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TIPS ON AVOIDING
# PIRACY,
# ROBBERY
# AND THEFT

IMB

ReCAAP
Information Sharing Centre

BIMCO

# Foreword

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Unfortunately, piracy, armed robberies and theft from ships remain hazards faced by seafarers. This guide has been developed by BIMCO in co-operation with IMB and ReCAAP to provide general advice for seafarers as to how to reduce the risks of unwanted intrusions on ships. The guide is not intended to be exhaustive but rather to be used as a tool for the crew and officers, alongside the IMO Guidelines and the Ship Security Plan.

NB: This map is for illustrative purposes only. It does not contain all areas where piracy, robbery and theft take place and it may change over time. You should therefore always consult the three sponsoring organizations for the latest trends and info on piracy attacks. The contact information is available in section 4 of this guide

● Areas of reported incidents
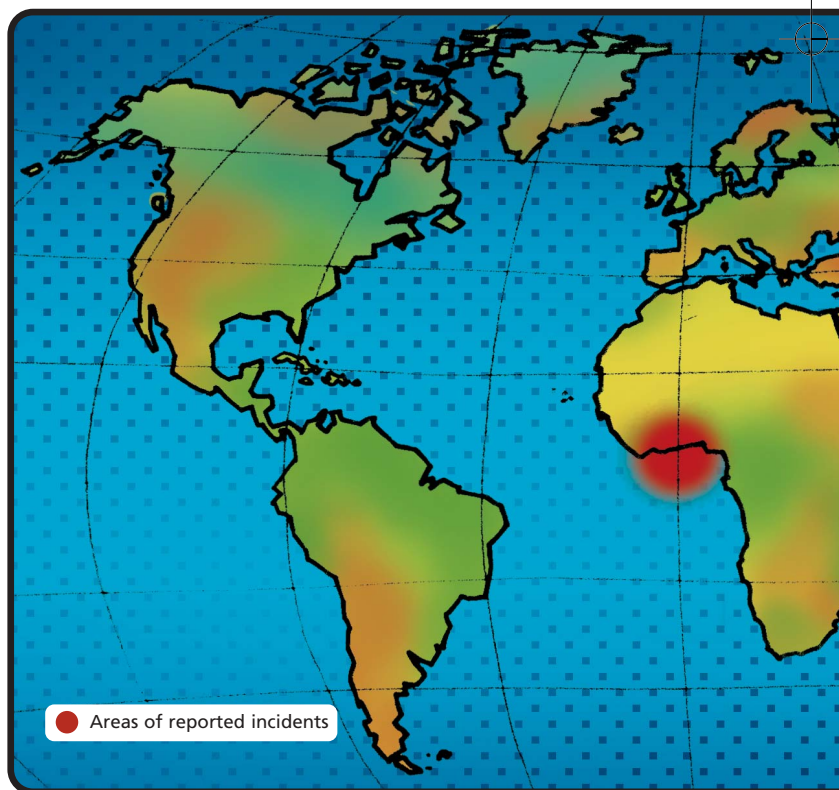
# Where?

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On a world-wide basis, the majority of attacks against ships take place at port anchorage areas.

Whilst restricting access to ships in port is an important preventive measure against drug smuggling and persons stowing away, to combat the threats of piracy and armed robbery, access to vessels must be restricted at all times, both in port and at sea.

