



Stay updated with our Mobile App. Scan the QR code to download.



REPORT FOR FEBRUARY 2018

MONTHLY

PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY AGAINST SHIPS IN ASIA

INCIDENTS OF PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY AGAINST SHIPS IN ASIA IN FEBRUARY 2018

OVERVIEW

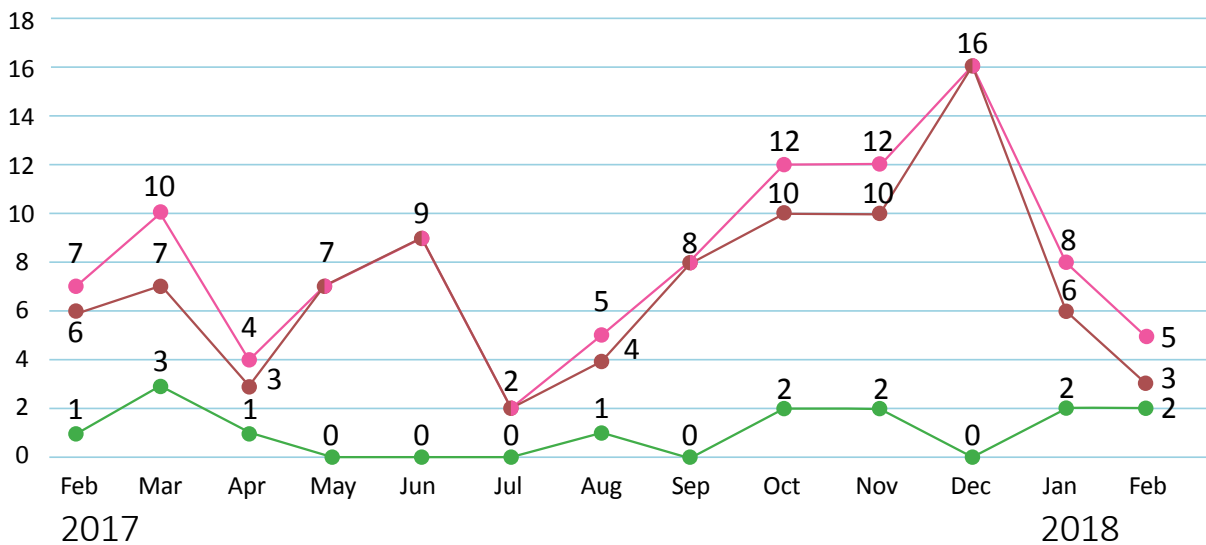
A total of five incidents of armed robbery against ships¹ were reported in Asia in February 2018. No piracy incident was reported. Of the five incidents, three were actual incidents² and two were attempted incidents³. Of the two attempted incidents, one was an attempted incident involving the abduction of crew from a container ship at approximately 4.4 nm southwest of Sibago Island, province of Basilan, Philippines.

There is no actual incident of abduction of crew and no incident of hijacking of ship for theft of oil cargo reported in February 2018.

NUMBER OF INCIDENTS

FEBRUARY 2018

In February 2018, a total of five incidents of armed robbery against ships (comprising three actual incidents and two attempted incidents) were reported. All incidents have been verified⁴ and reported to the ReCAAP ISC by ReCAAP Focal Points and regional authorities. Compared to January 2018, the situation in February 2018 has improved. A total of eight incidents were reported in January 2018 compared to five incidents in February 2018. Graph 1 shows the number of incidents reported each month from February 2017 to February 2018. Refer to the Appendix on pages 15-18 for the description of these incidents.



Graph 1 - Number of incidents (February 2017 to February 2018)

● Total ● Actual ● Attempted

STATUS OF SHIPS

Of the five incidents reported in February 2018, four incidents occurred on board ships while at anchor/berth (in Bangladesh, India and Vietnam), and one incident on board ship while underway (off Basilan, Philippines).

1 Definition of armed robbery against ships is in accordance with the Code of Practice for the Investigation of Crimes of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Assembly Resolution A.1025 (26). Refer to Appendix for detailed definition.

2 Actual incidents are incidents where pirates/robbers had boarded the ship; and regardless of whether they made off with any items stolen from the crew or secured and unsecured found on board the ship.

