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Advisory:

Ships to report incidents to nearest Coastal State

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ADVISORY TO SHIPS

1. The ReCAAP ISC is concerned with the non-reporting of incidents of armed robbery against ship to the nearest coastal State. In November 2021, there were two incidents of armed robbery against ships at Batangas Anchorages (the Philippines), but the masters of both ships did not report the incidents to the Philippine authorities despite requests of the authorities. Non-reporting of incidents by ships have occurred also in the waters of other coastal States.

2. The ReCAAP ISC issues this Advisory to remind the masters of ships and shipping companies the importance of making immediate reporting of incidents to the nearest coastal States, in accordance with the IMO MSC.1 – Circular 1334 on ‘*Guidance to shipowners and ship operators, ship masters and crew on preventing and suppressing acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships*’. The paragraph 11 of the Circular states: “It is therefore recommended that in the event of an occurrence, master should report all actual or attempted attacks of piracy and armed robbery or threats thereof, to: (i) the nearest RCC or regional piracy focal point where applicable (e.g. ReCAAP ISC in the Asian region).”

3. The immediate reporting of incidents will enable the coastal States to activate its law enforcement agencies to response to the incident. It was evidenced in past incidents that timely reporting by ships to the coastal State led to the arrest of the perpetrators. The reporting of incidents also enables the authorities to step up surveillance in the vicinity, which deters the perpetrators from repeating attacks on other ships in the area.

4. On the other hand, the ReCAAP ISC recommends that the law enforcement agencies to enhance surveillance, increase patrols and respond promptly to incidents reported by ships, in order to arrest and prosecute the perpetrators. It is a collective and shared responsibility of all the stakeholders to address the incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships.