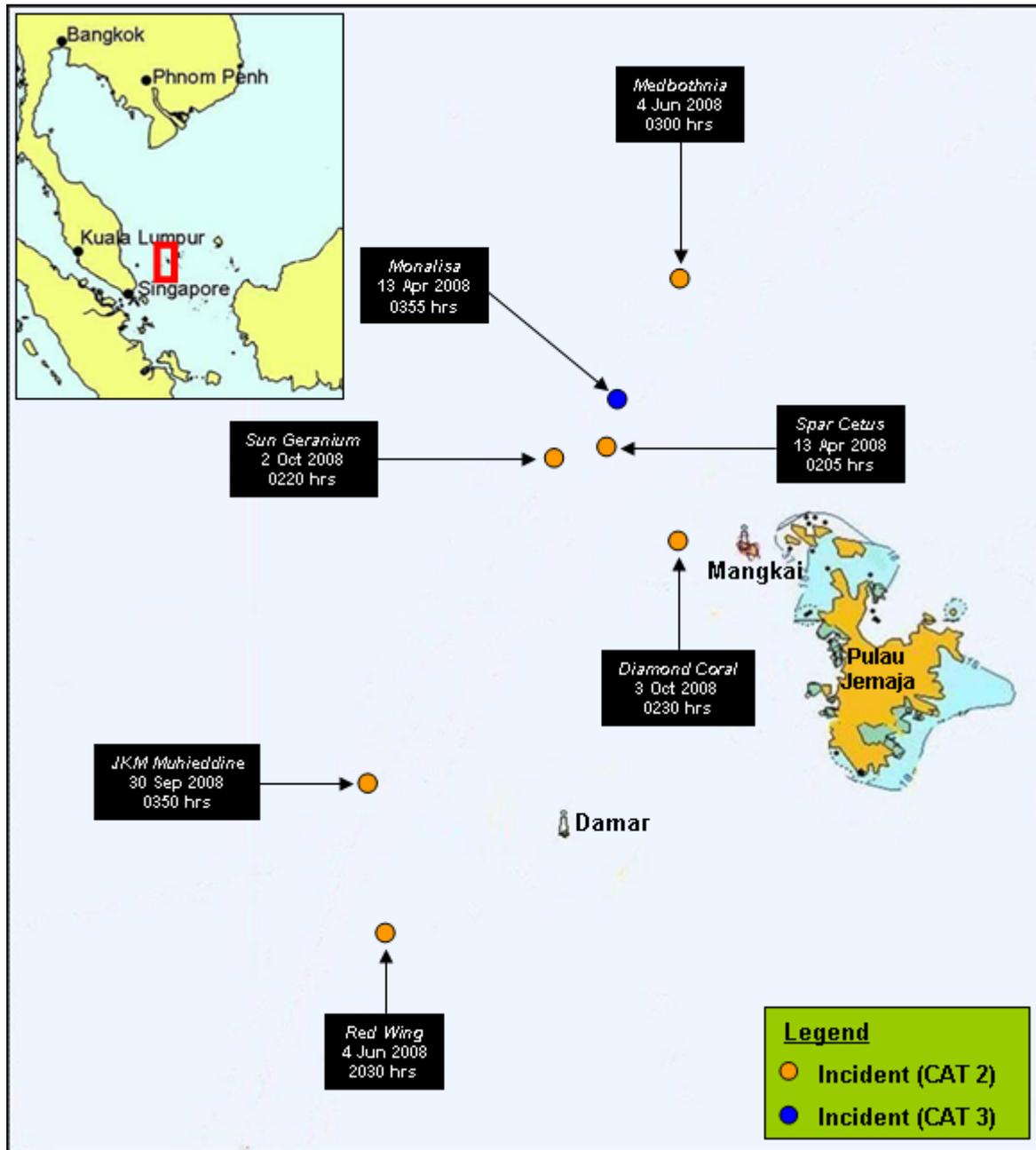
1. Comparing the incidents reported during 2008, 2009 and 2010, the ReCAAP ISC notes that incidents reported in 2008 and 2010 were more scattered and occurred over a larger area compared to incidents occurred in 2009. Refer to diagram below on the cluster of incidents reported in 2008-2010. The sustainability of the boat used by the pirates/robbers in support of the attack could be one of the key considerations in the area of operation carried out by the pirates/robbers.