Today, many attackers are armed with knives or handguns. In some cases they are equipped with more sophisticated weapons such as machine guns, and there have been incidents where grenades have been used.
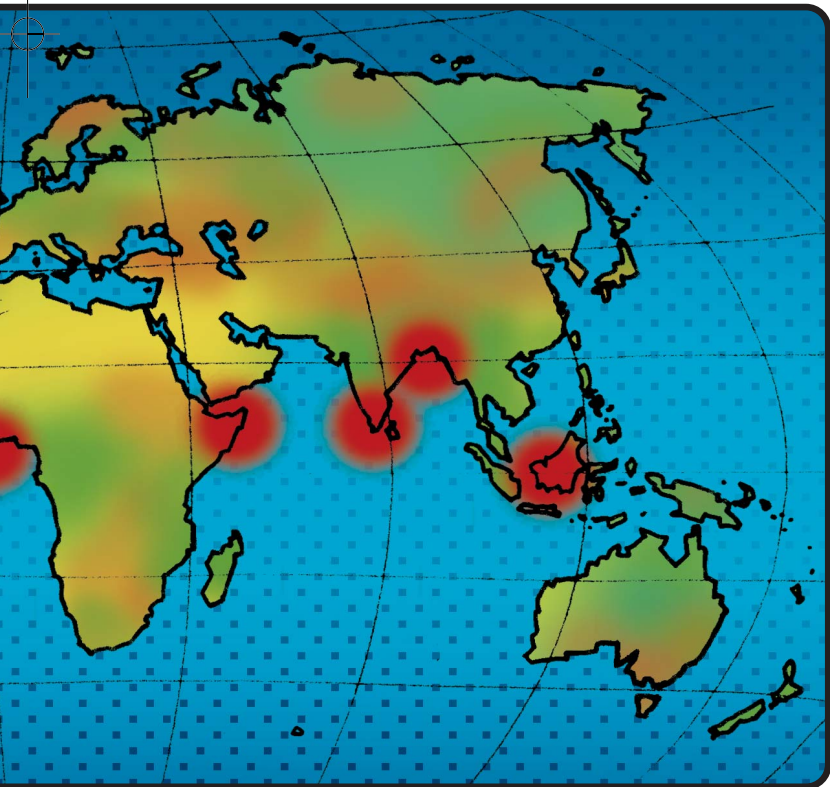
# Which and what?

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Incidents vary in form and aggression from thefts in port to violent attacks on the high seas. It is important that the response is adjusted in accordance with the threat so the situation does not escalate.

Attacks range from petty thefts to deliberate targeting of vessels, hijacking and kidnapping.

Seafarers can refer to the following sources for the latest reports/news on piracy and armed robbery activity:

- The IMB: The IMB Piracy Reporting Centre broad-
  casts daily SITREP on the latest reported attacks
  through INMARSAT's SafetyNet. Ship masters are
  advised to refer to these reports for timely and
  relevant risk information as vessels transit risk
  areas. The IMB also publishes weekly piracy reports
  at www.icc-ccs.org/prc/piracyreport.php

- The ReCAAP ISC: The ReCAAP ISC publishes monthly
  reports on the piracy and armed robbery situation
  in Asia. These reports provide analysis on patterns
  and trends of piracy and armed robbery in Asia, and
  share best practices. Where necessary, the ReCAAP
  ISC also provides incidents alerts on significant inci-
  dents. These reports and alerts are available at
  www.recaap.org

- BIMCO Newsletter and BIMCO website:
  www.bimco.org

# What do they want?

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- Money.
- Crew belongings.
- Cigarettes and alcohol.
- Stores.
- Ropes and moorings.
- Hostages.
- The ship itself.
- Cargo.

When the vessel is in port please make sure not to tempt thieves by leaving valuables and money where it can be seen. Furthermore, to the extent possible avoid keeping large cash amounts on board. Stores and ropes and moorings should be stowed away during port calls and when in piracy infested areas.

## Who are they?

**8**

Just as the objectives of the intruders may be different, they may also be organised in many different ways.

• Individuals/Opportunist Thieves.
• Opportunist gangs/Pirates.
• Syndicates and separatist groups.
• Organised criminal gangs.
• Pirates posing as Local Militia.