3 Attempted incidents are incidents where pirates/robbers tried but failed to board the ship.

4 A total of another four incidents (all in January 2018) are pending verification.

SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL OF INCIDENTS

Chart 1 shows the significance level of incidents⁵ reported in February of 2009-2018. Of the five incidents reported in February 2018, two were CAT 3 incidents, one was a CAT 4 incident and two were attempted incidents. No CAT 1 incident was reported in February 2018 compared to one CAT 1 incident reported in February 2017. The number of actual incidents reported during February 2018 was the lowest among the 10-year reporting period (2009-2018). The location of the incidents is shown in Map below.



Map 1 – Location of incidents in February 2018

- 1** *Globe Explorer*
Bulk carrier
1 Feb 18
0210 hrs
- 2** *BBC Amber*
General cargo ship
6 Feb 18
0231 hrs
- 3** *Tiberius*
Bulk carrier
11 Feb 18
0120 hrs
- 4** *Team Challenge*
Bulk carrier
10 Feb 18
0100 hrs
- 5** *Kudos 1*
Container ship
16 Feb 18
2240 hrs

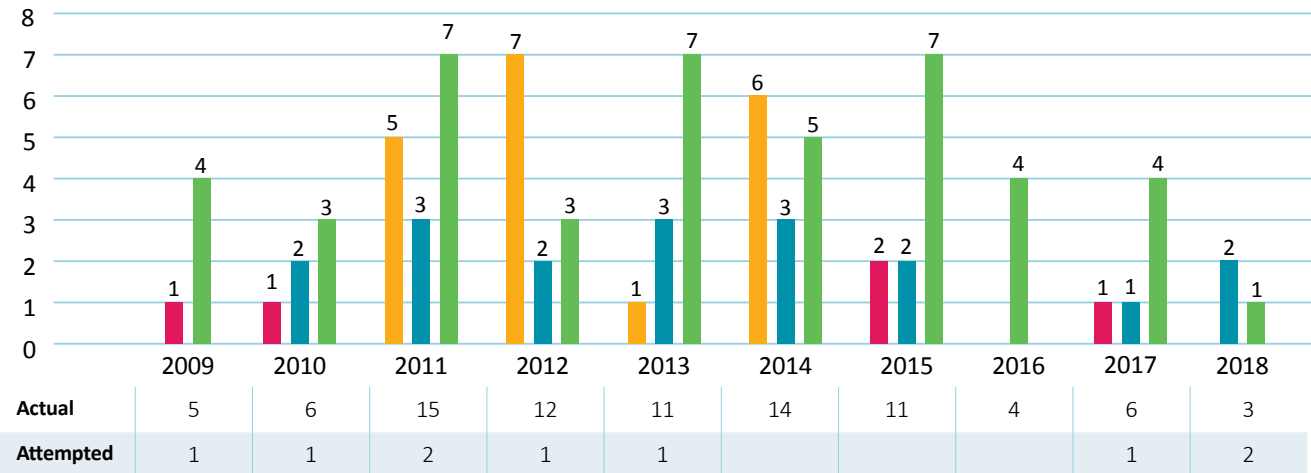


Chart 1 – Significance level of incidents (February of 2009-2018)

