

Nautical Forum

Situation of Piracy & Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia - 2022

ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre

17 January 2023

SCOPE

- ❖ Situation in Asia – 2022
- ❖ Situation Update by Location
- ❖ Collaborative & Cooperative Efforts

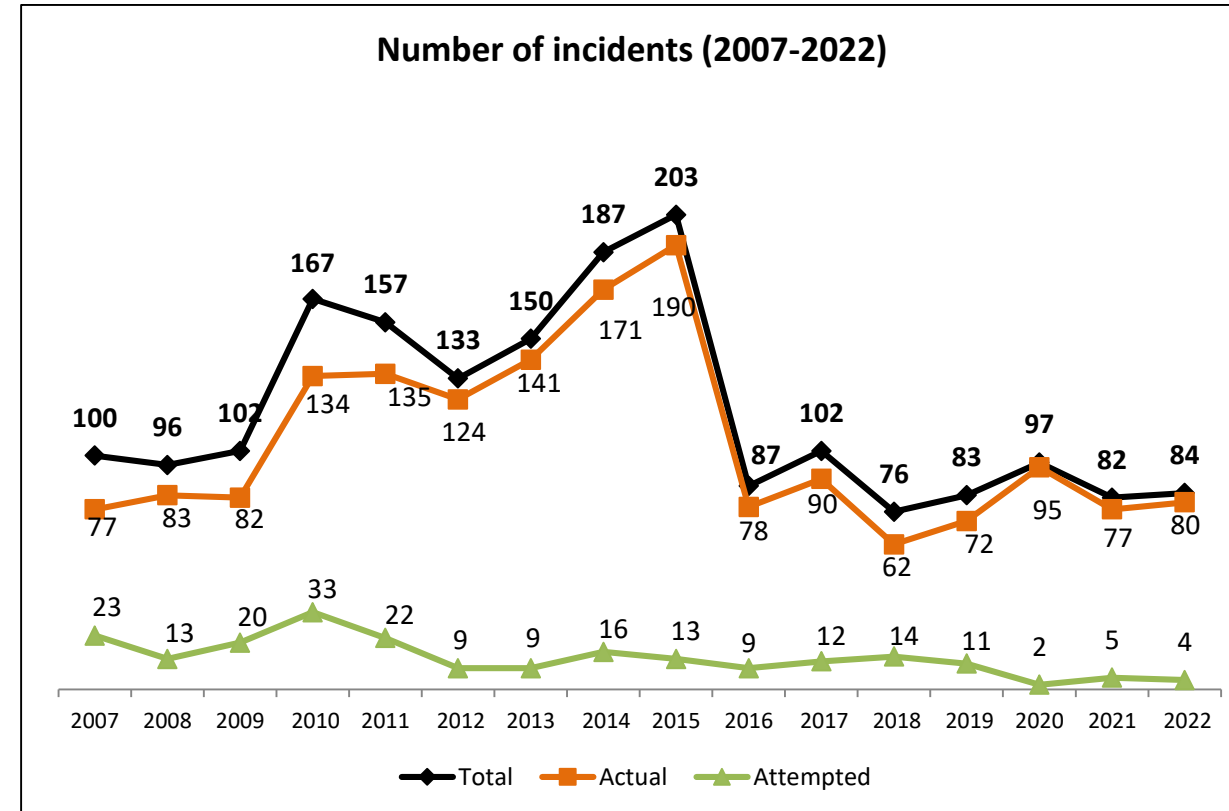
Situation in Asia - 2022

Overview

- Incidents increased marginally
 - 84** total incidents in 2022 compared to **82** in 2021
 - Increase** of incidents in: Singapore Strait (by 6), Bangladesh (by 5), Malaysia (1), South China Sea (1)
Decrease of incidents in: Philippines (by 7), Indonesia (by 3)
- 65% of incidents in Asia occurred in Singapore Strait (55 of 84)
- No incident of abduction of crew by Abu Sayyaf Group in 2022
 - Philippine Coast Guard **downgraded threat** from 'POTENTIALLY HIGH' to '**MODERATE**'
 - Threat of abduction of crew however, remains.
- Severity level of incidents
 - No CAT 1** incident (most serious incidents), 2nd time in 16 years
 - Majority (69%) were CAT 4** incidents (perpetrators not armed, crew not injured)
 - Some incidents involved with violence by perpetrators
Seriously injured: 1, Assaulted: 2, Threatened: 1

Number of incidents

- 84 incidents (80 actual & 4 attempted)
- 1 incident of **piracy** (on high seas involving fishing boat – universal jurisdiction)
- 83 incidents of **Armed Robbery/Theft** (internal waters, territorial seas & archipelagic waters – coastal States jurisdiction)
- Collaborative & cooperative efforts by law enforcement agencies to deal with incidents in their AoR & shipping industry to make timely reporting to coastal State