# Lock and check!

**10**

When in areas where attacks are frequent, secure all access to the accommodation, bearing in mind the need to escape in case of fire or emergency, and always keeping one point of access available to watchmen on deck. Keep cabin doors and windows closed and locked. Lockers and hatches should be sealed to the greatest extent possible, Remove all portable equipment from the deck and avoid, if possible, keeping large cash amounts on board.
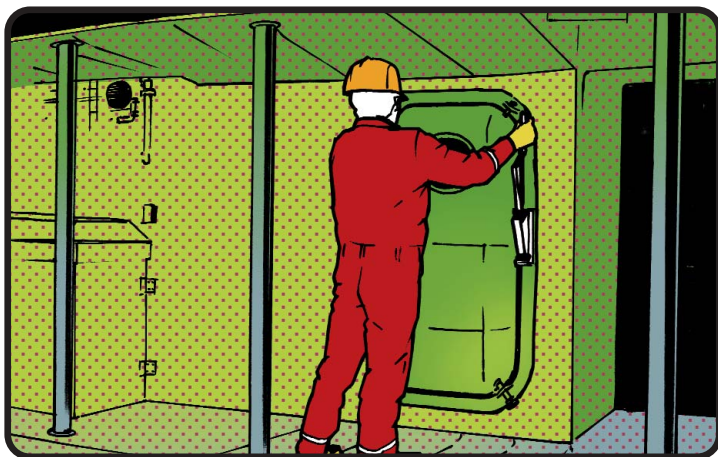
# Access control and watch-keeping

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The ISPS Code requires that all access to ships must be restricted. Extra care should be taken when in areas where thefts are known to take place.

• At some ports locally hired gangway and other watchmen can not always be fully trusted to do their job or stay awake.

• Enhanced deck watch-keeping should be implemented at high risk ports, whilst along-side and especially at anchorages.

• SSO liaison with the PFSO or Port Security is recommended when alongside.

# Raise the gangway at night

**12**

Gangways, ladders, ramps and draft ladders should be raised or closed when not in use and also at night when cargo operations are not taking place.

Most incidents taking place in ports are petty thefts – although they may be undertaken by organised criminals.

Preventing easy but illegal access to the ship will contribute to avoiding presenting opportunities to the criminals.

At night, watches should be kept on anchor chains, and stern warps when alongside – especially in high risk areas.

# Illumination of the vessel

**13**

Arrange proper illumination of all decks and quayside areas during the night.

Arrange light on deck and the quayside.

It has a deterrent effect to demonstrate that the crew is alert and prepared for an illegal boarding. A well lit area being frequently inspected does not present an easy target for the occasional petty thief.

Detecting a thief before boarding the ship avoids a potentially dangerous confrontation on board.

# Make rounds

**14**

Decks should be monitored regularly and in areas of particular danger, additional watch-keepers should ensure a good lookout at all times.

Deck watchmen should make their rounds at irregular intervals to avoid thieves timing a boarding in between rounds. Crewmen on watch should be in radio contact with the bridge, checking in at regular intervals.

• Make rounds on deck.

• Make the rounds at irregular intervals.

• Stay in radio contact with the bridge.

• Place checklist on bridge to ensure that watch-keeping is consistent and that all security conditions of the ship are met.

• Crewmen should always report suspicious activity to the OOW.
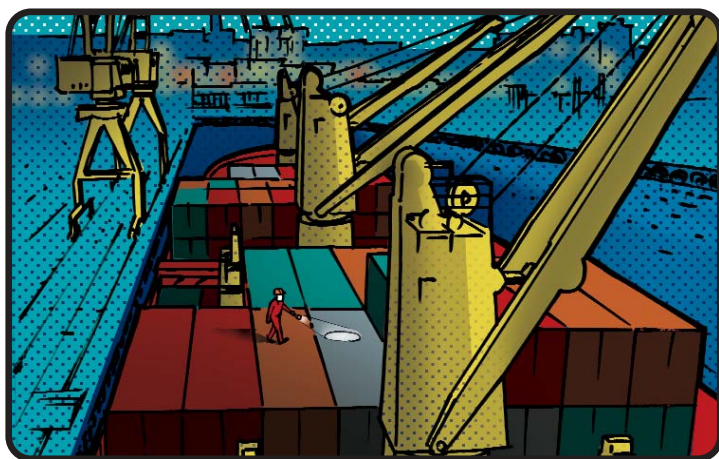
# Be on the alert!