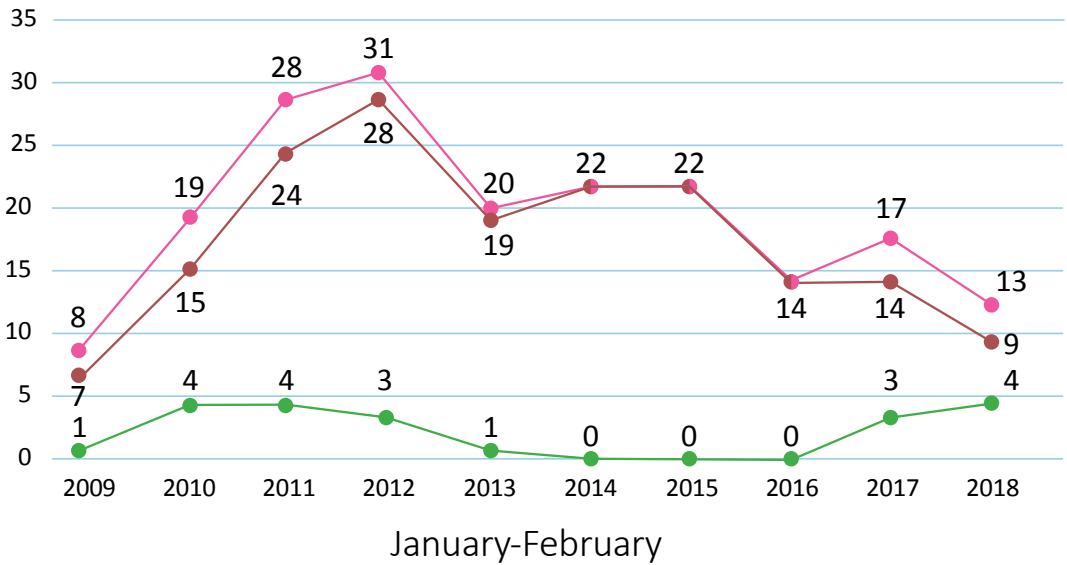
- CAT 1
- CAT 2
- CAT 3
- CAT 4

⁵ Refer to the Appendix for the description of the four Category levels (CAT 1, CAT 2, CAT 3 and CAT 4).

NUMBER OF INCIDENTS

JANUARY – FEBRUARY 2018

During January-February 2018, a total of 13 incidents were reported, of which nine were actual incidents and four were attempted incidents. Except for January-February 2009, the number of incidents reported during January-February 2018 was the lowest among the 10-year reporting period. Compared to January-February 2017, there was a 24% decrease in the total number of incidents during January-February 2018. A total of 17 incidents (comprising 14 actual incidents and three attempted incidents) were reported during January-February 2017. Graph 2 shows the number of incidents reported during January-February 2009-2018.



Graph 2 - Number of incidents (January-February of 2009-2018)

● Total ● Actual ● Attempted

SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL OF INCIDENTS

Chart 2 shows the significance level of incidents reported during January-February of 2009-2018. Of the nine actual incidents reported during January-February 2018, three were CAT 3 incidents and six were CAT 4 incidents. Majority of the incidents reported during January-February 2018 were CAT 4 incidents which conforms to the trend observed for the same period in the past 10 years (January-February 2009-2018).

No CAT 1 incident was reported during January-February 2018 compared to two CAT 1 incidents reported during the same period in 2017 (both were abduction of crew for ransom in the Sulu-Celebes Sea), and four CAT 1 incidents in 2015 (all were hijacking of ships for theft of oil cargo).