Broad Cluster of Incidents (2008-2010)

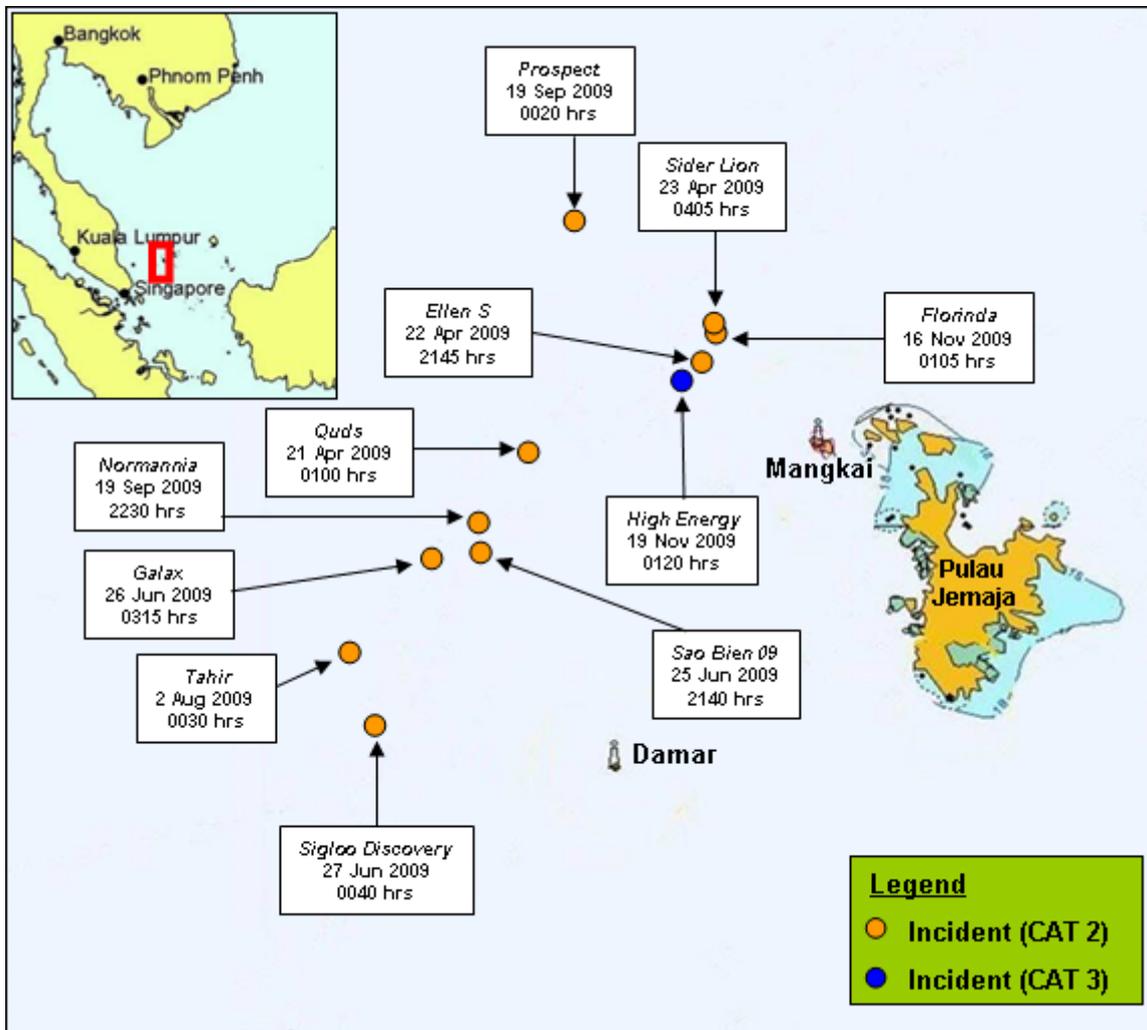


Location of Incidents Involving Vessels Underway in the Vicinity of the Islands of Anambas and Mangkai