**15**

Identifying suspicious persons or craft at the earliest possible moment and letting them know that they have been detected will often discourage intruders from attempting to board vessels. Detection can be made apparent by means of sounding the ship's alarm or illuminating the suspects using lights, flares, etc.

Piracy acts often occur in the same areas and on moonless nights. When transiting known areas extra watch-keeping and full illumination of the ship will pay dividends.

Many vessels report successes in deterring intruders this way.

# Radio Communication

**16**

Bear in mind that attackers may be monitoring ship to ship/shore communication. Caution should be exercised when communicating over the radio in high risk areas, particularly in respect of information regarding the ship's position, cargo details, ETA etc.

A tactic sometimes used by attackers in some regions involves sending fake distress signals in order to lure ships close to the attackers. Be extra vigilant when monitoring distress signals in piracy-infested waters.

If suspicious activity is detected, it may be appropriate to warn other ships in the area via VHF.

# Radar

**17**

Attackers often use small high-speed craft. If such boats appear to be matching the speed and course of the ship or boats are closing in at high speed, this may be an indication that an attack is imminent. Law enforcement vessels are obliged to identify themselves to the Master.

The early detection of a possible attack and early preventive measures, such as illumination of the deck and raising the alarm, may discourage the attackers and prevent the attack from taking place.

## Stay off the coast and travel at high speed

**18**

Vessels trading along coasts known for pirate attacks are recommended to stay well away from shore and if possible maintain as high a speed as circumstances allow. Subject to the terms of the charter party, vessels should not loiter, e.g. awaiting pilot, bunkers stores etc., in areas where the risk of attack is high. Maintain good lookout - also astern - and keep as many lookouts as can be spared. Be aware that in some areas the recommendation is to stay more than 200 nautical miles off shore.

Ship Security Officers (SSOs) should liaise with Company Security Officers when planning voyages to evaluate potential risk areas.

The BIMCO Secretariat can assist regarding current "areas of reported incidents", advisories and recommended distances from shore.

## Keep water
## hoses pressurized

**19**

Keep water hoses under pressure and readily available for use.

**Caution!**
If the attackers are armed and boarding is inevitable, using the water hose against them may put the crew at higher risk of reprisal.

# Reporting of incidents

**20**

Be familiar with the relevant sections of the Ship Security Plan.

Develop an operating procedure to be placed on the bridge and crew spaces on "action to be taken when piracy/armed robberies take place."

Masters should exercise the action plan regularly; crew should be familiar with procedures and clearly understand "citadel", lockdown routines.

## Send the security alert

During an attack, be aware of the approved reporting procedures.

The Master should forward a pre-formatted message to the IMB reporting Centre in the event of an attack and also an immediate report concerning the attack in pre-formatted message to the Rescue Co-ordination Centre (RCC) for the area.

Ensure that the entire crew is aware of when and how to use the vessel's Ship Security Alert System in accordance with the Ship Security Plan.

# After the incident - Reporting

**21**

The reporting procedures outlined in the Ship Security Plan (also in the ISM procedures) must be followed.

According to the ISPS Code, all incidents taking place in ports must be reported to the Port Facility Security Officers as soon as possible.

Ship and Company Security Officers should remember to ensure that the information reaches the appropriate authorities and organisations immediately.

This is important to ensure that other ships can be warned of potential dangers and the pattern of the pirates.

In Asia the national authorities will forward information obtained from PFSOs to the **ReCAAP Information Sharing Center\*** in Singapore to facilitate regional efforts to investigate and prosecute the perpetrators.

