



ReCAAP
Information Sharing Centre

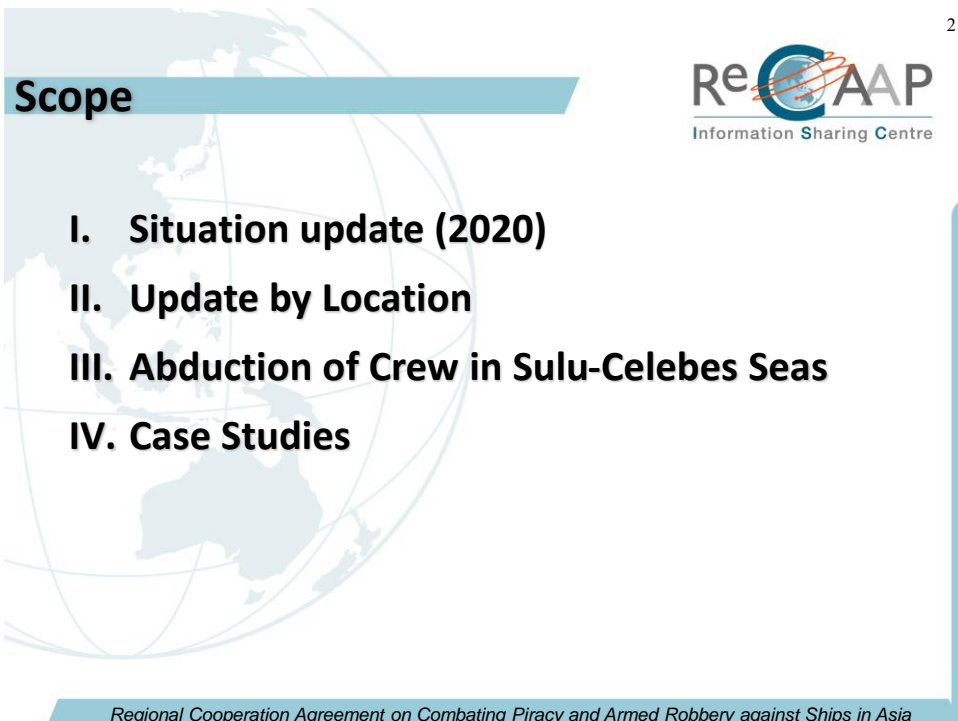
Nautical Forum

Situation Update of Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia in 2020

ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre
15 January 2021

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

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Scope

- I. Situation update (2020)**
- II. Update by Location**
- III. Abduction of Crew in Sulu-Celebes Seas**
- IV. Case Studies**

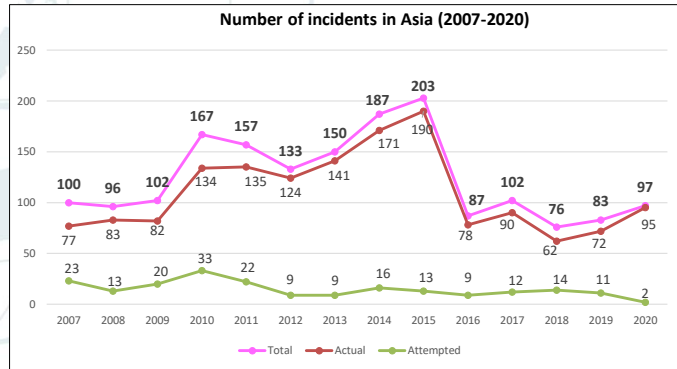
Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia

I. Situation update (2020)

1. Number of Incidents



- ❑ 97 incidents (95 actual and 2 attempted) in 2020
- ❑ **17% (14 incidents) increase** in total incidents and **32% (23 incidents) increase** in actual incidents compared to 2019
- ❑ Highest number of actual incidents among past 5 years (2016 – 2020)