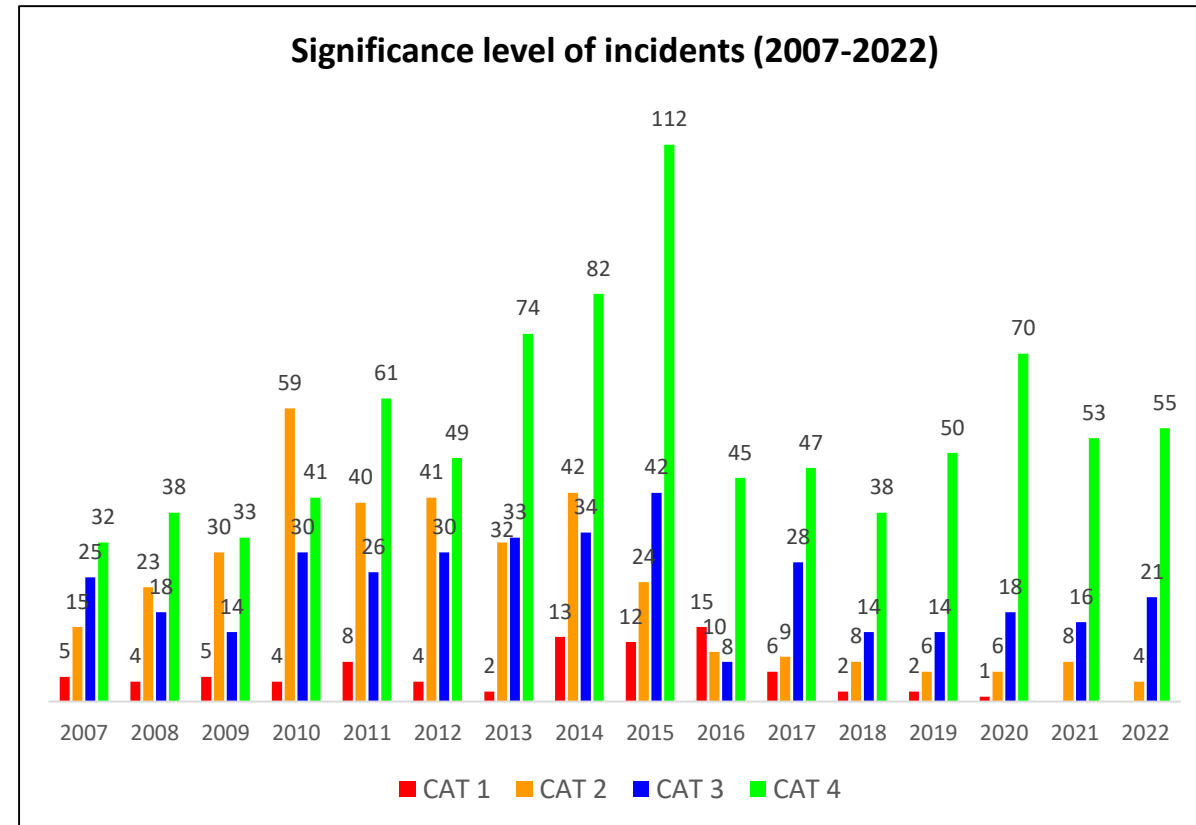


Situation in Asia - 2022

(cont'd)

Severity of incidents

- 80 actual incidents
 - 4 x **CAT 2**, 21 x **CAT 3** and 55 x **CAT 4**
 - Compared to 2021 -
 - **50% Decrease** in **CAT 2** incidents
 - **31% Increase** in **CAT 3** incidents
 - **Majority (69%) CAT 4** incidents (perpetrators **not armed** & crew **not injured**)
- Incidents were **less severe** in 2022 compared to 2021
 - 2022:
 - 1 incident of crew seriously injured, 2 incidents crew assaulted, 1 incident crew threatened
 - 2021:
 - 2 incidents crew assaulted, 5 incidents crew held hostage temporarily, 5 incidents crew threatened



Situation in Asia - 2022

(cont'd)

Location of incidents

- Singapore Strait (55)
- Bangladesh (5)
- Malaysia (2)
- South China Sea (1)
- Indonesia (10)
- Philippines (4)
- India (5)
- Vietnam (2)

Number of incidents in 2022 vs 2021

➤ Increase:

- Singapore Strait [55 incidents vs 49 incidents]
- Bangladesh [5 incidents vs 0 incident]
- Malaysia [2 incidents vs 1 incident]
- South China Sea [1 incident vs 0 incident]

➤ Decrease:

- Indonesia [10 incidents vs 13 incidents]
- Philippines [4 incidents vs 11 incidents]

