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# MONTHLY REPORT

PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY  
AGAINST SHIPS IN ASIA

02  
FEBRUARY 2023



*ENHANCING REGIONAL COOPERATION...*

# INCIDENTS OF PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY AGAINST SHIPS IN ASIA - FEBRUARY 2023



## OVERVIEW

In February 2023, nine incidents of armed robbery against ships<sup>1</sup> (occurred in internal waters, archipelagic waters and territorial seas) were reported in Asia. No incident of piracy<sup>2</sup> (occurred on high seas) was reported. Of the nine incidents, eight incidents were reported in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS), which remains an area of concern. The number of incidents reported in SOMS accounts for 75% (12 of 16 incidents) of the total number of incidents in Asia reported during January-February 2023.

There continues to be no incident of abduction of crew for ransom in the Sulu-Celebes Seas and waters off Eastern Sabah in February 2023. The last known incident occurred on 17 Jan 20. As the threat of abduction of crew has reduced, the Philippine Coast Guard recommends downgrading the threat from 'potentially high' to 'moderate' which implies that 'incidents are possible to occur but are relatively less severe in nature'. The ReCAAP ISC has accordingly updated its Advisory to all ships to consider re-route from the area as an option.

## FEBRUARY 2023

### NUMBER OF INCIDENTS

In February 2023, nine incidents (all actual incidents<sup>3</sup>) of armed robbery against ships were reported in Asia. The incidents were verified and reported to the ReCAAP ISC by ReCAAP Focal Points. Refer to the Appendix on pages 21-26 of this report for the '*Description of incidents - February 2023*'.

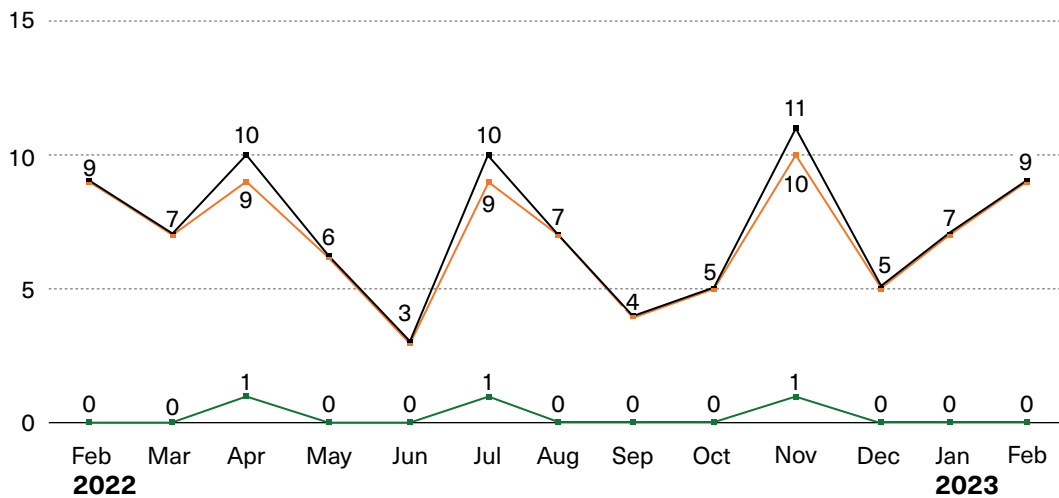
Graph 1 shows the number of incidents reported monthly from February 2022 to February 2023. The number of incidents each month has fluctuated over the 13-month period, between three incidents (lowest) and 11 incidents (highest).

From a month-on-month comparison, the number of incidents in February 2023 is the same as that in February 2022, but higher than the preceding month January 2023.

1 Definition of 'armed robbery against ships' is in accordance with the Code of Practice for the Investigation of Crimes of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Assembly Resolution A.1025 (26). Refer to Appendix on page 16 of this report for detailed definition.

2 Definition of 'piracy' is in accordance with Article 101 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS 82). Refer to Appendix on page 16 of this report for detailed definition.

3 Actual incidents are incidents where perpetrators boarded the ship, regardless of whether they stole items from the crew or items found on board ship.



Graph 1 – Number of incidents (February 2022-February 2023)

■ Total ■ Actual ■ Attempted

## STATUS OF SHIPS

Of the nine incidents reported in February 2023, eight incidents occurred on board ships while underway and one incident on board ship at anchor.

## SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL OF INCIDENTS

To provide a qualitative perspective of the incidents, the ReCAAP ISC classifies each actual incident into one of the four categories to determine its significance level (CAT 1 being most severe incident, CAT 2 moderately severe, CAT 3 less severe and CAT 4 least severe). Refer to the Appendix on pages 16-17 of this report on the '*Methodology in classifying incidents*' for the description of each category.

Of the nine actual incidents reported in February 2023, one was a CAT 2<sup>4</sup> incident, two were CAT 3<sup>5</sup> incidents and six were CAT 4<sup>6</sup> incidents.

**CAT 2.** The CAT 2 incident occurred on board a bulk carrier while underway off Pulau Cula (Indonesia), in the eastbound lane of the Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) in the Singapore Strait (SS). Nine perpetrators armed with long knives were sighted in the engine room. The duty oiler was tied but later managed to escape and raised the alarm. The perpetrators escaped after the alarm was raised. A search on board the ship was conducted, and reported some auxiliary engine parts were stolen.

4 **CAT 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.

5 **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.