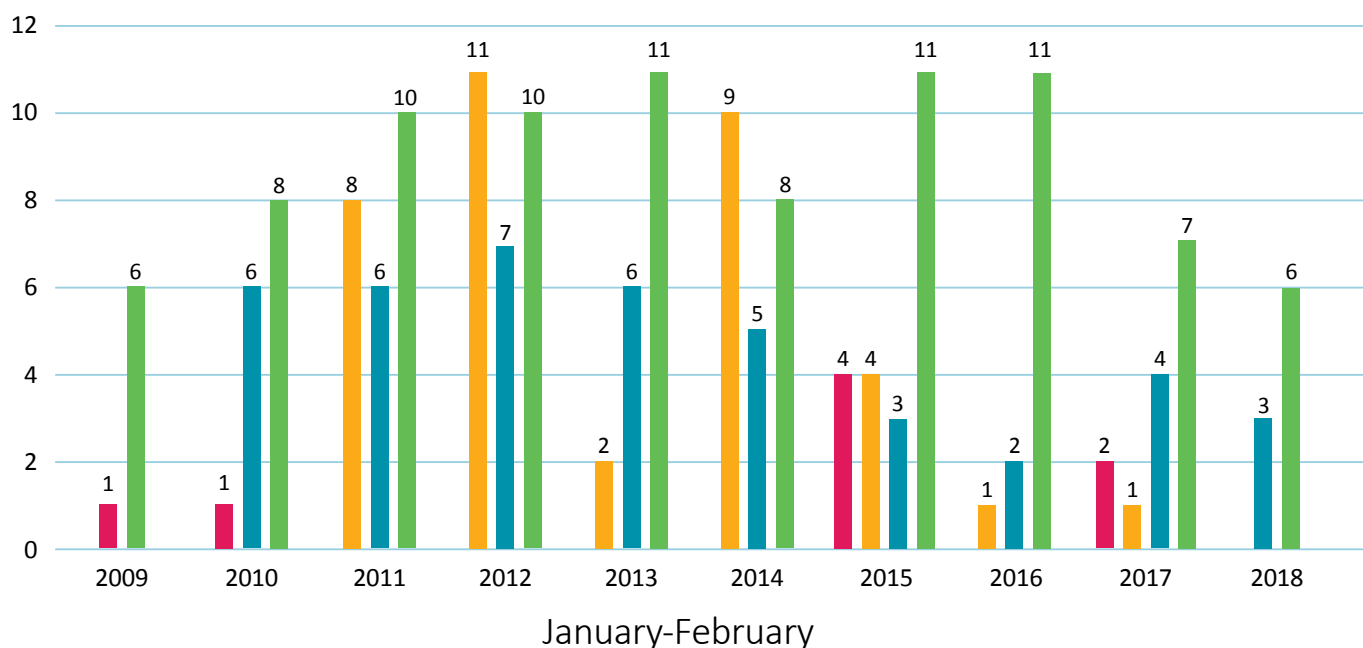


Chart 2 – Significance level of incidents (January-February of 2009-2018)

● CAT 1 ● CAT 2 ● CAT 3 ● CAT 4

SITUATION ON ABDUCTION OF CREW FROM SHIPS WHILE UNDERWAY IN THE SULU-CELEBES SEA AND WATERS OFF EASTERN SABAH

There was no report of actual incident involving the abduction of crew from ships while underway in the Sulu-Celebes Sea in February 2018. However, of concern was an attempted incident of abduction of crew reported on 16 Feb 18 involving container ship, *Kudos 1*. The last actual incident reported to the ReCAAP ISC occurred on board *Super Shuttle Tug 1* on 23 Mar 17; and the last attempted incident occurred on board *Doña Annabel* on 18 Apr 17.

ATTEMPTED BOARDING OF *KUDOS 1* ON 16 FEB 18

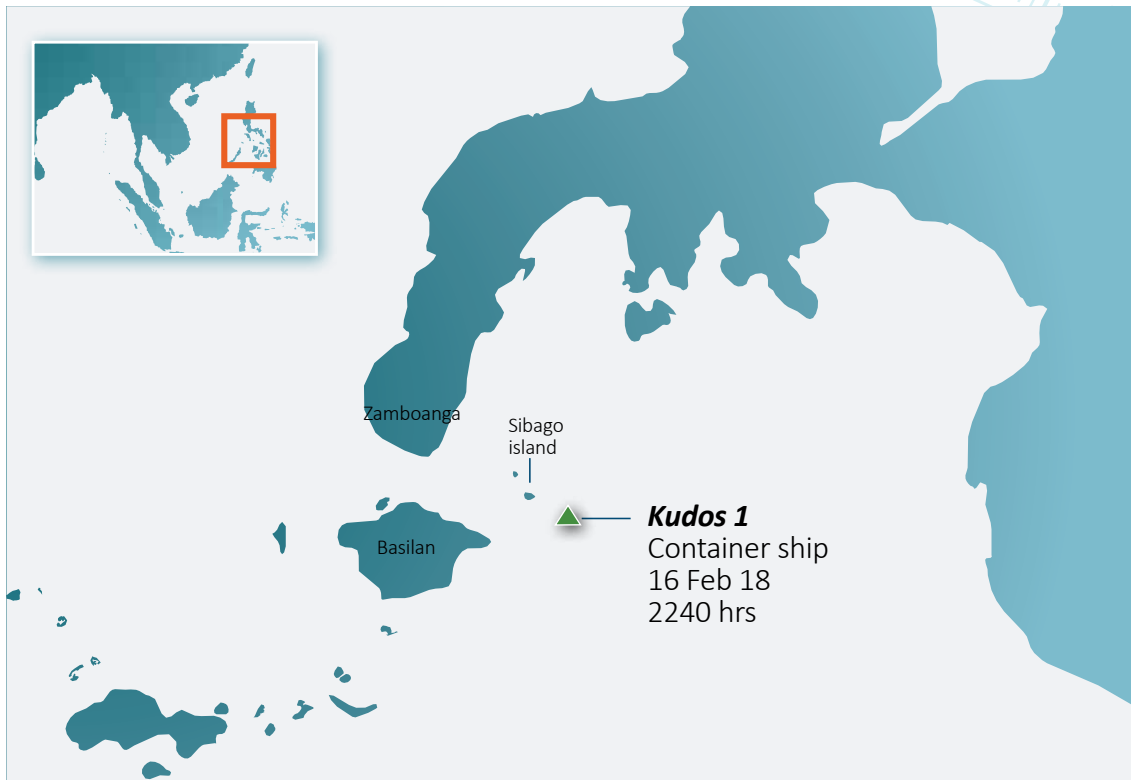
On 16 Feb 18, container ship, *Kudos 1* was underway at approximately 4.4 nm southeast of Sibago Island, province of Basilan, Philippines, when three motorized bancas with three perpetrators on board each banca manoeuvred to the portside amidship of *Kudos 1*. Armed with firearms, the perpetrators attempted to board the ship using ropes and hooks. The master and crew splashed hot water onto the perpetrators who opened fire at the ship for about two minutes and re-positioned themselves at about 400 to 500 meters away from the ship. The master also activated two flares. The perpetrators escaped quickly in the motorized bancas and sped heading towards Basilan. Three crew suffered minor injuries on their hands due to the glass debris from the ship's porthole mirror which was broken because of the gun shot. The authorities was alerted to the distress signal and immediately responded by deploying assets to the location of the incident. The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) boarded the ship and provided medical treatment to the injured crew. The PCG and Philippine Navy (PN) escorted the ship safely towards the port of Zamboanga City.