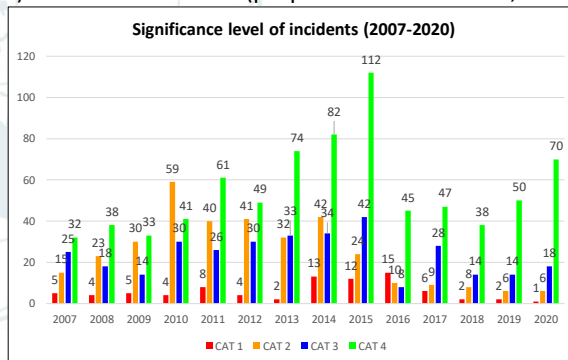
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I. Situation update (2020)

2. Severity of Incidents



- ❑ 95 actual incidents in 2020
 - 1 x CAT 1, 6 x CAT 2, 18 x CAT 3 and 70 x CAT 4 [**lowest number of CAT 1 and CAT 2 incidents since 2007**]
 - CAT 1: One actual incident of abduction of crew
 - CAT 2: Same number as 2019
 - Majority (74%) are CAT 4 incidents (perpetrators not armed, crew not harmed)



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I. Situation update (2020)

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3. Location of Incidents



- Singapore Strait (34)
- Indonesia (22)
- Philippines (13)
- India (9)
- Vietnam (6)
- Bangladesh (5)
- South China Sea (4)
- Malaysia (3)
- Sulu-Celebes Seas (1)

Armed robbery against ships

(93 incidents)

Piracy

(4 incidents)

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I. Situation update (2020)

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4. Location of Incidents (2020 vs 2019)



☐ Increase of incidents:

Mostly at ports/anchorages

- Bangladesh [5 incidents in 2020 vs 0 incident in 2019]
- India [9 incidents in 2020 vs 5 incidents in 2019]
- Philippines [13 incidents in 2020 vs 7 incidents in 2019]
- Vietnam [6 incidents in 2020 vs 2 incidents in 2019]

Mostly while underway

- South China Sea [4 incidents in 2020 vs 1 incident in 2019]
- Singapore Strait [34 incidents in 2020 vs 31 incidents in 2019]

☐ Improvement

Mostly at ports/anchorages

- China [0 incident in 2020 vs 3 incidents in 2019]
- Malaysia [3 incidents in 2020 vs 8 incidents in 2019]

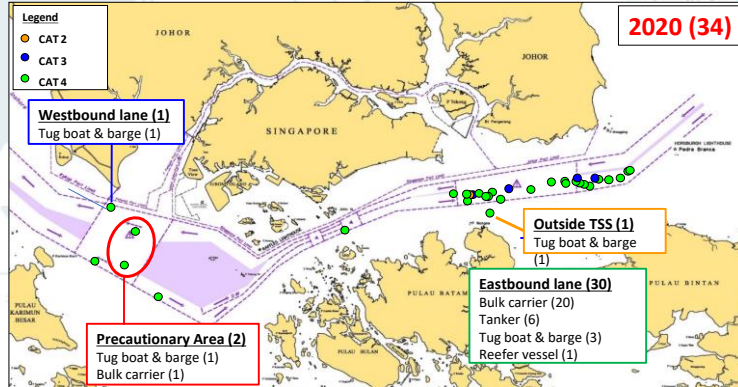
Abduction of crew

- Sulu-Celebes Seas [1 incident in 2020 vs 2 incidents in 2019]

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II. Update by location

2.(1) Singapore Strait (2020)



Past 6 years ...