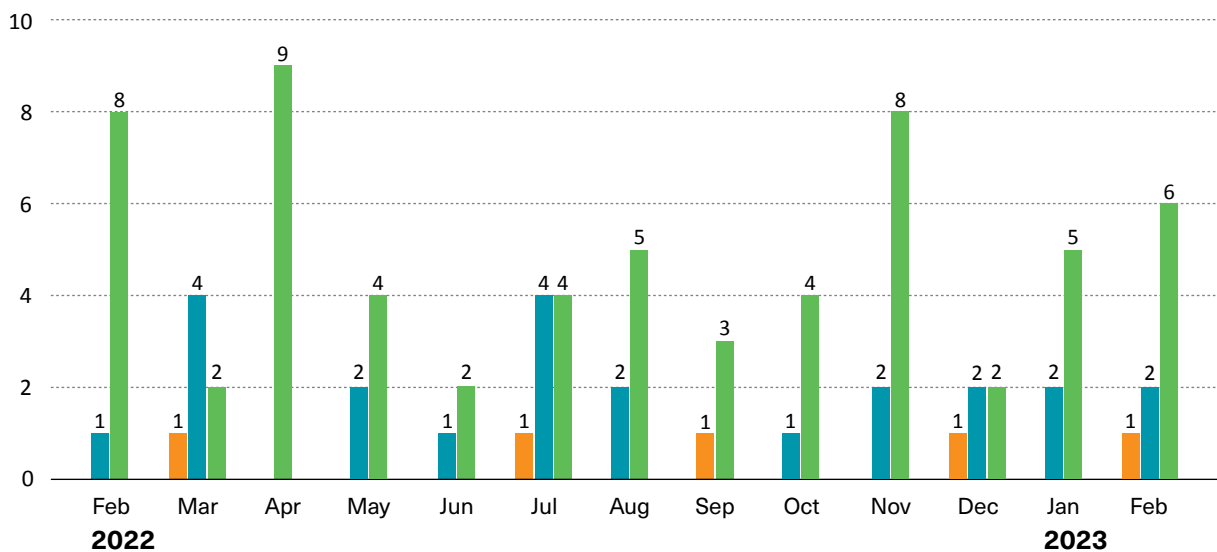
6 **CAT (Category) 4** incident is classified as "least significant" in nature. Under this category, the perpetrators are not armed, and the crew not injured.

**CAT 3.** The two CAT 3 incidents occurred on board bulk carriers while underway in the precautionary area of the TSS in the SS. The incidents occurred off Nongsa Point, Pulau Batam (Indonesia) and off Pulau Karimun Kecil (Indonesia). The incidents involved perpetrators who were armed with knives. In one of the incidents, the perpetrators were sighted in the vicinity of the engine room by the motorman and 3<sup>rd</sup> engineer. The crew sustained minor injuries when the perpetrators threw spanners at them. The perpetrators escaped with some scrap items. In the other incident, the perpetrators were sighted in the engine room. The alarm was raised and the perpetrators escaped. The crew was not injured and nothing was stolen.

**CAT 4.** Of the six CAT 4 incidents, one incident occurred on board a ship while anchored at Panjang Anchorage, Indonesia; and five incidents on board ships while underway in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS). Of the five incidents in the SOMS, four incidents occurred in the Singapore Strait and one incident in the Malacca Strait. Some auxiliary engine spares were stolen in one incident, scrap metals stolen in two incidents and nothing was stolen in the other two incidents. The crew was not injured in all six incidents.

As in past incidents, majority of the incidents were CAT 4 incidents. This accounts for 67% of the number of actual incidents (six of nine) reported in February 2023. In CAT 4 incidents, perpetrators are not armed and crew not injured.

Chart 1 shows the significance level of incidents reported month-on-month from February 2022 to February 2023.



**Chart 1 – Significance level of incidents (February 2022-February 2023)**

■ CAT 2   ■ CAT 3   ■ CAT 4

## LOCATION OF INCIDENTS

The location of the nine incidents reported in February 2023 is shown in Map 1.



Map 1 – Location of incidents in February 2023

● CAT 2 ● CAT 3 ● CAT 4

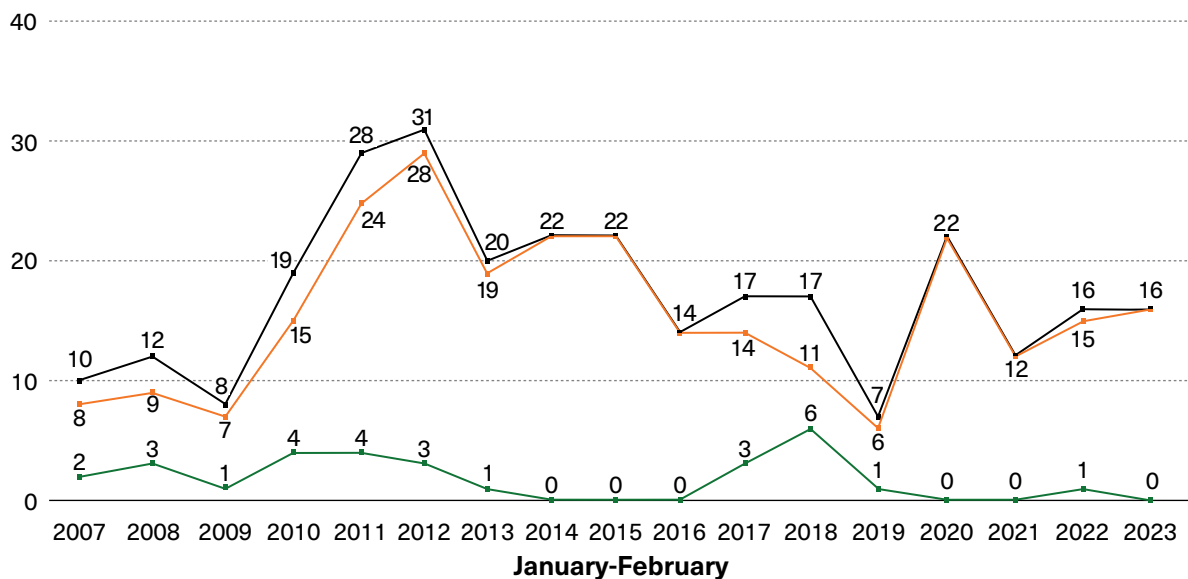
- |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <p><b>1</b> <i>HK Tug 9 &amp; LKH 2882</i><br/>Tug boat &amp; barge<br/>1 Feb 23, 1903 hrs<br/>1° 17.7' N,<br/>104° 9.55' E</p> | <p><b>2</b> <i>Chryssa K</i><br/>Bulk carrier<br/>3 Feb 23, 0100 hrs<br/>1° 3.5' N,<br/>103° 37' E</p>  | <p><b>3</b> <i>Pacific West</i><br/>Bulk carrier<br/>4 Feb 23, 0130 hrs<br/>1° 11.4' N,<br/>103° 24' E</p>        | <p><b>4</b> <i>HK Tug 2 &amp; LKH 3883</i><br/>Tug boat &amp; barge<br/>8 Feb 23, 1730 hrs<br/>1° 12.02' N,<br/>103° 52.4' E</p> |
| <p><b>5</b> <i>Malakand</i><br/>Bulk carrier<br/>15 Feb 23, 0415 hrs<br/>1° 16' N,<br/>104° 10' E</p>                           | <p><b>6</b> <i>Otago Bay</i><br/>Bulk carrier<br/>17 Feb 23, 0430 hrs<br/>1° 4.2' N,<br/>103° 42' E</p> | <p><b>7</b> <i>Ocean Creation</i><br/>Bulk carrier<br/>18 Feb 23, 0400 hrs<br/>1° 16.22' N,<br/>104° 13.78' E</p> | <p><b>8</b> <i>Lowlands Amstel</i><br/>Bulk carrier<br/>23 Feb 23, 0130 hrs<br/>1° 8.1' N,<br/>103° 29.28' E</p>                 |
| <p><b>9</b> <i>Metis</i><br/>Chemical tanker<br/>24 Feb 23, 0354 hrs<br/>5° 29.89' S,<br/>105° 18.1' E</p>                      |   |   |  |

# JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2023

## NUMBER OF INCIDENTS

During January-February 2023, a total of 16 incidents of armed robbery against ships were reported in Asia. All were actual incidents. Compared to January-February 2022, the **total number of incidents is the same as that during January-February 2023**.