➤ Consistent:

- India [5 incidents vs 5 incidents]
- Vietnam [2 incidents vs 2 incidents]

Areas of Concern

- Continued occurrence of incidents in Singapore Strait
- Threat of abduction of crew for ransom in Sulu-Celebes Seas

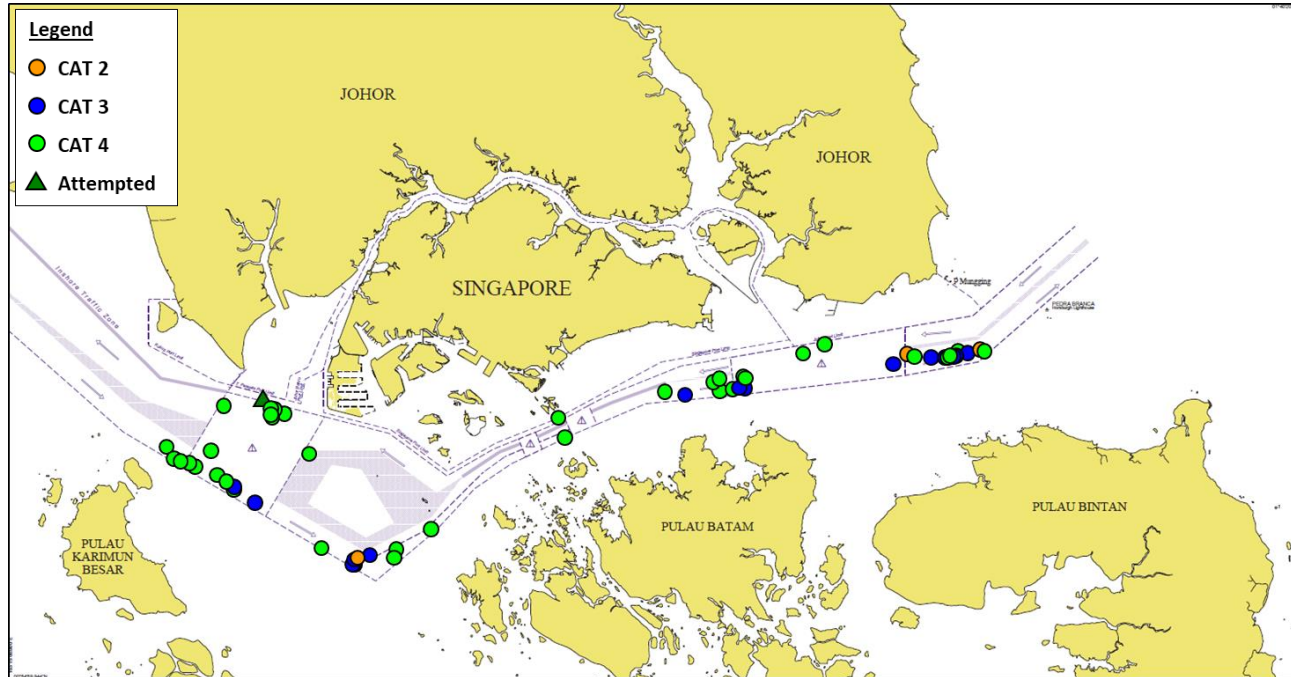
Situation Update by Location

Singapore Strait – Overview (2022)

1. 65% were CAT 4 incidents (36 of 55)
2. 53% incidents involved groups of 1-3 men (29 of 55)
3. 67% no information on weapons carried by perpetrators, or perpetrators not armed (37 of 55)
4. No injuries reportedly suffered by crew
 - Two incidents reported crew tied up, threatened and pushed to the floor
5. 51% reported nothing was stolen &/or no information of losses (28 of 55)
 - Unsecured items (13), engine spares (11), ship stores (2), Cash/personal item (1)
6. Types of ships boarded: Bulk carriers (53%), tug boats/supply vessels (25%), tankers (22%)
7. Bigger ships mostly boarded while underway in the Eastbound lane; tug boats/supply vessels boarded while in Westbound lane
8. 85% of incidents occurred during hours of darkness [47 of 55]
 - 2 incidents (1900-2000 hrs), 34 incidents (2100-0259 hrs), 11 incidents (0300-0559 hrs)

Situation Update by Location

Singapore Strait - Location (2022)



Eastbound lane (35)

Bulk carrier (24)
Tanker (9)
Tug boat & barge (2)

Westbound lane (6)

Tug boat & barge (6)

Outside of TSS (2)

Tanker (1)
Tug boat & barge (1)

Separation Zone (1)

Tug boat & supply vessel (1)

Precautionary Area (11)

Bulk carrier (5)
Tug boat/supply vessel & barge/oil rig (4)
Tanker (2)

Past 5 years ...