Kudos 1

Photograph courtesy of ReCAAP Focal Point (Philippines)

The vigilance of the crew, quick responses in retaliation towards the perpetrators and timely sending out of distress signals to the authorities has resulted in immediate response by the authorities which successfully forced the perpetrators to abort boarding and escape.



Map 2 – Location of incident

RESCUE OF ABDUCTED CREW

On 9 Feb 18, the ReCAAP Focal Point (Philippines) reported to the ReCAAP ISC the release of two Indonesian fishermen who were held in captivity by the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) for more than a year. The two fishermen, masters of fishing vessels *SSK 00520* and *SN 1154*, were abducted in the waters between Pegasus Reef and Kual Kinatabangan near Taganak Island in Tawi-Tawi on 5 Nov 16. They were released and handed over to the Indonesian authorities on 20 Jan 18.

CURRENT STATUS

As of 28 Feb 18, nine abducted crew is still being held in captivity⁶. The Philippine authorities continue to conduct pursuit operations and intensify its military operations to rescue the abducted crew and neutralise the militant group. The ReCAAP ISC reiterates its advisory issued via the *ReCAAP ISC Incident Alert* dated 21 Nov 16 to all ships to re-route from the area, where possible. Otherwise, ship masters and crew are strongly urged to exercise extra vigilance while transiting the Sulu-Celebes Sea and eastern Sabah region, and report immediately to the following Centres:



Map 3 – Contact details of the Centres

- 1 Philippine Coast Guard District**
Southwestern Mindanao
Operation Centre
Tel: +63 929686 4129
Tel: +63 929686 0689
VHF: Channel 16 with call-sign “ENVY”
Email: hcgdswm@yahoo.com
- 2 Navy - Littoral Monitoring Station (LMS)**
Bongao, Tawi-Tawi
Tel: +63 917774 2293
VHF: Channel 16
Email: jointtaskgrouptt@gmail.com
- 3 Eastern Sabah Security Command (ESSCOM)**
Tel: +60 89863181/016
Fax: +60 898631812
VHF: Channel 16 with call-sign “ESSCOM”
Email: bilikgerakanesscom@jpm.gov.my

⁶ Since March 2016 (till February 2018), a total of 61 crew had been abducted. Of these, 28 had been released, 17 rescued, seven killed and nine are still in captivity.



CONCLUSION

The situation of piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia has improved in February 2018 compared to January 2018. A total of five incidents were reported in February 2018 compared to eight incidents reported in January 2018. However, of concern was the occurrence of an attempted incident of abduction of crew for ransom in the Sulu-Celebes Sea on 16 Feb 18.

The ReCAAP ISC advises ships transiting the areas of concern to exercise enhanced vigilance, maintain look-out for suspicious approach by boats, report all incidents to the nearest coast States and flag State immediately, keep abreast of the latest situation and implement preventive measures recommended in the *Regional Guide to Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia*.