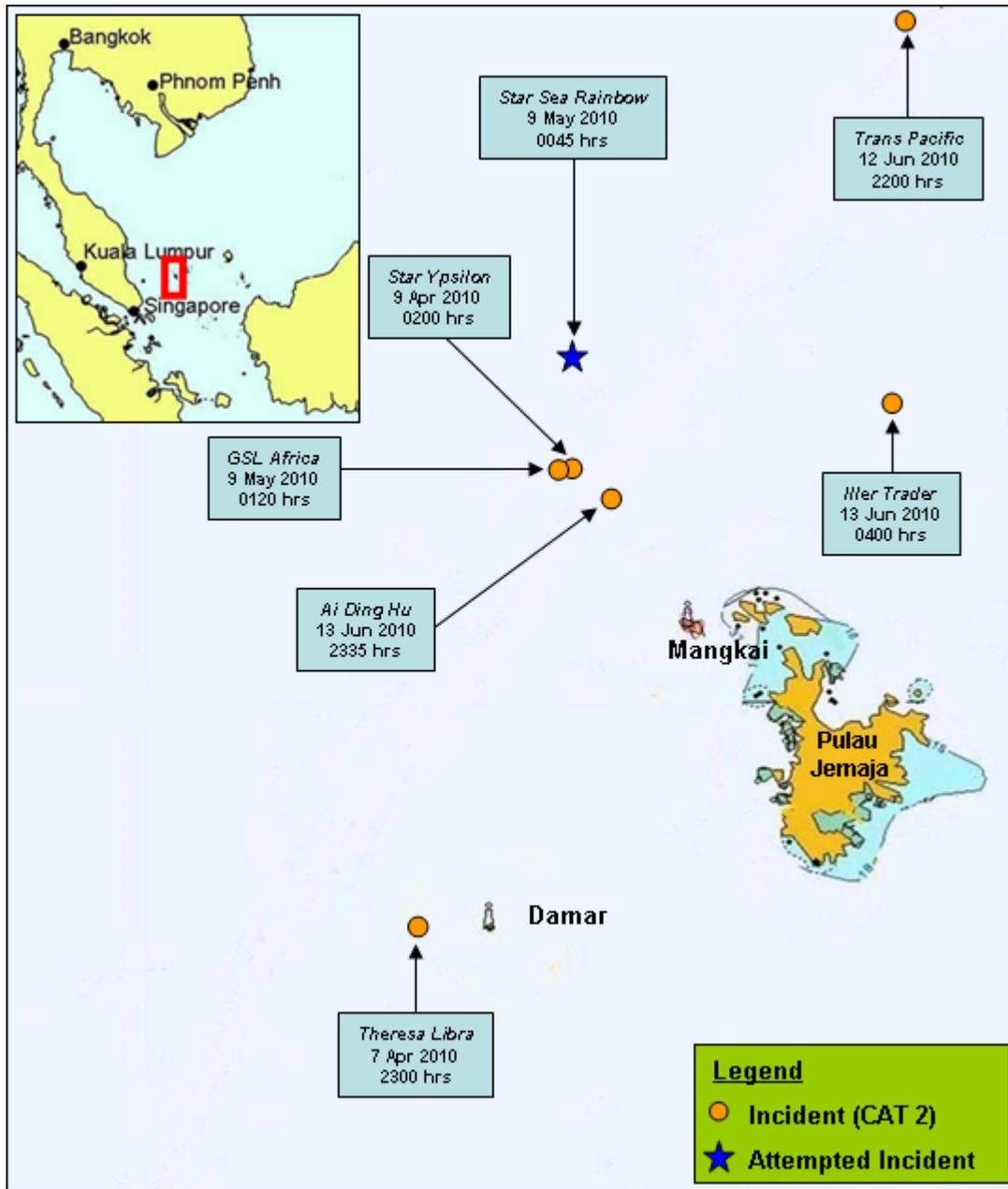
Location of Incidents in 2008





Location of Incidents in 2009





Location of Incidents in 2010



Annex B

Modus Operandi of pirates/robbers operating off the Islands of Anambas and Mangkai

1. From January 2008 to June 2010, 25 incidents of piracy and armed robbery were reported to occur off the islands of Anambas and Mangkai.
2. All incidents occurred while the ships were under way, some in proximity with the islands. The robbers were normally armed with knives, some with iron bars, axe, hammers, iron rods, pipes (guns were used only in one incident), came alongside the victim ship during hours of darkness. 13 out of 25 incidents occurred between 0200 hrs and 0405 hrs, three other incidents that occurred between 2030 hrs and 2145 hrs, and nine incidents occurred between 2200 hrs and 0120 hrs. Of the 25 incidents, one was an attempted incident, 24 were actual incidents. Of the 24 actual incidents, 21 were CAT 2 incidents and three were CAT 3 incidents.
3. 90% of the incidents involved tankers, bulk carriers and container ships. Of the 25 incidents, six involved chemical tankers, eight involved bulk carriers, five involved container ships, three involved LPG tankers, one involved general cargo ship, one involved product tanker and one involved a tug boat towing a barge. No conclusion can be drawn on the type of ships being attacked as the mere density of such vessels that transit through this area would make them vulnerable. The attacks were more opportunistic in nature.
4. Groups of between 5-8 robbers were involved in all but three incidents. Ten out of 25 incidents involved groups of five to six robbers while another 12 incidents involved groups of seven to eight robbers. There were three incidents involved more than eight robbers: *Florinda* involved 10 robbers and *Spar Cetus* and *Iller Trader* reported the involvement of up to 12 robbers.
5. Of the 25 incidents, 23 resulted in the theft of cash, laptops, personal camera, mobile phones etc. Their modus operandi is that they came alongside the victim ship, boarded the ship, proceeded to the cabin of the ship master, officers and engineer and took their personal belongings, namely cash, laptops, etc. In three of the 25 incidents, it was reported that they took about 15 to 20 minutes to board the ship and rob the crew before escaping in their speed boats. In two incidents involving *Tahir* on 2 August 2009 and *High Energy* on 19 November 2009 nothing was stolen.



Annex C

Susceptible Periods

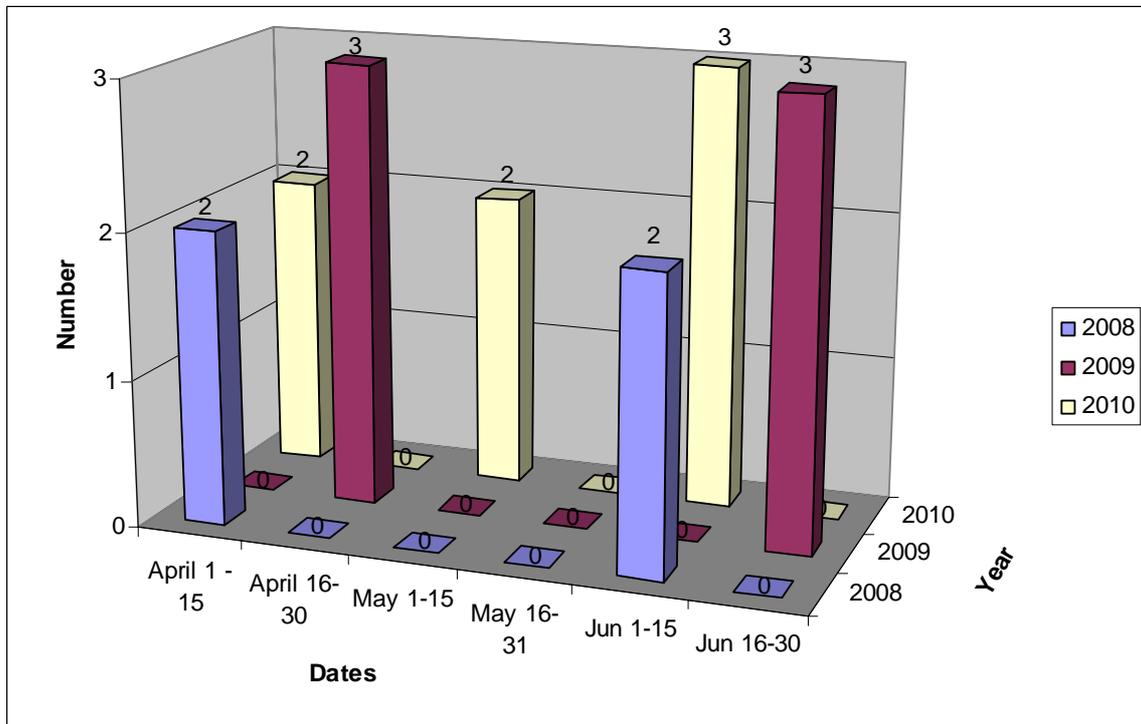
1. Although not conclusive, it appears that there is a pattern regarding the occurrence of incidents in this area. It is observed that Incidents did not occur 'one-off', but seems to occur repeatedly.

a. Of the seven incidents reported in 2008, two occurred in April 2008, two in June 2008, one in September 2008 and two in October 2008. Between January and December 2009, three occurred in April 2009, three occurred in June 2009, one in August 2009, two in September 2009 and two in November 2009. Between January and June 2010, two occurred in April 2010, two occurred in May 2010 and three occurred in June 2010. It is therefore gathered that for the three years, incidents mostly occurred during April to June, and September to November.

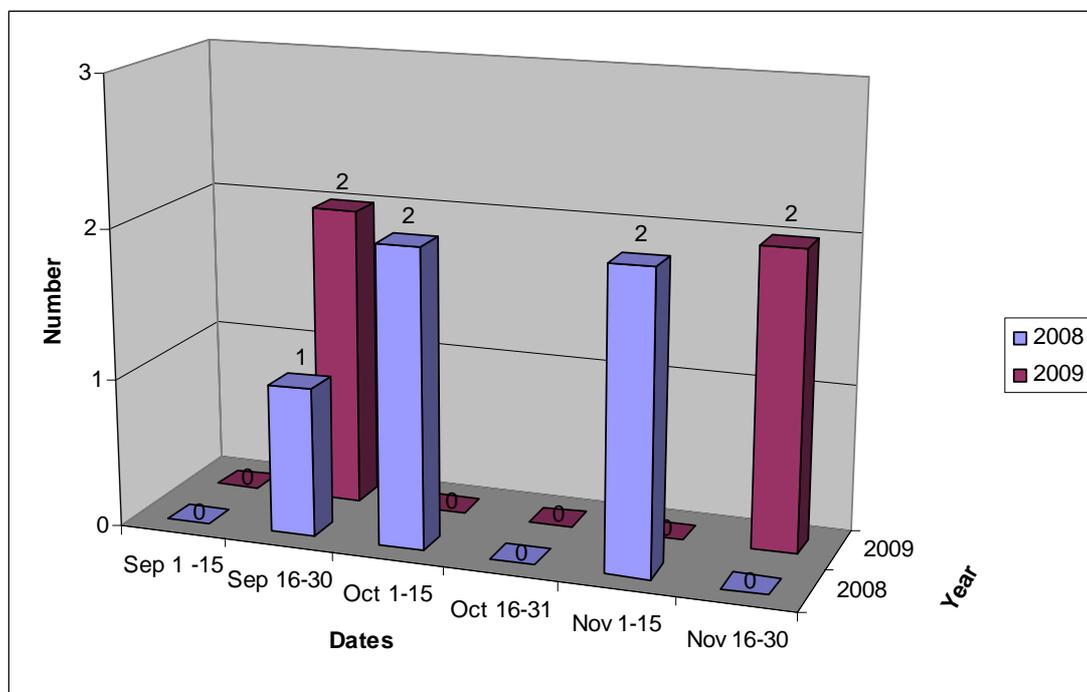
b. The ReCAAP ISC notes that incidents mostly occurred one after another on consecutive days or alternate days. This was evidence throughout 2008, 2009 and 2010. In 2008, two incidents were reported on 13 April 2008, two incidents on 4 June 2008, three incidents on 30 September 2008, 2 October 2008 and 3 October 2008. Similar observations were made in 2009 where three incidents were reported on 21, 22 and 23 April 2009, three incidents on 25, 26 and 27 June 2009, one incident on 2 August 2009, two incidents on 19 September 2009 and two incidents on 16 November 2009 and 19 November 2009. In 2010, two incidents were reported on 7 and 9 April 2010, two incidents on 9 May 2010, and three incidents on 12 and 13 June 2010.