Graph 2 shows the total number of incidents reported during January-February of 2007-2023.



**Graph 2 – Number of incidents (January-February of 2007-2023)**

■ Total    ■ Actual    ■ Attempted

## JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2023 COMPARED WITH JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2022

The total number of incidents reported during January-February 2023 remains the **same** compared to the same period in 2022.

There was a **decrease** in the number of incidents reported in India and SOMS during January-February 2023 compared to January-February 2022. In India, one incident was reported during January-February 2023 compared to two incidents during the same period in 2022. In SOMS, 12 incidents were reported during January-February 2023 compared to 13 incidents during the same period in 2022.

However, there was an **increase** of incidents in Indonesia with three incidents reported during January-February 2023 compared to one incident during the same period in 2022.

## AREAS OF CONCERN

There are two areas of concern during January-February 2023:

### 1. Occurrence of incidents in Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS)

Incidents continued to occur in SOMS during January-February 2023. This accounts for 75% (12 of 16 incidents) of the total number of incidents in Asia. Of the 12 incidents reported in SOMS, 11 occurred in SS and one occurred in Malacca Strait (MS). More details of the situation in SOMS can be found in pages 9-11 of this report.

### 2. Threat of abduction of crew for ransom in the Sulu-Celebes Seas

No incident of abduction of crew by the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) was reported in the Sulu-Celebes Seas since January 2020. The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) has downgraded the threat assessment level of abduction of crew in the area from 'potentially high' to 'moderate'. However, due to the presence of the remnants of the ASG in the area, the threat of abduction of crew for ransom in Sulu and Tawi-Tawi remains. More details of the threat of abduction of crew in the Sulu-Celebes Seas can be found in page 12-14 of this report.

## SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL OF INCIDENTS

The 16 actual incidents reported during January-February 2023 were: one CAT 2, four CAT 3, and 11 CAT 4 incidents. No CAT 1 incident was reported during this period.

Chart 2 shows the significance level of incidents during January-February of 2007-2023.

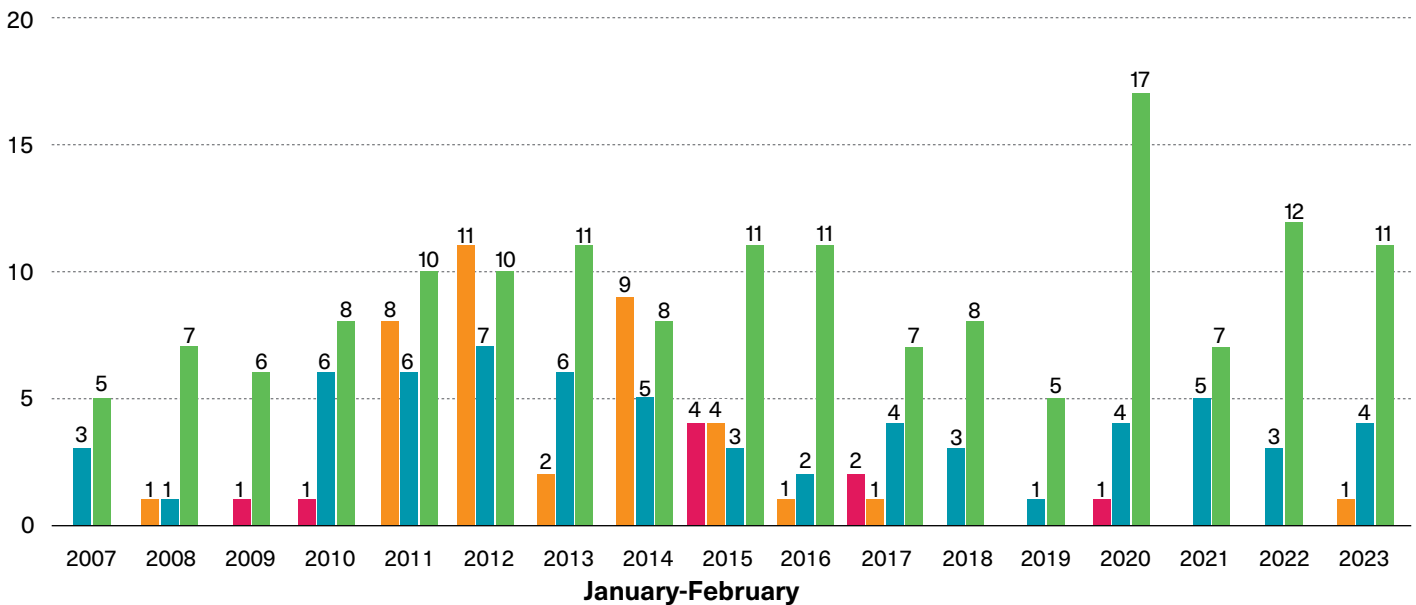


Chart 2 – Significance level of incidents (January-February of 2007-2023)

■ CAT 1 ■ CAT 2 ■ CAT 3 ■ CAT 4

**CAT 2.** The CAT 2 incident occurred on board a bulk carrier while underway in the SS. The perpetrators escaped after the alarm was raised. A search on board the ship was conducted, and reported some auxiliary engine parts were stolen.

**CAT 3.** All four CAT 3 incidents occurred on board bulk carriers while underway in the SS. Of these, three incidents involved perpetrators who were armed with knives; and one incident involved perpetrators armed with adjustable wrenches. In three incidents, the perpetrators did not confront or harm the crew, and nothing was stolen. However, in the remaining CAT 3 incident, the perpetrators threw spanners at the motorman and 3<sup>rd</sup> engineer, causing them to sustain minor injuries. Some scrap items were stolen.