DEFINITIONS & METHODOLOGY IN CLASSIFYING INCIDENTS

Definitions

Piracy, in accordance with Article 101 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), is defined as:

1. “Piracy” means any of the following acts:
 - (a) any illegal act of violence or detention, or any act of depredation, committed for private ends by the crew or the passengers of a private ship or a private aircraft, and directed:
 - (i) on the high seas, against another ship, or against persons or property on board such ship;
 - (ii) against a ship, persons or property in a place outside the jurisdiction of any State;
 - (b) any act of voluntary participation in the operation of a ship or of an aircraft with knowledge of facts making it a pirate ship or aircraft;
 - (c) any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described in subparagraph (a) or (b).

Armed Robbery Against Ships, in accordance with the Code of Practice for the Investigation of Crimes of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Assembly Resolution A.1025(26), is defined as:

2. “Armed robbery against ships” means any of the following acts:
 - (a) any illegal act of violence or detention, or any act of depredation, or threat thereof, other than an act of “piracy”, committed for private ends and directed against a ship, or against persons or property on board such ship, within a State’s internal waters, archipelagic waters and territorial sea;
 - (b) any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described above.

Methodology in classifying incidents

To provide some perspective on incidents of piracy and armed robbery, the ReCAAP ISC evaluates the significance of each incident in terms of two factors – the level of violence and the economic loss incurred. The indicators for these two factors are as follows:

- A. **Violence Factor.** This factor refers to the intensity of violence in an incident, and the three indicators used to determine this are:
 - (1) Type of weapons used. Incidents of pirates/robbers who board a ship with no visible weapons are generally deemed as less violent compared to those equipped with pistols, knives, machetes, or other dangerous weapons. In cases where more sophisticated weapons are used, such incidents would be considered more violent.
 - (2) Treatment of the crew. Incidents where pirates/robbers kill or kidnap crew are deemed to be more violent compared to petty thieves who flee upon being noticed. Other cases could include threatening crew members, assault, or serious injury.

(3) Number of pirates/robbers engaged in an attack. As a rule, an incident where a larger number of pirates/robbers were involved would be considered more significant as having a large capacity (as well as probability) for use of force. A larger number of pirates/robbers may also indicate the involvement of gangs or organised syndicates rather than petty and opportunistic pirates who generally operate in small groups.

B. **Economic Factor.** This factor takes into consideration the type of the property taken from the ship. Cases of theft of cash or personal effects are generally less significant incidents compared to cases where the entire ship is hijacked either for the cargo onboard or theft of the vessel.

Using these indicators, the ReCAAP ISC classifies all incidents into one of the four categories to determine their overall significance.

Category	Description
● CAT 1	CAT 1 incidents involved large number of perpetrators; more than 9 men in four out every 10 incidents and 4-9 men in the other six incidents. The perpetrators were mostly armed with guns and knives, and the crew is likely to suffer some form of injury or physical violence such as being assaulted or tied up or threatened. In term of losses, the ship was either hijacked or the cargo on board was stolen, for example siphoning of cargo oil.
● CAT 2	Majority of CAT 2 incidents involved 4-9 men who are likely to be armed with knives/machetes and in 1/4 of the incidents, armed with guns. The crew is likely to be threatened or held hostage temporarily to allow the perpetrators to steal the crew's cash and ship's property including engine spares. In a few cases, the crew suffered some form of injury or physical violence but less severe in nature compared to CAT 1 incidents.
● CAT 3	The number of perpetrators involved in CAT 3 incidents usually involved groups of between 1-6 men. At times, the perpetrators were armed with knives/machetes/others or other items such as sticks, rods, bats etc. The crew was not harmed, although there remains a small possibility that the crew could be subject to duress during the incident but not harmed physically. In almost half of the CAT 3 incidents, the perpetrators were unable to steal anything from the vessel, but in cases where losses were reported, stores and engine spares were the commonly targeted items.
● CAT 4	The perpetrators were not armed and the crew not harmed. More than half of CAT 4 incidents involved 1-3 men who escaped empty-handed upon sighted by the crew.

This classification of incidents allows the ReCAAP ISC to provide some perspective of the piracy and armed robbery situation in Asia and to facilitate the maritime community to carry out risk assessment.