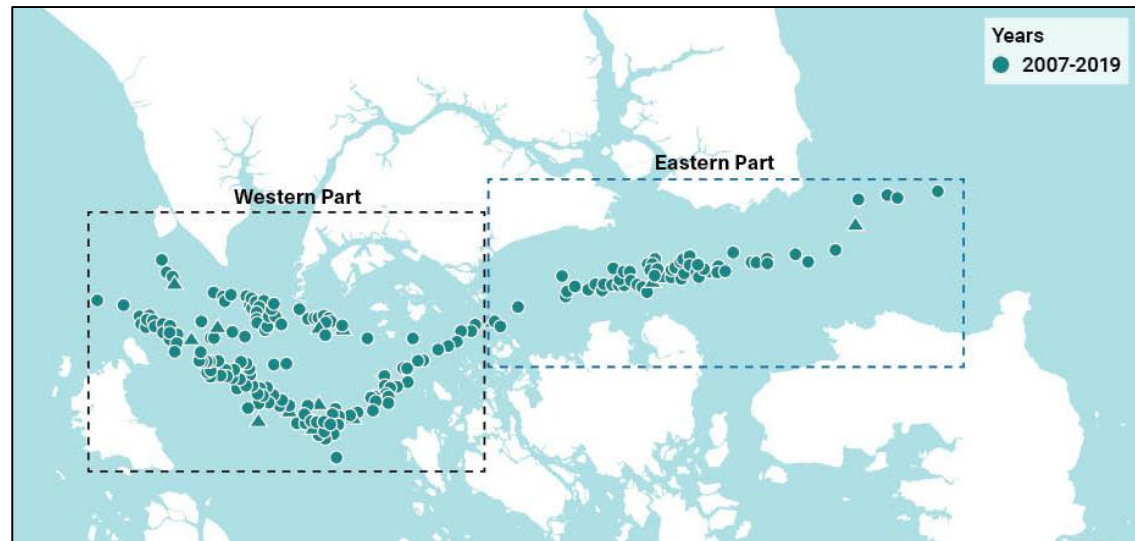
➤ 99 (2015) → 2 (2016) → 8 (2017) → 7 (2018) → 31 (2019) → 34 (2020) → 49 (2021) → **55** (2022)

2022

➤ 3 x CAT 2, 15 x CAT 3, 36 x CAT 4, 1 x Attempted

Situation Update by Location (cont'd)

Singapore Strait – Locations (2007-2019 vs 2020-2022)



Location of incidents in SS (2007-2019)



Location of incidents in SS (2020-2022)

- 2007-2019: **75%** of incidents occurred in the **Western Part** of SS (196 of 263)
- 2020-2022: **70%** of incidents occurred in the **Eastern Part** of SS (96 of 138)

More incidents occurred in the Eastern Part during 2020-2022

Singapore Strait – Bigger ships vs Tug boats/supply vessels - 2022



Location of incidents in SS – bigger ships



Location of incidents in SS – tug boats/supply vessels

- Bigger ships: More in Eastern part, all in eastbound lane & precautionary area of TSS
- Tug boats/supply vessels: More in Western Part, mostly in westbound lane of TSS

Situation Update by Location (cont'd)

Singapore Strait – Modus Operandi (2007-2021 vs 2022)

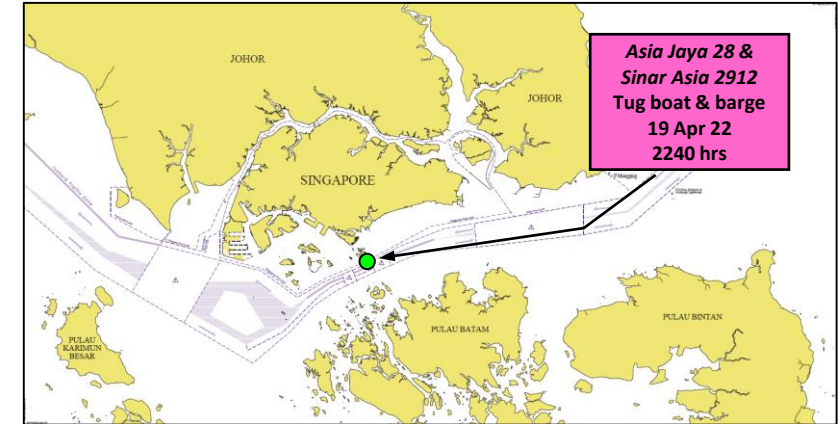
	2007-2021	2022
Number of perpetrators	4-6 men (49%)	1-3 men (53%)
Type of weapons carried	No information available (61%)	No information available (58%)
Treatment of crew	No confrontation with crews (82%)	No confrontation with crew (96%)
Items stolen	Nothing stolen &/or no info (52%)	Nothing stolen &/or no info (51%)
Type of ships boarded	Bulk carrier (63%)	Bulk carrier (53%)
Time of incident	Hours of darkness (83%)	Hours of darkness (85%)