**CAT 4.** Consistent with the past trend observed in Asia, majority of the incidents reported during January-February 2023 were CAT 4 incidents. This accounts for 69% of the number of actual incidents (11 of 16) during January-February 2023. In CAT 4 incidents, perpetrators were not armed and the crew not injured.



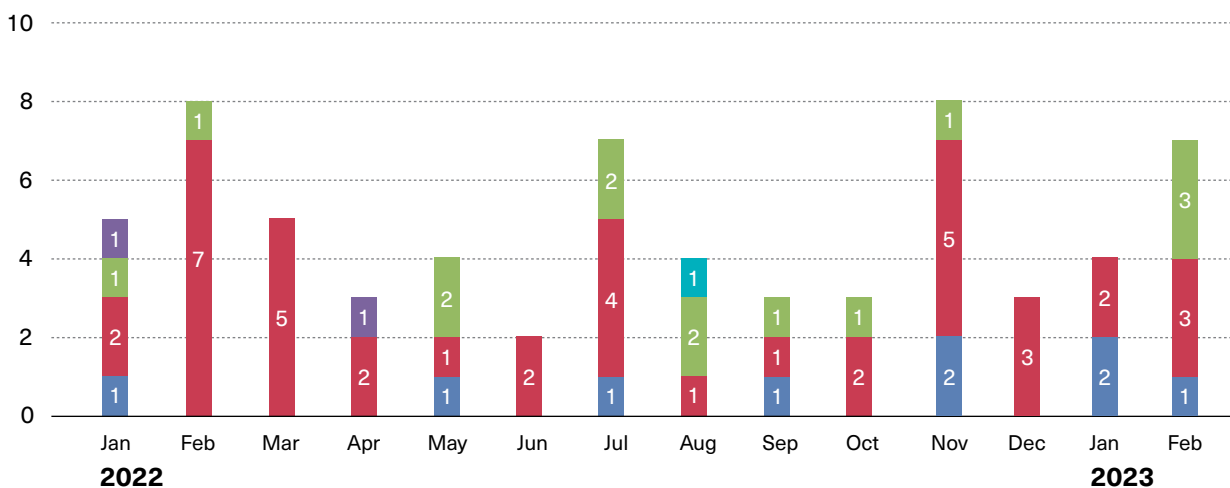
# ARMED ROBBERY AGAINST SHIPS IN THE STRAITS OF MALACCA AND SINGAPORE

## FEBRUARY 2023

A total of eight incidents of armed robbery against ships were reported in SOMS in February 2023. All were actual incidents. Of the eight incidents, seven incidents occurred in the SS and one incident in the MS.

For the seven incidents in the SS, three incidents occurred in the eastbound lane of the TSS, three incidents in the precautionary area and one incident in the westbound lane.

Chart 3 shows the number of incidents reported in the SS each month from January 2022 to February 2023. The number of incidents reported in the SS has almost doubled from four incidents in January 2023 to seven incidents in February 2023.



**Chart 3 – Number and location of incidents in Singapore Strait (January 2022-February 2023)**

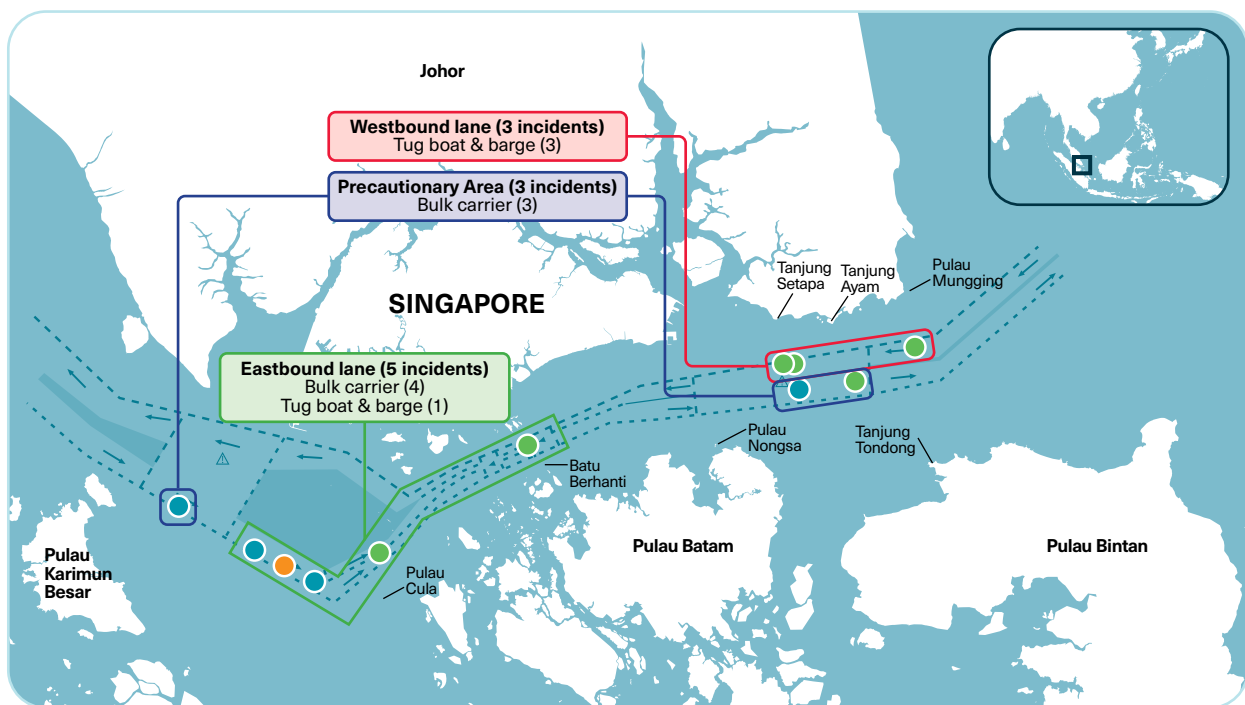
■ Westbound ■ Eastbound ■ Precautionary Area ■ Outside of TSS ■ Separation Zone

## JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2023

A total of 12 incidents were reported in the SOMS during January-February 2023. Of these, 11 incidents occurred in the SS and one incident in the MS.