DETAILS OF ReCAAP FOCAL POINTS / CONTACT POINT

Country & Agency In Charge	Point of Contact	
	Phone No	Fax Number
Australia		
Australian Maritime Border Operations Centre (AMBOC) Maritime Border Command (MBC) E-mail: amboc@border.gov.au	+61-2-6275-6000	+61-2-6275-6275
Bangladesh		
Department of Shipping E-mail: cns@dos.gov.bd	+88-02-9554206	+88-02-9587301
Brunei		
Brunei Police Marine Email: kasnol.kincho@police.gov.bn	+673-8836495	+673-2774000
Cambodia		
Merchant Marine Department E-mail: mmd@mpwt.gov.kh	+85-5-2386-4110	+85-5-2386-4110
China		
China Maritime Search and Rescue Coordination Centre (Beijing) Email: cnmrcc@mot.gov.cn	+86-10-6529-2218 +86-10-6529-2219 +86-10-6529-2221	+86-10-6529-2245
Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (Hong Kong) Email: hkmrcc@mardep.gov.hk	+85-2-2233-7999	+85-2-2541-7714
Denmark		
Danish Maritime Authority (DMA) Email: ReCAAP-FP-DK@dma.dk	+45-9137-6000	+45-9137-6001
India		
MRCC (Mumbai) Coast Guard Region (West) Mumbai – India Email: indsar@vsnl.net mrcc-west@indiancoastguard.nic.in	+91-22-2431-6558 +91-22-2438-8065	+91-22-2433-3727 +91-22-2431-6558

Country & Agency In Charge	Point of Contact	
	Phone No	Fax Number
Japan		
Japan Coast Guard (JCG) Ops Centre Email : jcg-op@mlit.go.jp	+81-3-3591-9812 +81-3-3591-6361	+81-3-3581-2853
Republic of Korea		
Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries Operations Centre Email: piracy@gicomsgo.kr	+82-44-200-5895 to 98	+82-44-200-5886 to 88
Laos		
International Organisations Department Ministry of Foreign Affairs Email: Ketkeo_pmc@yahoo.com svongdeuane@yahoo.com	+856-21-970 151	+856-21-212505 +856-21-212547
Myanmar		
MRCC Ayeyarwaddy (Myanmar Navy) Email: mrcc.yangon@mptmail.com.mm mrcc.myanmar2012@gmail.com	+95-313-1650	+95-1202-417
Netherlands		
Dutch Coast Guard Maritime Information Centre (MIK-NL) Email: mik-nl@kustwacht.nl	+31-223-658-101	+31-223-658-358
Norway		
Norwegian Maritime Authority Email: morten.alsaker.lossius@sjofartsdir.no	+47-5274-5000 +47-5274-5130	+47-5274-5001
Philippines		
Philippine Coast Guard PCG Action Centre-MRCC (Manila) Email: cgac@coastguard.gov.ph	+63-2-527-8481 to 89 (ext: 6136/37) +63-917-724-3682 +63-929-825-3207 (mobile)	+63-2-310-2097
Coast Guard District South Western Mindanao (CGDSWM) Email: hcgdswm@yahoo.com	+63 929689 4129 +63 916626 0689 VHF: Channel 16 with call sign "ENVY"	

Country & Agency In Charge	Point of Contact	
	Phone No	Fax Number
Singapore		
Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore Port Operations Control Centre (POCC) Email: pocc@mpa.gov.sg	+65-6226-5539 +65-6325-2493	+65-6227-9971 +65-6224-5776
Sri Lanka		
Sri Lanka Navy Operations Room / MRCC (Colombo) Email: nhqdn@yahoo.com nhqdn@navy.lk	+94-11-244 5368 +94-11-221 2230/31	+94-11-244 1454 +94-11-244 9718
Thailand		
Royal Thai Navy Maritime Information Sharing Centre (MISC) Email: miscdutyofficer@misc.go.th sornchon2558@gmail.com	+66-2475-4532	+66-2475-4577
United Kingdom		
National Maritime Information Centre Operations Centre Email: NMIC-OPS@mod.gov.uk	+44 2392-211951	+44 2392-212024 Please indicate "FAO NMIC – A leg"
United States		
USCG Rescue Coordination Center Alameda (RCCAlameda) Email: rccalameda@uscg.mil	+1-510-437-3701	
Vietnam		
Vietnam Coast Guard Email: vietnamcoastguard@gmail.com	+84-24-3355-4378	+84-24-3355-4363

