

PRESS RELEASE

The Eighth Governing Council Meeting of the ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ISC)

1 At the Eighth Governing Council Meeting of the ReCAAP ISC held on 4-6 March 2014 in Singapore, Governors from the nineteen¹ ReCAAP countries commended the ReCAAP ISC on achieving further milestones in research and analysis, capacity building, engagement and co-operation with other organisations with interests in combating piracy and armed robbery against ships. Partner Organisations from International Organisations and maritime industry, as well as External Participants also participated in the Meeting.

2 The Council welcomed the accession of Australia to the ReCAAP with effect from 3 August 2013 and their participation at this Governing Council Meeting. The expansion of ReCAAP membership demonstrates ReCAAP's credibility and growing relevance in the international maritime community, and further underscores the importance of international cooperation in combating piracy and armed robbery effectively. In this light, the Council recognised the importance of full participation of all countries listed in Article 18(1) of the ReCAAP Agreement, and hoped that those who have yet to sign and ratify the Agreement would do so to collectively address the issue of piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia. The Council also welcomed external participants² to attend part of its deliberation.

3 The Council discussed the "Future of the ReCAAP ISC" and affirmed the need to enhance its relevance. The Council agreed to continue to discuss the "Future of the ReCAAP ISC" with the goal of strengthening ReCAAP ISC's role and raise its stature as an internationally recognised centre of excellence for information sharing.

4 The Council further commended the ReCAAP ISC on the release of its Annual Report 2013, the continuous improvement of the situation in Asia since 2010. The Council noted the incidents continue to be less severe in nature though the number of incidents had increased slightly compared to 2012. It was noted 77% of the 149 incidents reported in 2013 were petty theft and Category 3 (less significant) incidents, while Category 1 (very significant) and Category 2 (moderately significant) incidents had the greatest decrease year-on-year. The overall improvement of the situation of piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia in 2013 demonstrated the effectiveness of the ReCAAP information sharing network, and operational-level cooperation and collaboration among the stakeholders.

5 In the area of capacity building, the Council welcomed the successful conduct of various ReCAAP ISC capacity building activities including the *ReCAAP ISC Capacity Building Workshop 6/13* on 15-16 August 2013 in Singapore, and *ReCAAP Focal Point Senior Officers' Meeting 5/13* on 12-14 November 2013 in Guilin, China, co-organised with China Maritime Search and Rescue Centre of the People's Republic of China.

6 In addition, the Council was pleased to note the successful conduct of *Cluster Meeting 4/13* on 24-25 September 2013 in Manila, the Philippines, co-organised with the Philippine Coast Guard. The Meeting provided a platform in enhancing inter-ministry coordination, and an excellent ground to exchange views with the Philippines' maritime industry representatives.

¹ The ReCAAP countries are listed in Annexe 1.

² The list of external participants represented at the meeting is attached in Annexe 2.

7 The Council noted that ReCAAP ISC's reports are now frequently cited in media and industry publications. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has also held up the ReCAAP initiative as a model of inter-governmental co-operation against piracy that other regions could emulate. In addition, the ReCAAP ISC participated in several international conferences / forums on combating piracy matters.

8 The Council reiterated its serious concern over the piracy situation in the Gulf of Aden, off the coast of Somalia and off the coast of west Africa. The Council noted the relative success in recent years in operational coordination of international efforts and the positive work of the Contact Group on piracy off the coast of Somalia. The Council commended the concrete efforts of the ReCAAP ISC, under its Cooperation Agreement with the IMO, in the implementation of the Djibouti Code of Conduct (DCoC) through sharing of its experiences and expertise as part of the wider efforts of the international community to combat piracy off the coast of Somalia and recognises there is more to be done to achieve coherence among the growing number of maritime information sharing centres. Events in 2013 included the successful conduct of 2nd *Centre-to-Centre Dialogue* between the ReCAAP ISC and the Regional Information Sharing Centres of DCoC on 4-5 January 2014 in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman, funded by the Special Contribution of Japan, arising from the need for closer cooperation. The event was supported by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and Thailand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, endorsed by the IMO. The Dialogue was aimed to provide a platform for sharing the expertise and experience of ReCAAP ISC on engaging national focal points, discuss the technical and operational experiences of the ISCs to date, ways to promote national cross-agency cooperation and practical ways of linking ReCAAP and DCoC training and capacity building activities.

9 Representatives from industry organisations who attended the meeting also expressed their support for the ReCAAP initiative, and reiterated their desire to collaborate with the ReCAAP ISC.