The ReCAAP ISC is concerned with the continued occurrence of incidents in the SS, in particular, off Pulau Cula (Indonesia) [four incidents] during January-February 2023. Map 2 show the location of the 11 incidents in the SS.

Of the 11 incidents, the perpetrators were reported in the engine room or the vicinity of the engine room in five incidents. Of these, two incidents reported engine spares were stolen.



Map 2 – Location of incidents in Singapore Strait (January-February 2023)

● CAT 2 ● CAT 3 ● CAT 4

## EFFORTS BY THE AUTHORITIES AND ReCAAP ISC

The authorities of the littoral States of the Strait have stepped up enforcement efforts both on land and at sea. They have increased patrols in areas of concern during vulnerable time windows for more effective deterrence and operational responses. The authorities continue to cooperate in sharing information on incidents, sighting of small boats' concentration and suspicious activities, and facilitate prompt responses by the relevant authorities. Singapore's ReCAAP Focal Point has issued advisories to ships transiting the SS to remind ship masters to be vigilant and adopt recommended shipboard preventive measures.

The ReCAAP ISC, on its part, has been providing the maritime community with the latest information and analytics by issuing weekly, and monthly reports and also the Incident Alerts. On a regular basis, the Centre has organised Nautical Forum, Piracy & Sea Robbery Conference and Dialogue Sessions to engage the shipping industry. Through these means, the ReCAAP ISC is highlighting the areas of concern and modus operandi of the perpetrators while encouraging all ships to adopt preventive measures and make immediate reporting of incidents to the nearest coastal State and flag State.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

To address the increase of incidents in the SS, the ReCAAP ISC strongly urges the littoral States of the SS to continue to enhance surveillance and enforcement in their internal water, archipelagic waters and territorial seas; and respond promptly to incidents. The littoral States are encouraged to promote cooperation and coordination for patrols and information sharing on incidents and criminal groups involved to arrest and prosecute the perpetrators.

While transiting the SS or area of concern, the ship masters and crew are strongly advised to heighten vigilance and proactively adopt the following measures to prevent boarding by the perpetrators:

- Keep abreast of the latest situation (at [www.recaap.org](http://www.recaap.org)) particularly the incident-prone areas in the SS. The ReCAAP ISC's reports indicate detailed locations of incidents with latitude and longitude.
- Tune-in to advisories and navigational broadcasts announced by the authorities.
- Maximise vigilance, lookouts for suspicious small boats and increase watch keeping; particularly for crew on board tug boats towing barges during daylight, and for crew on board bigger ships during night time.
- Keep the CCTV and other devices including communication equipment operational to alert the ship crew and record the movement of perpetrators.
- Rounds of the ship's compartment be taken prior to entering the area of concern. Ensure that all doors and hatches having direct access to the bridge, accommodation, store rooms, steering gear compartment and engine room are closed and secured.
- Sound alarm when suspicious boats are sighted in the close vicinity of the ship or barge or suspicious individuals on board the ship or barge.
- Maintain communication with their shipping company by providing periodic updates and establish daily communication checks.
- Report all incidents, suspicious activities and presence of suspicious small boats in the vicinity to the nearest coastal State and flag State.

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

## FEBRUARY 2023

There was no report of incident of abduction of crew for ransom in February 2023. The last known incident occurred on 17 Jan 20 off Lahad Datu, Sabah, Malaysia. No crew is currently being held in captivity by the ASG. The Philippines, Malaysian and Indonesian authorities continued to maintain surveillance and military operations to neutralise the ASG.

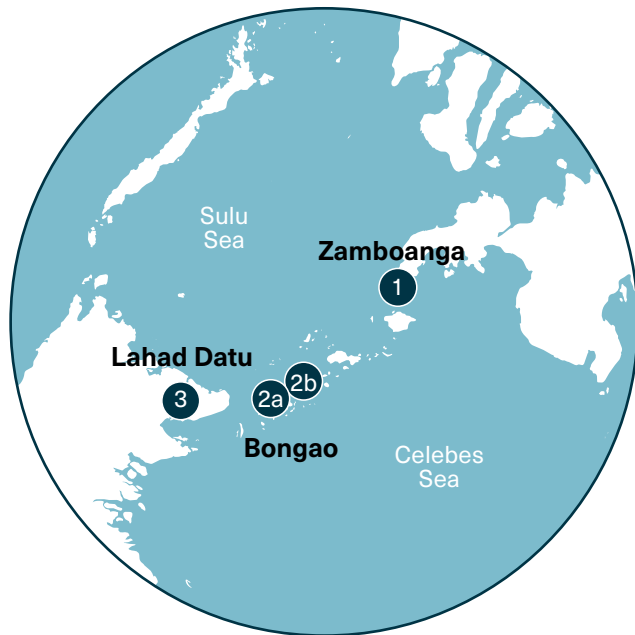
## DOWNGRADING OF THREAT ASSESSMENT LEVEL

With inputs from stakeholders and counterparts with vital involvement in securing the Sulu-Celebes Seas maritime security measure, the PCG recommends the downgrading of the threat of the 'Abduction of crew for ransom in the Sulu-Celebes Seas' from 'POTENTIALLY HIGH' to 'MODERATE'. The **MODERATE** threat level as per their orders, implies that '*incidents are possible to occur but are relatively less severe in nature*'. This is based on the perception that despite the presence of the remnants of the terrorist group in the islands of Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi, the government's continued ground military operations have reduced the strength of the perpetrators to conduct atrocities at sea.

## ADVISORY

With the PCG's recommendation to downgrade the threat of abduction of crew in the Sulu-Celebes Seas, the ReCAAP ISC updated its Advisory on 15 Sep 22 to all ships to consider re-route from the area as an option based on its prerogative.

However, for ship masters and crew transiting the area, they are strongly encouraged to exercise extra vigilance while transiting the area, and report 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 on the next page.



Map 3 – Contact details

### 1 Philippine Coast Guard District Southwestern Mindanao

Tel: +63 998 585 7972  
+63 917 842 8446  
VHF: Channel 16 with call-sign  
“NEPTUNE”  
Email: [hcgdswm@yahoo.com](mailto:hcgdswm@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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:bilikgerakan_esscom@jpm.gov.my)

In the event that the ship master or crew is unable to establish contact with the Operation Centres of the Philippines as listed in the ReCAAP ISC Advisory, they can contact the **Philippine Coast Guard Command Centre** at the following contact details:

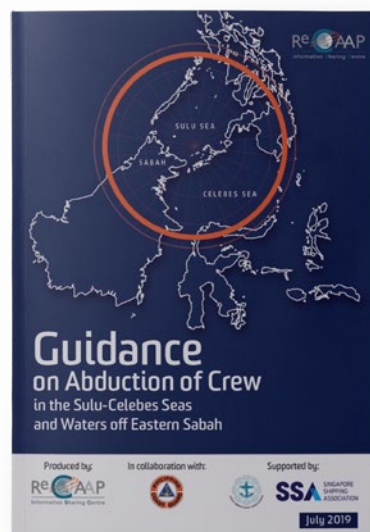
Tel: +632-8-527-8481 (ext: 6136/37)  
+632-998-585-5327 (mobile)  
+632-917-842-8249 (mobile)  
+632-8-527-3877 (fax)

Email: [pcgcommandcenter2022@gmail.com](mailto:pcgcommandcenter2022@gmail.com) (updated on 10 Oct 22)

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

The ReCAAP ISC recommends the shipping industry to refer to the '*Guidance on Abduction of Crew in the Sulu-Celebes Seas and Waters off Eastern Sabah*' produced in July 2019. The Guidance consists of advisory on the measures to be taken by ships transiting the area, including contact details and the Notice to Mariners (NOTAM) issued by the Philippines and Malaysia. It also shares the analysis of incidents based on the information collected from past incidents. The Guidance can be found at [www.recaap.org](http://www.recaap.org).

The Guidance is produced in collaboration with the Philippine Coast Guard (ReCAAP Focal Point) and supported by the Asian Shipowners' Association (ASA) and Singapore Shipping Association (SSA). The Guidance complements the general guidance contained in the '*Regional Guide 2 to Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia*' produced by the ReCAAP ISC.



## CONCLUSION

The total number of incidents of armed robbery against ships in Asia reported during January-February 2023 is the same as in January-February 2022. However, incidents continued to occur in the Singapore Strait, and remains an area of concern. To reverse the upward trend of incidents, collective efforts and shared responsibility of all stakeholders are indispensable.

The ReCAAP ISC urges the law enforcement agencies in Asia, particularly in the areas of concern, to enhance surveillance, increase coordinated patrols and respond swiftly to reported incidents in order to arrest and prosecute the perpetrators. On the other hand, ships transiting the areas of concern are advised to enhance vigilance and security level, maintain all round lookout and report all incidents to the nearest coastal State and flag State as shown in the poster on '*Piracy & Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia on Reporting of Incidents – Contact Details*', and implement preventive measures recommended in the '*Regional Guide 2 to Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia*'.

The ReCAAP ISC will continue to enhance regional cooperation and provide the maritime community with verified information in a timely manner by issuing analytics reports, warning, incident alert and advisory with information to be effectively utilized by all stakeholders, each to play its role to ensure safe and secured seas for maritime trade and commerce and economic growth for all in the region.

# APPENDICES

## DEFINITIONS & METHODOLOGY IN CLASSIFYING INCIDENTS

### Definitions

**Piracy**, in accordance with Article 101 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), is defined as:

1. “Piracy” means any of the following acts:
  - (a) any illegal act of violence or detention, or any act of depredation, committed for private ends by the crew or the passengers of a private ship or a private aircraft, and directed:
    - (i) on the high seas, against another ship, or against persons or property on board such ship;
    - (ii) against a ship, persons or property in a place outside the jurisdiction of any State;
  - (b) any act of voluntary participation in the operation of a ship or of an aircraft with knowledge of facts making it a pirate ship or aircraft;
  - (c) any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described in subparagraph (a) or (b).

**Armed Robbery Against Ships**, in accordance with the Code of Practice for the Investigation of Crimes of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Assembly Resolution A.1025(26), is defined as:

2. “Armed robbery against ships” means any of the following acts:
  - (a) any illegal act of violence or detention, or any act of depredation, or threat thereof, other than an act of “piracy”, committed for private ends and directed against a ship, or against persons or property on board such ship, within a State’s internal waters, archipelagic waters and territorial sea;
  - (b) any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described above.

### Methodology in classifying incidents

To provide some perspective on incidents of piracy and armed robbery, the ReCAAP ISC evaluates the significance of each incident in terms of two factors – the level of violence and the economic loss incurred. The indicators for these two factors are as follows:

1. **Violence Factor.** This factor refers to the intensity of violence in an incident, and the three indicators used to determine this are:
  - (a) Type of weapons. Incidents of pirates/robbers who board a ship with no visible weapons are generally deemed as less violent compared to those equipped with pistols, knives, machetes, or other dangerous weapons. In cases where more sophisticated weapons are used, such incidents would be considered more violent.
  - (b) Treatment of crew. Incidents where pirates/robbers kill or kidnap crew are deemed to be more violent compared to petty thieves who flee upon being noticed. Other cases could include threatening crew members, assault, or serious injury.



- (c) Number of pirates/robbers engaged in an attack. As a rule, an incident where a larger number of pirates/robbers were involved would be considered more significant as having a large capacity (as well as probability) for use of force. A larger number of pirates/robbers may also indicate the involvement of gangs or organised syndicates rather than petty and opportunistic pirates who generally operate in small groups.
2. **Economic Factor.** This factor takes into consideration the type of the property taken from the ship. Cases of theft of cash or personal effects are generally less significant incidents compared to cases where the entire ship is hijacked either for the cargo onboard or theft of the vessel.

Using these indicators, the ReCAAP ISC classifies all incidents into one of the four categories based on a matrix of the indicators of the Violence Factor and Economic Factor. Below is the broad narration of the four Categories.

Category	Description
● CAT 1	CAT 1 incidents involved large number of perpetrators; more than 9 men in four out every 10 incidents and 4-9 men in the other six incidents. The perpetrators were mostly armed with guns and knives, and the crew is likely to suffer some form of injury or physical violence such as being assaulted or tied up or threatened. In term of losses, the ship was either hijacked or the cargo on board was stolen, for example siphoning of cargo oil.
● CAT 2	Majority of CAT 2 incidents involved 4-9 men who are likely to be armed with knives/machetes and in 1/4 of the incidents, armed with guns. The crew is likely to be threatened or held hostage temporarily to allow the perpetrators to steal the crew's cash and ship's property including engine spares. In a few cases, the crew suffered some form of injury or physical violence but less severe in nature compared to CAT 1 incidents.
● CAT 3	The number of perpetrators involved in CAT 3 incidents usually involved groups of between 1-6 men. At times, the perpetrators were armed with knives/machetes/others or other items such as sticks, rods, bats etc. The crew was not harmed, although there remains a small possibility that the crew could be subject to duress during the incident but not harmed physically. In almost half of the CAT 3 incidents, the perpetrators were unable to steal anything from the vessel, but in cases where losses were reported, stores and engine spares were the commonly targeted items.
● CAT 4	The perpetrators were not armed and the crew not harmed. More than half of CAT 4 incidents involved 1-3 men who escaped empty-handed upon sighted by the crew.