Situation Update by Location

(cont'd)

Singapore Strait – Arrest of Perpetrators

- On 19 Apr 22, tug boat, *Asia Jaya 28* towing barge *Sinar Asia 2912* off Kusu Island (Singapore) in eastbound lane of TSS
- Two unauthorised persons sighted escaping from barge
- Master reported incident to Singapore VTIS
- Singapore Police Coast Guard boarded barge, arrested 8 perpetrators & 1 crew
- **Investigation:** Crew of tug boat conspired with perpetrators to steal scrap metal from barge
- All 9 men charged & sentenced in State Court of Singapore



(Clockwise) Sampan, knife and scrap metal seized by the police
(Source: Singapore Police Coast Guard)

Situation Update by Location

(cont'd)

Singapore Strait – Arrest of Perpetrators

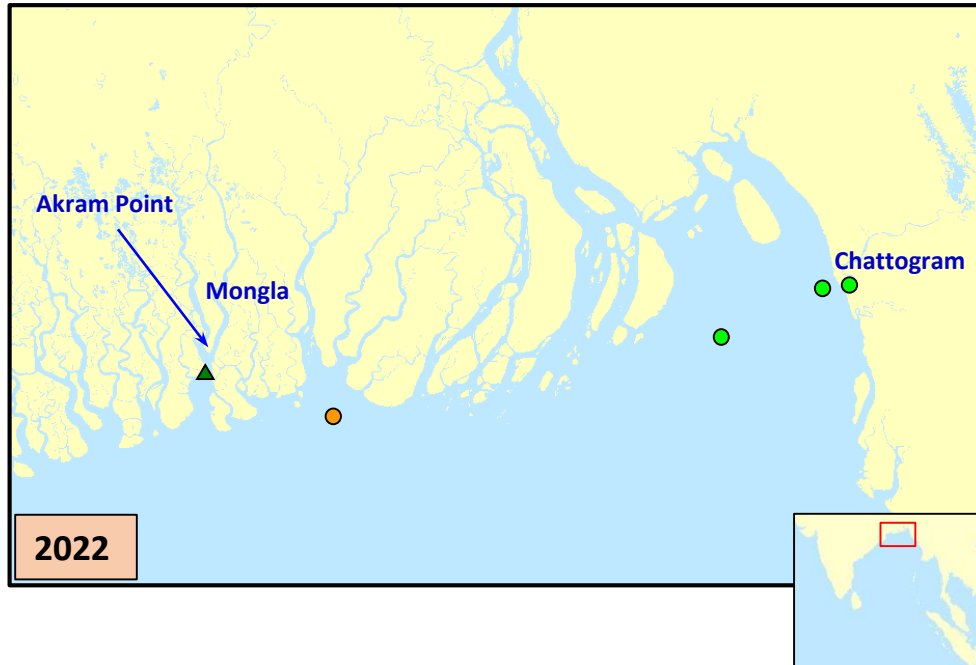
- On 3 Nov 22, tug boat, *Bina Marine 81* towing cargo barge, *Bina Marine 72 A* underway in Singapore Strait
- Master informed by POLCOM, through Singapore VTIS, 4 small wooden boats sighted alongside barge
- Search conducted by crew and master confirmed sighting with Singapore VTIS
- Batam VTIS contacted master & Indonesian Police Coast Guard deployed vessels
- 7 perpetrators arrested & 6 wooden boats seized
- Another 18 perpetrators escaped
- 400 kg of scrap metal stolen & crew was not injured



Situation Update by Location

(cont'd)

Bangladesh



Past 5 years ...

➤ 11 (2018) → 0 (2019) → 5 (2020) → 0 (2021) → **5** (2022)

2022

➤ 1 x **CAT 2**, 3 x **CAT 4**, 1 x Attempted

➤ Chattogram Anchorages (3)

- Tankers (3)
- Cans of paint, drums of lubricating oil, gangway wire coil & ship stores stolen
- **Bangladesh Coast Guard recovered stolen items in 2 incidents**

➤ Mongla (1)

- Bulk carrier
- Ship property/stores stolen

➤ Akram Point (1)

- 6 perpetrators tried boarding vessel but failed due to alertness of crew
- **Bangladesh Coast Guard arrested perpetrators & handed over to police**

Comments

- Commend good efforts of law enforcement agencies in recovery of stolen items & arrest

Situation Update by Location

(cont'd)

Bangladesh – Arrest & Recovery

Chattogram Anchorage

Wawasan Topaz (15 Mar 22): 6 perpetrators boarded tanker, stole ship stores & escaped