2. Given that the incidents occurred on consecutive days and the close proximity of the incidents, it appears that the same group of pirates/robbers was likely to be involved in the incidents.





Incidents Reported during April-June of 2008-2010



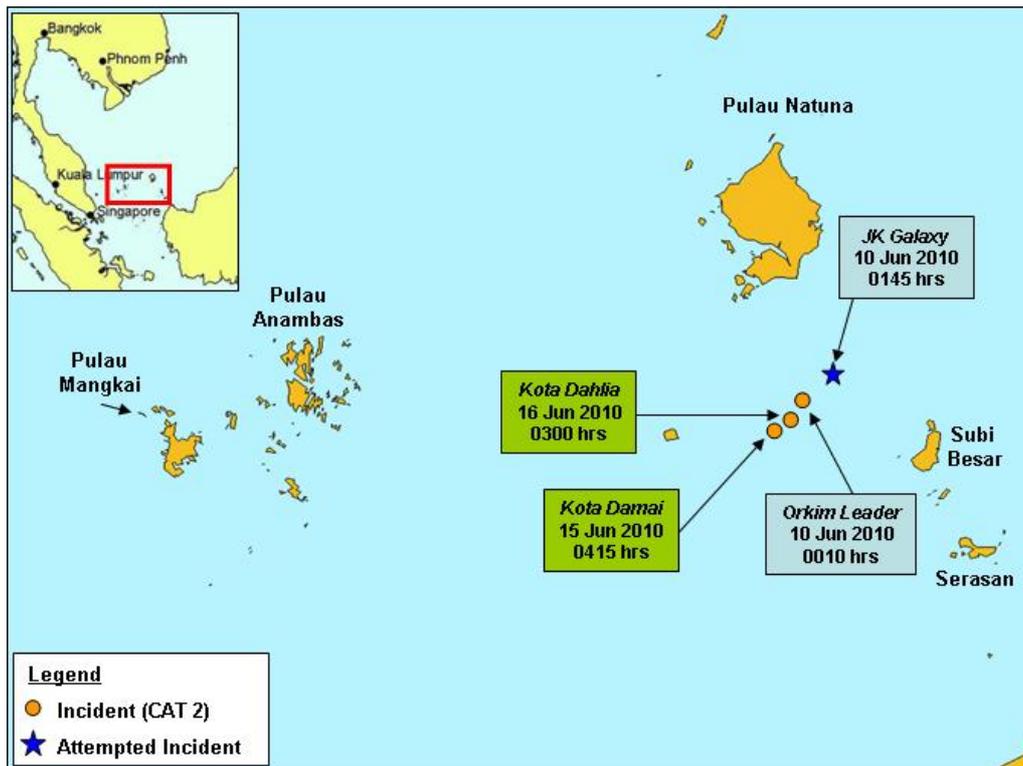
Incidents Reported during September- November of 2008-2009



Annex D

Incidents reported off Pulau Subi Besar

1. The location of the incidents is shown in map below.



Approximate location of Incidents

Modus Operandi of Robbers

2. A closer analysis of the four incidents indicated the following modus operandi of the pirates / robbers:

- a. All incidents occurred while the ships were underway off Pulau Subi Besar, Indonesia.
- b. The robbers were armed with long knives and came alongside the victim ship during hours of darkness. Two incidents reported use of speed boats to board the vessels from quarters using rope with grapnel.