This classification of incidents allows the ReCAAP ISC to provide some perspective of the piracy and armed robbery situation in Asia and to facilitate the maritime community to carry out risk assessment.

## DETAILS OF ReCAAP FOCAL POINTS / CONTACT POINT

Country & Agency In Charge	Point of Contact	
	Phone No	Fax Number
<b>Australia</b>		
Australian Maritime Border Operations Centre (AMBOC) Maritime Border Command (MBC) E-mail: <a href="mailto:MBC_NCU@abf.gov.au">MBC_NCU@abf.gov.au</a>	+61-2-6275-6000	+61-2-6275-6275
<b>Bangladesh</b>		
Department of Shipping E-mail: <a href="mailto:shaker395@yahoo.com">shaker395@yahoo.com</a>	+88-02-9554206	+88-02-7168363
<b>Brunei</b>		
Royal Brunei Marine Police Email: <a href="mailto:marine@police.gov.bn">marine@police.gov.bn</a>	+673-2773548	+673-2770549
<b>Cambodia</b>		
Merchant Marine Department Ministry of Public Works and Transport E-mail: <a href="mailto:dararith.hg@gmail.com">dararith.hg@gmail.com</a>	+855-77-331-531	+855-23-864-110
<b>China</b>		
China Maritime Search and Rescue Coordination Centre (Beijing) Email: <a href="mailto:cnmrcc@mot.gov.cn">cnmrcc@mot.gov.cn</a> <a href="mailto:cnmrcc@msa.gov.cn">cnmrcc@msa.gov.cn</a>	+86-10-6529-2218 +86-10-6529-2219 +86-10-6529-2221	+86-10-6529-2245
Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (Hong Kong) Email: <a href="mailto:hkmrcc@mardep.gov.hk">hkmrcc@mardep.gov.hk</a>	+85-2-2233-7999	+85-2-2541-7714
<b>Denmark</b>		
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# DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENTS (FEBRUARY 2023)

## ACTUAL INCIDENTS

● CAT 2 ● CAT 3 ● CAT 4

S/N	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, GT, IMO No.	Date Time	Location of Incident	Details of Incident
1	<p><b>HK Tug 9</b> Tug boat Singapore 299 9767120</p> <p><b>LKH 2882</b> Barge Singapore 4430</p>	01/02/23 1903 hrs	<p>1° 17.7' N, 104° 9.55' E</p> <p>Approximately 3.5 nm from Tanjung Setapa (Malaysia), in the westbound lane of the Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) in the Singapore Strait (SS)</p> <p>[Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS)]</p>	<p>While underway, the Singapore Police Coast Guard surveillance team spotted a suspicious craft proceeding towards the unmanned barge towed by the tug boat, and informed Singapore Port Operations Control Centre (POCC).</p> <p>POCC notified the master of tug boat, who confirmed sighting of a small boat with three perpetrators alongside the barge. Two of the perpetrators subsequently climbed on board the barge, and appeared to be transferring <b>scrap metal</b> to their boat. The master later updated POCC that the perpetrators had left the barge at about 1915 hrs. No further assistance was required, and the vessels continued their voyage to the next port, Phuy My, Vietnam.</p> <p>At about 2145 hrs, the tug boat and barge were near Ramunia Bay, Johor, Malaysia and the Malaysian Police Coast Guard patrol boat came alongside the vessels to inquire about the incident and check on the safety of the crew.</p> <p><b>[ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore)]</b></p>

S/N	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, GT, IMO No.	Date Time	Location of Incident	Details of Incident
2	<b>Chryssa K</b> Bulk carrier Liberia 44230 9595852	03/02/23 0100 hrs	1° 3.5' N, 103° 37' E  Approximately 5.9 nm northwest of Pulau Cula (Indonesia), in the eastbound lane of the TSS in the SS  (SOMS)	<p>While underway, the master of the bulk carrier reported to Singapore Vessel Traffic Information System (VTIS) that <b>nine perpetrators armed with long knives</b> were sighted in the engine room. The <b>duty oiler was tied</b> but managed to escape and raised the alarm. The perpetrators escaped after alarm was raised. The crew was mustered at the bridge and a security search on board was conducted. At about 0208 hrs, the crew completed the security search and <b>some auxiliary engine parts</b> were discovered stolen. The bulk carrier was en route from Port Said, Egypt to Singapore.</p> <p>A safety navigational broadcast was initiated. The Republic of Singapore Navy's (RSN) Maritime Security Task Force (MSTF) and Singapore Police Coast Guard were notified of the incident. Information of the incident was shared with the Indonesian authorities.</p> <p>The Singapore Police Coast Guard officers boarded the ship for investigation upon her arrival in Singapore. The ship was cleared with no sighting of the perpetrators on board. <b>The crew was safe and accounted for.</b></p> <p><b>[ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore)]</b></p>

S/N	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, GT, IMO No.	Date Time	Location of Incident	Details of Incident
3	<p><b>Pacific West</b> Bulk carrier Marshall Islands 92221 9604029</p>	04/02/23 0130 hrs	<p>1° 11.4' N, 103° 24' E</p> <p>Approximately 2.8 nm east of Pulau Iyu Kecil (Indonesia), in the eastbound lane of the TSS in the Malacca Strait</p> <p>(SOMS)</p>	<p>While underway, the master of the bulk carrier reported to Singapore VTIS that four perpetrators were sighted in the steering gear room. The master raised the alarm and mustered crew. A security search on board was conducted and at about 0345 hrs, the security search was completed and no perpetrators found. <b><u>The crew was safe and accounted for. Nothing was stolen.</u></b> The ship was bound for Singapore.</p> <p>A safety navigational broadcast was initiated. The RSN's MSTF and Singapore Police Coast Guard were notified of the incident. Information of the incident was shared with the Indonesian and Malaysian authorities.</p> <p>The Singapore Police Coast Guard officers boarded the ship for investigation upon her arrival in Singapore. At about 0934 hrs, the ship was cleared with no sighting of the perpetrators on board.</p> <p><b>[ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore)]</b></p>
4	<p><b>HK Tug 2</b> Tug boat Singapore 152 9210763</p> <p><b>LKH 3883</b> Barge Singapore 1847</p>	08/02/23 1730 hrs	<p>1° 12.02' N, 103° 52.4' E</p> <p>Approximately 1.1 nm from Batu Berhanti Racon (Indonesia), in the eastbound lane of the TSS in the SS</p> <p>(SOMS)</p>	<p>While underway, the chief officer of the tug boat towing unmanned barge, spotted a small boat with four perpetrators on board alongside the barge. Three of the perpetrators subsequently climbed on board the barge and appeared to be transferring scrap metal to their boat.</p> <p>The master reported the incident to his company and VTIS Central. As the perpetrators had fled, the master did not request for assistance. The tug boat and barge continued its voyage to the next port, Kuantan, Malaysia.</p> <p><b><u>There was no injury to the crew</u></b> during the incident, and <b><u>some scrap metals</u></b> were reported missing.</p> <p><b>[ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore)]</b></p>