- Within 20 min, Bangladesh Coast Guard boarded ship & investigated
- Later, duty patrol recovered stolen items

BLPG Sophia (16 Apr 22): Perpetrators boarded tanker, stole 20 cans of paint & two drums of lubricating oil & escaped

- Bangladesh Coast Guard dispatched team to investigate
- Recovered stolen items after combing operation

Akram Point

Blue Marlin (11 Jul 22): 6 perpetrators attempted to board vessel

- Alarm raised & perpetrators failed to board ship
- Master reported to Hiron Point Pilot/Port Control Station
- Bangladesh Coast Guard patrol boat arrested perpetrators & handed over to police



(Top & Bottom) Recovery of stolen items
(Source: Bangladesh authorities)



Situation Update by Location

(cont'd)

Indonesia



Past 5 years ...

➤ 27 (2018) → 23 (2019) → 22 (2020) → 13 (2021) → **10** (2022)

2022

➤ 4 x **CAT 3**, 6 x **CAT 4**

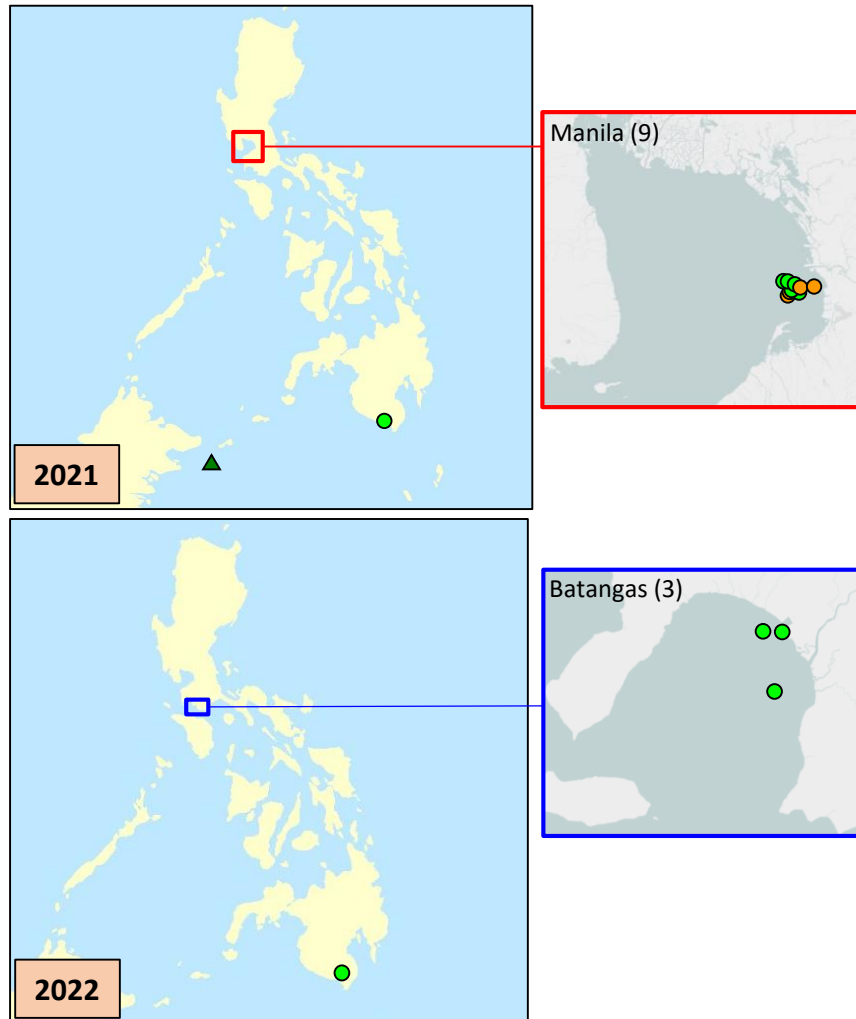
Comments

- Improvement at Tanjung Priok Anchorage, Jakarta (6 → 3)
- Indonesia increased enforcement against ships at anchor or drifting in Indonesian waters without obtaining authorization from local authorities
- Ships found guilty fined & detained

Situation Update by Location

(cont'd)

Philippines (excluding abduction of crew)



Past 5 years ...