In addition to the reporting requirements outlined in Ship Security Plans, BIMCO recommends that copies of reports should also be submitted to **IMB Piracy Reporting Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia\*\*:**

**\* ReCAAP ISC**
**NOL Building**
**456 Alexandra Road,**
**#11-02, Singapore 119962**
**E-mail: info@recaap.org**
**Tel.: +65 63763063**
**and +65 63763088.**
**Fax: +65 63763066**

**\*\* IMB Piracy Reporting**
**Centre, Kuala Lumpur,**
**Malaysia.**
**Tel.: +60 3 2078 5763**
**Fax: +60 3 2078 5769**
**Telex: MA34199 IMBPCI**
**E-mail: IMBKL@icc-ccs.org**
**24 Hour Anti Piracy**
**HELPLINE**
**Tel.: +60 3 2031 0014**

# BIMCO

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In order to enable BIMCO to monitor members' experiences and take appropriate action on behalf of members, it is crucial that reports are submitted to the Secretariat.

Copies of Master's reports are sufficient for this purpose, and a convenient reporting form is also available for members to use.

Reports received by BIMCO are routinely forwarded to the IMO, the IMB and the ReCAAP ISC as appropriate, thereby easing members' administrative burdens.

Members who can report to the aforementioned parties, as well as to their ships' Flag States, are encouraged to do so.

# BIMCO
# Piracy reporting form

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The reporting form can be found on the BIMCO Website and in this brochure. Masters' reports and/or completed reporting forms can be submitted to the BIMCO Secretariat via:

**Security@bimco.org**
or fax: +45 44366868

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## BIMCO Reporting Form
## Attacks against vessels

Please take a few minutes to fill in this form and mail, fax or email it to:
BIMCO, Security and International Affairs Department, Bagsvaerdvej 161, DK-2880 Bagsvaerd, Denmark. Fax: +45 4436 6868, E-mail Security@bimco.org

**1. Vessel particulars**

| Owner/Operator: | | Name of vessel: | |
|---|---|---|---|
| IMO Number | | Number of crew: | |

**All information related to vessels identification will be kept confidential by BIMCO**

| Type of vessel: | Bulk Carrier ☐ Container ☐ General Cargo ☐ Passenger ☐ Ro/Ro ☐ Tanker ☐ Other: | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Size of vessel (GT) | | Flag: | |

**2. Location and time of incident**

| Position: | | Area: | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Port: | | Country: | |
| Date/Month/Year: | Time: (Hours) | Duration: (Hours) | |
| Vessel attacked during hours of darkness? | Yes ☐ No ☐ | Were preventive measures against attacks taken on board? | Yes ☐ No ☐ |
| If yes, please describe: | | | |

**3. Details of incidents**

**4. Consequences**

| Consequence for Crew: | |
|---|---|
| Consequence for Ship: | |
| Consequence for Cargo: | |

**5. Actions**

| Action taken by the Master/crew: | |
|---|---|
| Action taken by the Authorities: | |

**6. Reporting**

| Incident reported to the coastal authority? | Yes ☐ No ☐ | If yes, to whom? | Port Facility Security Officer (PFSO) ☐ Others, please specify: |
|---|---|---|---|
| Incident reported to other authorities or parties: | Yes ☐ No ☐ | If yes, to whom? | |
| Reporting party: | | BIMCO Reg. No.: | |

**7. Any additional remarks/comments may be attached to this form.**

# BIMCO Reflecting your interests

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BIMCO, established in 1905, is the world's largest international shipping association with approximately 2,400 members situated in 123 countries. The owner-members of BIMCO control a fleet of about 550 million deadweight tonnes, thereby representing 65% of the world's merchant fleet.

BIMCO seeks to protect the fair treatment and welfare of seafarers at all times.

BIMCO
Bagsvaerdvej 161
2880 Bagsvaerd
Denmark
**www.bimco.org**

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