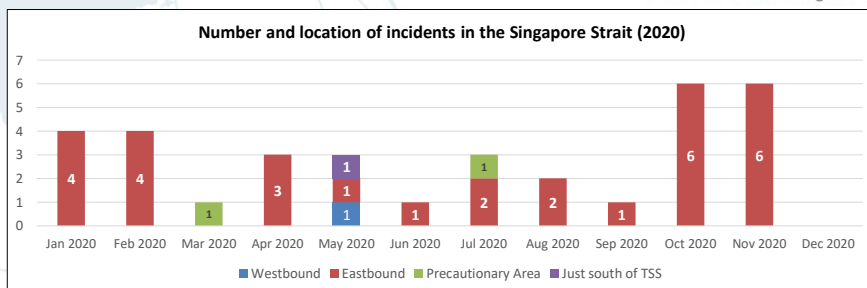
- 99 (2015) → 2 (2016) → 8 (2017) → 7 (2018) → 31 (2019) → **34** (2020)
- Significant decrease in 2016: Arrests of perpetrators by Indonesian authorities in 2014 and 2015

2020 - 1 x CAT 2, 4 x CAT 3, 29 x CAT 4

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II. Update by location

2.(2) Singapore Strait (2020)



☐ Same perpetrators suspected for successive incidents in the eastbound lane of TSS (close timing and location)

- 18 Jan (2 incidents)
- 9 Feb (2 incidents)
- 29 Aug and 30 Aug
- 13 Oct and 14 Oct
- 26 Oct (2 incidents)
- 8 Nov and 9 Nov (2 incidents)
- 17 Nov and 19 Nov

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II. Update by location

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2.(3) Singapore Strait (2020) - Modus Operandi



* Number of incidents in bracket

Location	Type of ships	No. of perpetrators	Weapons carried	Treatment of crew	Items stolen	Time of incident
Eastbound lane of the TSS (30 incidents)	Bulk carriers (21)	1-3 men (21)	Not stated (27)	No injuries (33)	Nothing stolen (16)	Hours of darkness (28)
Precautionary Area (2 incidents)	Tankers (6) Tug boats (6) Reefer vessel (1)	4-6 men (9) 7-9 men (2) Unknown (2)	Knives (5) Not armed (2)	Assaulted (1)	Engine spares (7) Ship stores (6) Items on barges (3) Cash/property (1) Not stated (1)	Daylight hours (6)
Westbound lane of the TSS (1 incident)						
Just outside (south) of the TSS (1 incident)						

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II. Update by location

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2.(4) Singapore Strait: Recommendations



ReCAAP ISC issued five Incident Alerts, with recommendations:

➤ To littoral States

- Increase surveillance and patrols of littoral States
- Enhance information sharing and strengthen coordination among littoral States
- Authorities to respond promptly to incident reported by ship in order to make arrest and prosecute the perpetrators

➤ To shipping industry

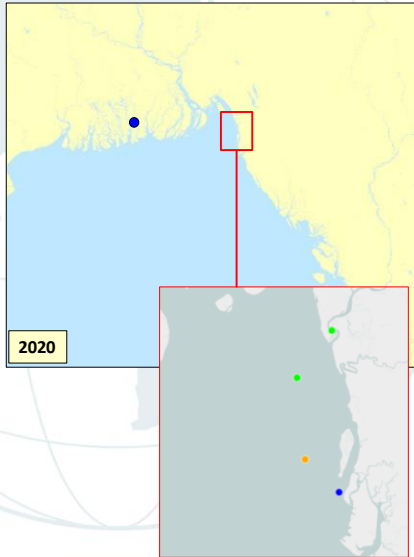
- Crew to exercise utmost vigilance, adopt preventive measures and report incidents immediately to nearest coastal State

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II. Update by location

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3. Bangladesh



Past 5 years ...

- ❖ 2 (2016) → 11 (2017) → 11 (2018)
- 0 (2019) → 5 (2020)

2020

- ❖ 1 x CAT 2, 2 x CAT 3, 2 x CAT 4
- ❖ Chittagong (2), off Kutubdia (1), Martabari (1), Pussur River (1)