- c. Two out of four incidents occurred between 0001 hrs and 0200 hrs while two incidents occurred during 0201hrs to 0500 hrs.
- d. All the three actual incidents were CAT 2 (moderately significant) incidents and reported loss of ship's and crew property mainly cash, crew's jewellery and electronic items.
- e. The robbers operated in groups of six to eight men. One incident (*Kota Damai*) reported involvement of eight men; it also reported that they wore black shirts, black trousers and winter caps, probably to camouflage themselves in the dark surroundings.
- f. The robbers did not inflict any harm on the crew.



Annex E

Contact Details of ReCAAP Focal Points / Contact Point

S/No	Country & Agency In Charged	Point of Contact	
		Phone No	Fax Number
People's Republic of Bangladesh			
1.	Department of Shipping E-mail: dosdgdbd@btbb.net.bd	+88-02-9554206	+88-02-7168363
Brunei Darussalam			
2.	National Maritime Coordination Centre (NMCC) Email: P2MK@jpm.gov.bn	+67-3871-4440 +67-3717-6322	+67-3245-5916
Kingdom of Cambodia			
3.	Merchant Marine Department E-mail: mmd@online.com.kh	+85-5-2388-1846	+85-5-2388-2968
People's Republic of China			
4.	China Maritime Search and Rescue Centre (Beijing) Email: cnmrcc@msa.gov.cn	+86-10-6529-2218 +86-10-6529-2219 +86-10-6529-2221	+86-10-6529-2245
	Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (Hong Kong) Email: hkmrcc@mardep.gov.hk	+85-2-2233-7999 +85-2-2233-7998	+85-2-2541-7714
Republic of India			
5.	MRCC (Mumbai) Coast Guard Region (West) Mumbai – India Email: icgmrcc_mumbai@mtnl.net.in	+91-22-2437-6133 +91-22-2438-8065	+91-22-2433-3727 +91-22-2431-6558



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Japan			
6.	Japan Coast Guard (JCG) Ops Centre Email : op@kaiho.mlit.go.jp	+81-3-3591-9812 +81-3-3591-6361	+81-3-3581-2853
Republic of Korea			
7.	Ministry of Land, Transport and Maritime Affairs (MLTM) Operations Centre Email: piracy@gicomsgo.kr	+82-2-2110-8864 +82-2-2110-8865 +82-2-2110-8866 +82-2-2110-8867	+82-2-503-7333
Lao People's Democratic Republic			
8.	Department of Foreign Relations Ministry of Public Security Email: keomps@yahoo.com	+85-6-2121-2505	+85-6-2121-2505 +85-6-2121-2547
Union of Myanmar			
9.	MRCC Ayeyarwaddy (Myanmar Navy) Email: mrcc.yangon@mptmail.com.mm	+95-313-1650	+95-1-202-4117
Kingdom of Norway			
10.	Norwegian Maritime Directorate Email: morten.alsaker.lossius@sjofartsdir.no	+47-5274-5130 +47-5274-5000	+47-5274-5001
Republic of the Philippines			
11.	Philippine Coast Guard PCG Action Centre-MRCC (Manila) PCG Hot Text Email: cq2@coastguard.gov.ph pcg_cq2@yahoo.com	+63-2-527-3877 +63-2-527-8481 to 89 (ext: 6136/6137) +63-917-724-3682 (Text Hotline)	+63-2-527-3877
Republic of Singapore			
12.	Maritime Port Authority of Singapore Port Operations Control Centre (POCC) Email: pocc@mpa.gov.sg	+65-6226-5539 +65-6325-2493	+65-6227-9971 +65-6224-5776



Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka			
13.	Sri Lanka Navy Operations Centre Email: nhgsoo@navy.lk	+94-1-1244-5368	+94-1-1244-9718
Kingdom of Thailand			
14.	Royal Thai Navy Operations Centre Email: nidint@navy.mi.th	+66-2475-4643	+66-2466-1382
Socialist Republic of Viet Nam			
15.	Vietnam Marine Police Email : phongghqtcbsb@vnn.vn vietnamfocalpoint@yahoo.com.vn	+84-4-3355-4378	+84-4-3355-4363

Correct as at 7 June 2010