➤ 9 (2018) → 7 (2019) → 13 (2020) → 11 (2021) → 4 (2022)

2022

- 4 x **CAT 4**
- **Batangas Anchorages (3)**
 - RORO car carrier (2), Tanker (1)
 - Fire hydrant cap, fire hose nozzle, rope bundle, grease cans stolen
- **Port of Makar, General Santos (1)**
 - Container ship (1)
 - Nothing stolen

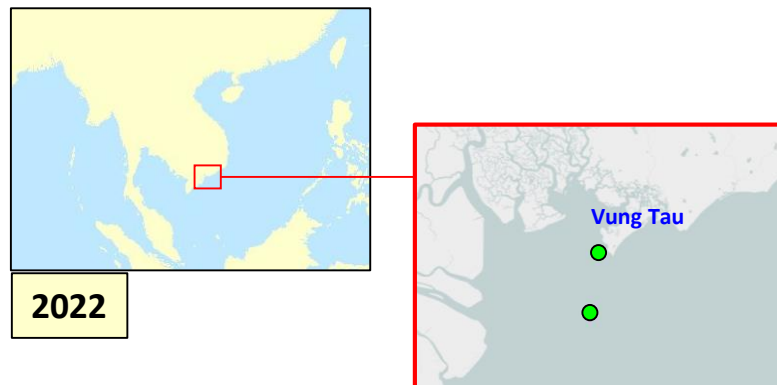
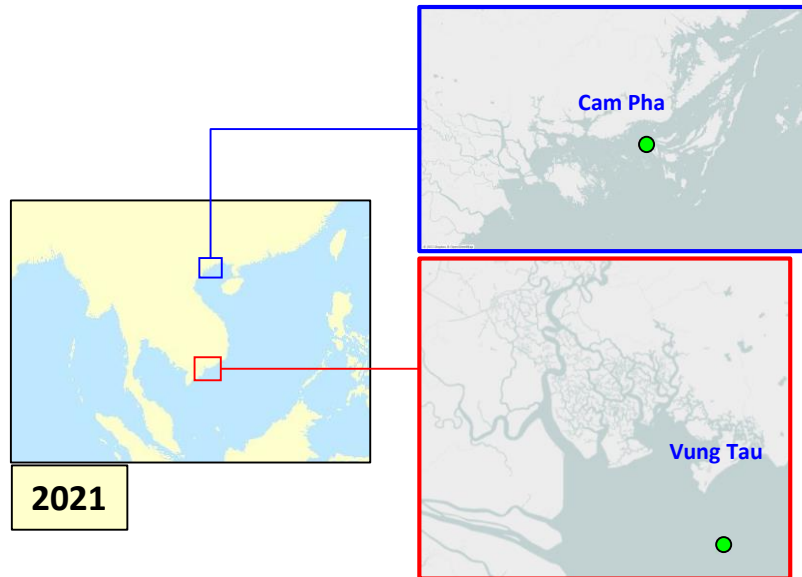
Comments

- **Improvement** at Manila Anchorage
 - No incident since Sep 2021 after arrest of leader & members of criminal group

Situation Update by Location

(cont'd)

Vietnam



Past 5 years ...

➤ 4 (2018) → 2 (2019) → 6 (2020) → 2 (2021) → 2 (2022)

2022

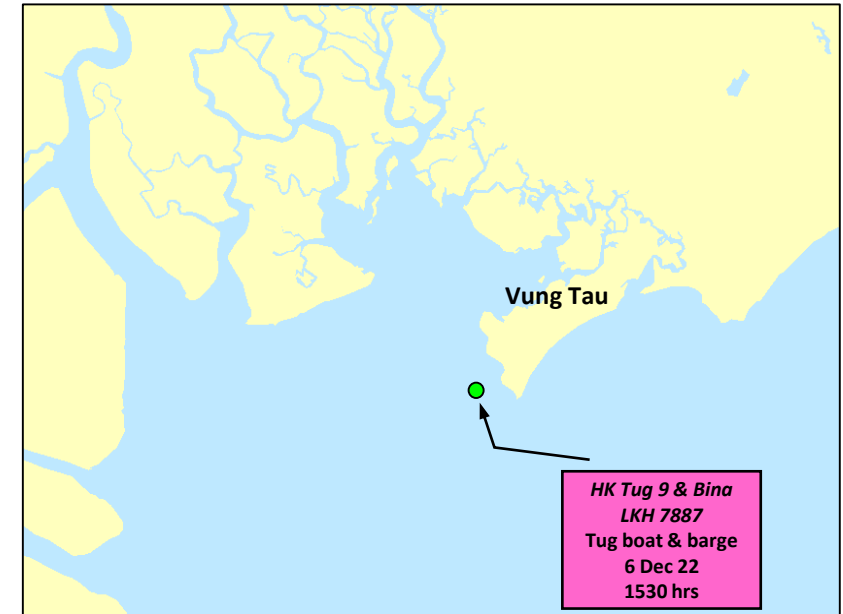
- 2 x **CAT 4**
- **Vung Tau Anchorage (2)**
 - Chemical tanker (1), tug boat & barge (1)
 - Ship stores and scrap metal
 - Vietnam Border Guard apprehended two perpetrators in one incident