Arrest of perpetrators at Chittagong Anchorage on 6 Mar

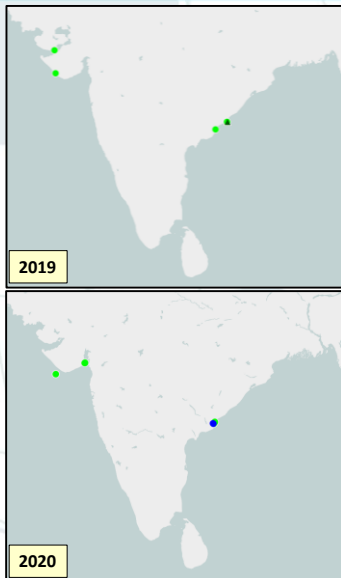
- ❖ Barge (*Antara Koh 18*) towed by tug boat (*Capitol T2001*) was anchored at Chittagong Anchorage when a group of perpetrators boarded the barge
- ❖ The crew of tug boat contacted a passing Bangladesh Coast Guard (BCG) ship via VHF
- ❖ The BCG boarded the barge and arrested the perpetrators

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II. Update by location

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4. India



Past 5 years ...

- ❖ 12 (2016) → 4 (2017) → 4 (2018) → 5 (2019) → 9 (2020)

2020

- ❖ 2 x CAT 3, 7 x CAT 4
- ❖ Kakinada (5), Alang (3), off Gujarat (1)

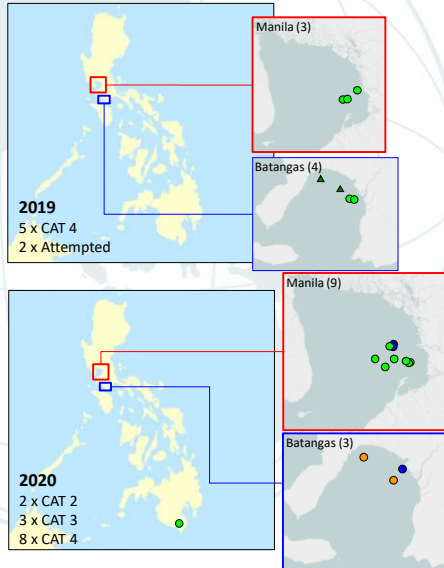
Arrests of perpetrators

- ❖ Arrest of perpetrators involved in three incidents that occurred at Alang and off Gujarat
- ❖ No incident reported in these locations since the arrests

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II. Update by location

5. Philippines (excluding abduction of crew)



Past 5 years ...

- ❖ 3 (2016) → 19 (2017) → 9 (2018)
→ 7 (2019) → **13** (2020)

2020

- ❖ 2 x CAT 2, 3 x CAT 3, 8 x CAT 4
- ❖ 9 in Manila, 3 in Batangas, 1 in General Santos
- ❖ Increase at Manila anchorage (3 → 9)
- ❖ Improvement at Batangas anchorage (4 → 3)

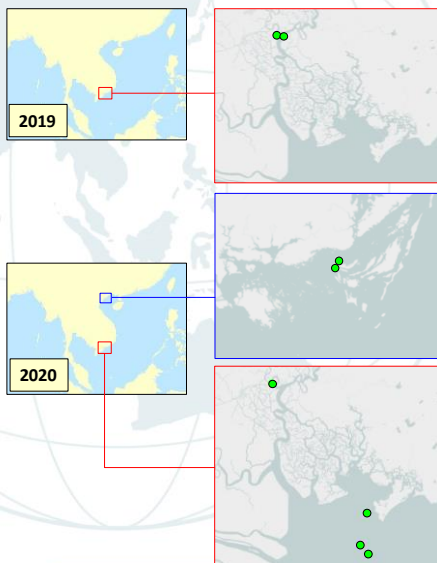
Efforts by Philippine authorities

- ❖ The Philippine Coast Guard has intensified patrols and law enforcement at the ports/anchorage in Manila and Batangas
- ❖ Arrest of perpetrators involved in an incident at Manila Bay in Oct 2020

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II. Update by location

6. Vietnam



Past 5 years ...