S/N	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, GT, IMO No.	Date Time	Location of Incident	Details of Incident
5	<p><b>Malakand</b> Bulk carrier Pakistan 40040 9304198</p>	<p>15/02/23 0415 hrs</p>	<p>1° 16' N, 104° 10' E</p> <p>Approximately 5.7 nm northeast of Nongsa Point, Pulau Batam (Indonesia), in the precautionary area of the TSS in the SS</p> <p>(SOMS)</p>	<p>While underway, the ship master reported to Singapore VTIS via VHF that five unauthorised persons were sighted in the engine room. <b><u>One of the perpetrators was armed with a knife.</u></b> The perpetrators escaped upon being sighted. Search on board the ship was conducted. <b><u>The crew was safe and accounted for. Nothing was stolen.</u></b></p> <p>No assistance was required, and the ship continued her voyage for Qinzhou, China. The ship's last port of call was Singapore.</p> <p>A safety navigational broadcast was initiated. The RSN's MSTF and Singapore Police Coast Guard were notified. Information of the incident was shared with the Indonesian and Malaysian authorities.</p> <p><b>[ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore)]</b></p>
6	<p><b>Otago Bay</b> Bulk carrier Hong Kong, China 31863 9782015</p>	<p>17/02/23 0430 hrs</p>	<p>1° 4.2' N, 103° 42' E</p> <p>Approximately 1.9 nm north-northwest of Pulau Cula, (Indonesia), in the eastbound lane of the TSS in the SS</p> <p>(SOMS)</p>	<p>While underway, the crew discovered that unauthorized entry into the engine room. <b><u>Some auxiliary engine spare parts</u></b> were stolen. <b><u>The crew was not injured.</u></b></p> <p><b>[ReCAAP Contact Point (Hong Kong)]</b></p>



S/N	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, GT, IMO No.	Date Time	Location of Incident	Details of Incident
7	<p><b><i>Ocean Creation</i></b> Bulk carrier Japan 106352 9398125</p>	<p>18/02/23 0400 hrs</p>	<p>1° 16.22' N, 104° 13.78' E</p> <p>Approximately 7.3 nm northwest of Tanjung Tondong, Pulau Bintan (Indonesia), in the precautionary area of the TSS in the SS</p> <p>(SOMS)</p>	<p>While underway, the master reported to Singapore VTIS via VHF that six unauthorised persons were sighted at the stern deck at 0400 hrs. At about 0425 hrs, he updated that there was a failed attempt to enter the engine room as the booby hatch leading to the engine room was secured with lashing. The alarm was raised and search on board carried out.</p> <p>At 0510 hrs, the master reported there was no further sighting of the perpetrators on board. <b><u>The crew was accounted for and safe. Nothing was stolen.</u></b> No assistance was required, and the ship continued on her passage. The ship departed from port of Singapore and was transiting the traffic separation scheme bound for Villanueva, Philippines.</p> <p>A safety navigational broadcast was initiated. The RSN's MSTF and Singapore Police Coast Guard were notified. Information of the incident shared with the Indonesian and Malaysian authorities.</p> <p><b>[ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore), ReCAAP Focal Point (Japan)]</b></p>

S/N	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, GT, IMO No.	Date Time	Location of Incident	Details of Incident
8	<p><b>Lowlands Amstel</b> Bulk carrier Panama 34810 9738947</p>	<p>23/02/23 0130 hrs</p>	<p>1° 8.1' N, 103° 29.28' E</p> <p>Approximately 4.5 nm east of Pulau Karimun Kecil (Indonesia), in the precautionary area of the TSS in the SS</p> <p>(SOMS)</p>	<p>While underway, the master reported to VTIS that <b>six perpetrators armed with knives</b> were sighted in the vicinity of engine room by the motorman and 3rd engineer on duty. There was a standoff between the perpetrators and the engine crew. The <b>perpetrators threw spanners at the crew</b> resulting in the <b>motorman sustained injury to hand and the 3<sup>rd</sup> engineer with minor injury to the head.</b></p> <p>The six perpetrators escaped when the ship alarm was raised. A small boat was seen close to starboard quarter of the bulk carrier. A search on board was carried out by the crew and at about 0215 hrs, the master confirmed there was no more perpetrators on board. <b>Some scrap items</b> were reported missing. The ship was transiting the TSS bound for Singapore.</p> <p>A safety navigational broadcast was initiated. The RSN's MSTF and Singapore Police Coast Guard were notified. Information of the incident was shared with the Indonesian authorities.</p> <p>The Singapore Police Coast Guard boarded the bulk carrier to conduct a search upon her arrival in Singapore.</p> <p><b>[ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore)]</b></p>
9	<p><b>Metis</b> Petroleum/chemical tanker Singapore 5256 9498949</p>	<p>24/02/23 0354 hrs</p>	<p>5° 29.89' S, 105° 18.1' E</p> <p>Panjang Anchorage, Indonesia</p>	<p>While anchored, the duty able-bodied (AB) sighted a total of five perpetrators, three on board the ship and two on a small boat, and immediately notified the bridge. The perpetrators subsequently escaped via the small boat. The incident was reported to Panjang VTS and the authorities advised ship to stay vigilant and increase security measures. There was no reported damage to the ship and <b>the crew was not injured. Engine spares</b> were reported missing.</p> <p><b>[ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore)]</b></p>



**Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy  
and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia**

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