Comments

- Commend good efforts of law enforcement agencies (arrest of perpetrators)

Vietnam – Arrest of Perpetrators

- On 6 Dec 22, tug boat, *HK Tug 9* towing barge, *LKH 7887* off Vung Tau, Vietnam
- Vietnam Border Guard (VBG) approached tug boat and informed master about 2 men on board barge unloading scrap metal onto a small boat
- Master subsequently confirmed men were not part of crew
- VBG deployed their craft, apprehended perpetrators & seized boat
- Some scrap metal from barge missing; crew not injured



Abduction of Crew in Sulu-Celebes Seas

- **No incident** reported since January 2020
- **No crew** currently held in captivity
- Presence of remnants of Abu Sayyaf Group in Sulu & off Tawi-Tawi, **threat of abduction of crew remains**
- Philippine Coast Guard recommends **downgrading threat** from 'POTENTIALLY HIGH' to 'MODERATE' [*Incidents possible to occur but relatively less severe in nature*]
- On 15 Sep 22, ReCAAP ISC updated Advisory to ships to **consider re-route from area as option**
 - Ships transiting area - masters strongly encouraged to **exercise vigilance & report** immediately to Ops Centre of Philippines & Malaysia

Collaborative & Cooperative Efforts

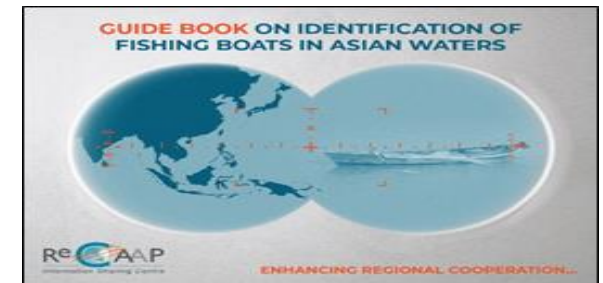
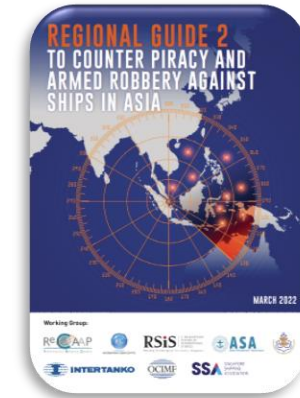
Shared responsibility & collective efforts of coastal States, shipping industry & ReCAAP ISC to curb increase of incidents

Littoral States

- Increase enforcement efforts by relevant authorities at sea and on land & respond promptly to reported incidents
- Enhance information sharing & strengthen coordination among littoral States
- Issue regular broadcasts to alert ships passing the Strait & remind them to be vigilant

Ship master & crew

- Keep abreast of latest situation, advisories & broadcasts
- Adopt preventive measures, exercise vigilance, report incidents immediately to coastal authorities



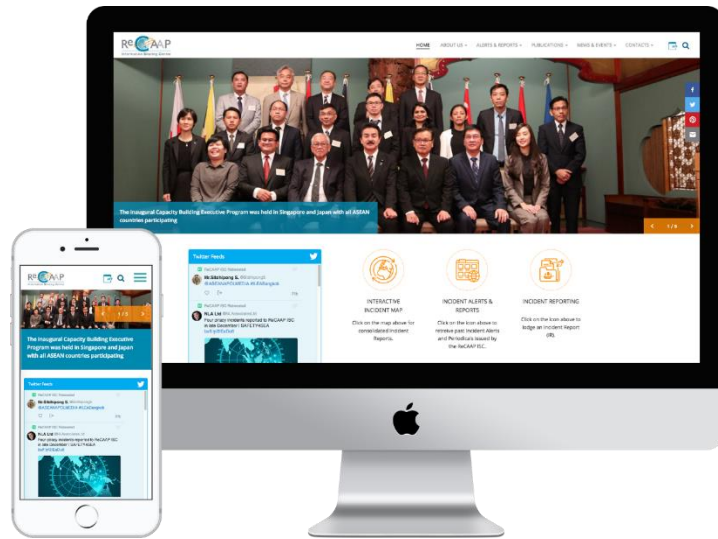
Collaborative & Cooperative Efforts (cont'd)

➤ ReCAAP ISC

- Produce timely & accurate reports, Incident Alerts, Warnings & Advisory
- Data Analytics to provide in-depth analysis & insights of correlations of incidents with external factors
- Conduct capacity building activities for ReCAAP Focal Points & regional authorities
- Organise virtual Capacity Building lectures by experts
- Publish guide books & posters
- Engage shipping industry: Dialogues, Nautical Forum, Piracy Conference, Maritime Roundtable
- Profile work of ReCAAP and Focal Points at IMO, INTERPOL, UNODC, APHoMSA, HACGAM, etc.



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