- ❖ 9 (2016) → 2 (2017) → 4 (2018)
→ 2 (2019) → **6** (2020)

2020

- ❖ 6 x CAT 4
- ❖ Vung Tau (3), Campha (2), Saigon River (1)

Recommendations

- ❖ Ships to exercise vigilance and report all incidents to the relevant authorities immediately
- ❖ Law enforcement agencies to step up surveillance, especially at Vung Tau and Campha

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III. Abduction of Crew in Sulu-Celebes Seas

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1. Number and Type of ships (2016-2020)



Incident/Type & GT of Ships	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Actual incidents (20 incidents)	<u>12</u> 5 – Tug boat (60 – 269 GT) 5 – Fishing trawler/boat (NA) 1 – General cargo ship (11,391 GT) 1 – Bulk carrier (2,999 GT)	<u>3</u> 1 – Tug boat (225 GT) 1 – Fishing trawler (NA) 1 – Bulk carrier (2,875 GT)	<u>2</u> 2 – Fishing boat (NA)	<u>2</u> 2 – Fishing boat (NA)	<u>1</u> 1 – Fishing trawler (NA)
Attempted incidents (11 incidents)	<u>6</u> 5 – Bulk carrier (17,979 – 93,169 GT) 1 – Product tanker (5,557 GT)	<u>4</u> 1 – Container ship (NA) 1 – Bulk carrier (45,026 GT) 1 – General cargo ship (1,599 GT) 1 – Passenger/Cargo ferry (NA)	<u>1</u> 1 – Container ship (NA)		
Status of abducted crew Total 86 (as on 31 Dec 2020)	Crew released/rescued (71), Crew killed/died (11), Crew in captivity (4)				

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III. Abduction of Crew in Sulu-Celebes Seas

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2. Latest incident on 17 Jan 20



❖ **17 Jan 20:** Six gunmen with masks in a grey speedboat with twin engine (40 HP) abducted eight crew from a Malaysia-registered fishing trawler

❖ **17 Jan 20 at about 1500 hrs:** Fishing trawler was found abandoned with no crew on board off Pulau Tambisan, Lahad Datu, Sabah (Malaysia)

❖ **18 Jan 20:** Malaysian authorities recovered three of the eight missing crew near Lahad Datu, Sabah

❖ **29 Sep 20:** The body of one of the five abducted crew was found during a military operation in Patikul, Sulu (Philippines). The remaining four crew are still held in captivity



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III. Abduction of Crew in Sulu-Celebes Seas

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3. Warnings

- ReCAAP ISC issued **two Warnings** on planned attacks based on information from the Philippine Coast Guard

❑ 22 May

ASG's plan of kidnapping activities targeting crew of fishing boats and other slow moving ships within the waters off Sabah (Malaysia)

❑ 2 July

On 21 Jun, five ASG members were sighted in Tawi-Tawi (Philippines) on board a speedboat. ASG planned kidnapping in Sabah and Semporna, Malaysia targeting foreigners and crew from ships passing by the Tawi-Tawi and Sabah waters



WARNING 02-2020
2 JULY 2020

1. Reference the Warning disseminated by the ReCAAP ISC on 22 May 2020 (Warning 01 2020) about a group of five Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) members planning to conduct kidnaping activities in underdeveloped areas in Sabah, Malaysia (see attached).

2. On 2 July 2020, the ReCAAP ISC has received information from the Philippine Coast Guard (ReCAAP Focal Point) that on 21 June 2020, five members of the Abu Sayyaf Group Kidnap-In-Ransom Group (ASG-KIRG) were spotted in Cotabato (Sarangani, Tawi-Tawi) on board a white with yellow and orange stripes speedboat powered by 200HP Yamaha engine. The Philippine Coast Guard added that as of 26 June 2020, the plan to carry out kidnaping in Sabah and Semporna, Malaysia targeting foreigners and the abduction of crew from ships passing by the Tawi-Tawi and Sabah waters still stands.

3. Ship masters and crew are strongly urged to exercise extra vigilance when heading the waters off Eastern Sabah and in the Sulu-Celebes Seas.