10 The Council was pleased to note the ReCAAP ISC's initiative in engaging the members of shipping community by conducting the *ReCAAP ISC Piracy and Sea Robbery Conference* and the *Nautical Forum* in 2013. The Council looked forward to the conduct of ReCAAP ISC Piracy and Sea Robbery Conference 2014, jointly organised with BIMCO, INTERTANKO, and RSIS³ on 8 April 2014 in Singapore, with the main objective of engaging the shipping community. To this end, the Council urges ship masters to report incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships to the relevant authorities immediately, to enable a more effective response and encourage multi-channel reporting, as advocated by the IMO MSC Circ. 1333/1334.

³ RSIS: S.Rajaratnam School of International Studies – a Graduate School of Nanyang Technological University of Singapore

11 The Council welcomed the voluntary contributions pledged by the ReCAAP Contracting Parties towards the work of the ReCAAP ISC for FY 2014⁴ as follows:

Kingdom of the Netherlands	EUR	30,000	
People's Republic of China	USD	50,000	
Republic of India	USD	50,000	
Kingdom of Norway	USD	100,000	
Republic of Korea	SGD	175,000	
Japan	SGD	920,000	(estimate)
Republic of Singapore	SGD	1,600,000	(estimate)

This assistance is in addition to the secondment of staff from China, India, the Republic of Korea, Japan, the Philippines and Thailand.

12 The Council reiterated the importance of the ReCAAP ISC being the conduit between the law enforcement agencies and the shipping agencies, called for greater cooperation among the like-minded agencies in suppressing piracy and armed robbery against ships.

13 The Ninth Governing Council Meeting of the ReCAAP ISC is scheduled to be held during the week of 16-20 March 2015 in Singapore.

The ReCAAP ISC Governing Council
6 March 2014

(Please contact The ReCAAP ISC Secretariat, Ms Amy FANG at 6376 3091, for further enquiries.)

⁴ FY 2014: 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015

Further information on the ReCAAP and the ReCAAP ISC

FACT SHEET

About the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP), and the ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ISC)

The Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) is the first regional government-to-government agreement to promote and enhance cooperation against piracy and armed robbery in Asia. It was finalised on 11 November 2004 and entered into force on 4 September 2006. To date, 19 States have become Contracting Parties to ReCAAP.

The nineteen Contracting Parties to ReCAAP are Australia, the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the People's Republic of China, the Kingdom of Denmark, the Republic of India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Kingdom of Norway, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, the Kingdom of Thailand, the United Kingdom and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.

The ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ReCAAP ISC) was established under the Agreement, and was officially launched in Singapore on 29 November 2006. It was formally recognised as an international organisation on 30 January 2007.

The roles of the ReCAAP ISC are to:

- serve as a platform for information exchange with the ReCAAP Focal Points via the Information Network System (IFN); facilitate communications and information exchange among participating governments to improve incident response by member countries; analyse and provide accurate statistics of the piracy and armed robbery incidents to foster better understanding of the situation in Asia;
- facilitate capacity building efforts that help improve the capability of member countries in combating piracy and armed robbery in the region; and
- cooperate with organizations and like-minded parties on joint exercises, information sharing, capacity building programme, or other forms of cooperation, as appropriate, and agreed upon among the Contracting Parties.

The ReCAAP ISC facilitates exchange of information among the ReCAAP Focal Points through a secure web-based Information Network System (IFN). Through this network, the ReCAAP Focal Points are linked to each other as well as the ReCAAP ISC on a 24/7 basis, and are able to facilitate appropriate responses to incident. The agency receiving the incident report will manage the incident in accordance to its national policies and response procedures, and provide assistance to the victim ship where possible. The agency will in turn, inform their ReCAAP Focal Point which will submit an incident report to the ReCAAP ISC and its neighbouring Focal Points.

For more information about the ReCAAP and ReCAAP ISC, please visit <http://www.recaap.org>

Contracting Parties to the ReCAAP

1. Australia
2. People's Republic of Bangladesh
3. Brunei Darussalam
4. Kingdom of Cambodia
5. People's Republic of China
6. Kingdom of Denmark
7. Republic of India
8. Japan
9. Republic of Korea
10. Lao People's Democratic Republic
11. The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
12. Kingdom of the Netherlands
13. Kingdom of Norway
14. Republic of the Philippines
15. Republic of Singapore
16. Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
17. Kingdom of Thailand
18. United Kingdom
19. Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

External Participants Represented at the Eighth Governing Council Meeting of the ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre

States

1. Malaysia
2. United States

Organisations

3. The International Maritime Organization (IMO)
4. European Commission (EC)
5. Information Fusion Centre (IFC)
6. Asian Shipowners' Forum (ASF)
7. Baltic and International Maritime Council (BIMCO)
8. Federation of ASEAN Shipowners' Association (FASA)/Singapore Shipping Association (SSA)