4. Source: Philippine Coast Guard

5. This information is to provide maritime situational awareness for mariners operating in the area.

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III. Abduction of Crew in Sulu-Celebes Seas

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4. Advisory by ReCAAP ISC

ReCAAP ISC Alert on 21 Nov 2016

- ❑ Re-route from area, where possible
- ❑ Exercise extra vigilance and maintain comms with authorities of Philippines and Malaysia



- 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
- 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: bilikperakan_esscom@jpm.gov.my

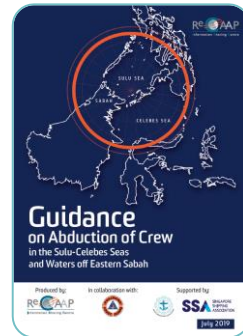
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III. Abduction of Crew in Sulu-Celebes Seas

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5. Guidance

- ❑ Shipping industry is advised to refer to the *Guidance on Abduction of Crew in the Sulu-Celebes Seas and Waters off Eastern Sabah* when transiting the area



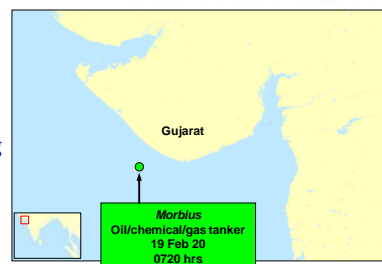
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IV. Case Studies

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1. Off Gujarat, India

- ❖ **19 Feb 20 at about 0720 hrs:** Tanker (*Morbius*) towed by tug boat (*Allianz Titanium*) was underway off Gujarat when two perpetrators boarded the tanker
 - ❑ Another seven perpetrators waited in a fishing boat
- ❖ Master of tug boat raised the alarm and reported incident to Indian Coast Guard (ICG) and local Marine Police
- ❖ ICG deployed a ship to the location and arrested all the nine perpetrators
- ❖ Perpetrators and fishing boat handed over to Marine Police Station Pipavav



Lessons learned

- ❖ Timely reporting of incident to coastal State
- ❖ Prompt response by the law enforcement agency
- ❖ Cooperation between agencies

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IV. Case Studies

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2. Singapore Strait



❖ **16 Mar 20 at about 0511 hrs:** Bulk carrier (*Sam Jaguar*) was underway off Pulau Karimum Kecil, Indonesia in the Singapore Strait

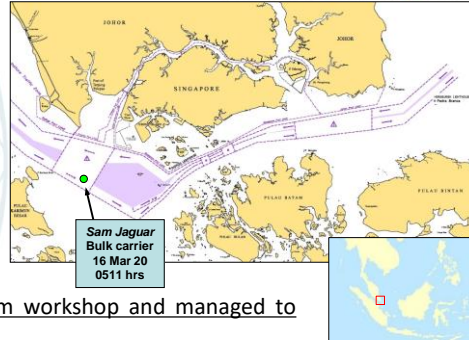
❖ Master reported to Batam and Singapore Vessel Traffic Information System (VTIS) of unauthorised boarding of 3 perpetrators

❖ Crew sighted perpetrators in engine room workshop and managed to detain them

❖ **16 Mar 20 at about 1303 hrs:** Indonesian Navy boarded the bulk carrier

❑ Arrested the three perpetrators for investigation and prosecution

❖ Nothing was stolen and crew was not injured



Lessons learned

- ❖ Timely reporting of incident to coastal State
- ❖ Crew should not engage in physical confrontation with perpetrators
- ❖ Prompt response by law enforcement agency

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IV. Case Studies

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3. Manila Bay, Philippines



❖ **30 Oct 20:** PCG patrol boat was conducting patrol within the vicinity waters of Manila Bay when they arrested 14 perpetrators who stole cargoes from two barges towed by tug boat, *Mika*

❖ PCG arrested the perpetrators and towed their motor bancas with the stolen cargo to Coast Guard Station Manila to file criminal charges



Lessons learned

- ❖ Intensified patrol and law enforcement by PCG
- ❖ Arrest and prosecution of the perpetrators

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