Correct as at 28 February 2018

DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENTS

ACTUAL INCIDENTS

● CAT 3 ● CAT 4

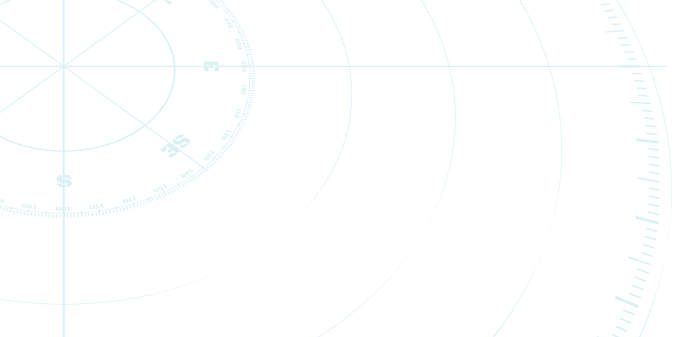
S/N	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, GT, IMO No.	Date Time	Location of Incident	Details of Incident
1	Globe Explorer Bulk carrier Panama 17027 9675561	01/02/18 0210 hrs	10° 39' N, 107° 0.90' E Godau Port, Vietnam	<p>While at anchor, two perpetrators armed with knives boarded the bulk carrier. They held the bosun hostage, threatened and injured him with a knife and then tied him up. The bosun managed to free himself and informed the master who raised the alarm and mustered the crew. A search was conducted and ship stores were reported missing. The incident was reported to the port authorities who boarded the ship for investigation, and sent the bosun ashore for medical treatment.</p> <p>[ReCAAP Focal Point (Japan), ReCAAP Focal Point (Vietnam)]</p>
2	BBC Amber General cargo ship Antigua & Barbuda 12838 9563706	06/02/18 0231 hrs	22° 08' N, 91° 44 ' E Chittagong Anchorage, Bangladesh	<p>While at anchor, six perpetrators in a local out board engine boat boarded the general cargo ship using grapnel hook with rope. They threatened the crew, stole unsecured items from the ship and escaped. Upon receipt of the information, the Bangladesh Coast Guard deployed patrol boats to investigate but were unable to locate the perpetrators.</p> <p>[ReCAAP Focal Point (Bangladesh)]</p>

S/N	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, GT, IMO No.	Date Time	Location of Incident	Details of Incident
3	Tiberius Bulk carrier Marshall Islands 21163 9665841	11/02/18 0120 hrs	22° 07' N, 91° 43 ' E Chittagong Anchorage, Bangladesh	<p>While at anchor, five perpetrators in a boat boarded the bulk carrier from the port side via hook. The perpetrators stole a rope and escaped. The incident was reported to the port control who informed the Bangladesh Coast Guard (BCG). The BCG conducted a search in the vicinity and was able to recover the stolen rope and returned it to the ship.</p> <p>[ReCAAP Focal Point (Bangladesh)]</p>

DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENTS

ATTEMPTED INCIDENTS

S/N	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, GT, IMO No.	Date Time	Location of Incident	Details of Incident
4	Team Challenge Bulk carrier Marshall Islands 17679 9282780	10/02/18 0100 hrs	22° 11.4' N, 88° 9.17' E Diamond Harbour Anchorage, near Kolkata, India	<p>While at anchor, the duty AB noticed an unusual noise coming from the anchor chain. He checked and saw one perpetrator climbing up through the anchor chain, and two other perpetrators were waiting in a boat. The duty crew shouted, and the perpetrator jumped into the water and escaped in the boat. The master raised the general alarm and mustered the crew. The crew was not injured and nothing was stolen.</p> <p>The incident was reported to MRCC Mumbai who requested the nearest Indian Coast Guard (ICG) unit in Haldia (CGD HQ 8) to investigate the incident. Upon investigation, the incident was verified by the port authorities who has been requested to enhance surveillance in the area and implement deterrent measures. The incident is pending further investigation by the police and local port authorities.</p> <p>[ReCAAP Focal Point (India)]</p>
5	Kudos 1 Container ship 892	16/02/18 2240 hrs	6° 42.6' N, 122° 27.8' E Approximately 4.4 nm southeast of Sibago Island, province of Basilan, Philippines	<p>While underway, three motorized bancas with three perpetrators on board each banca manoeuvred to the portside amidship of <i>Kudos 1</i>. Armed with firearms, the perpetrators attempted to board the ship using ropes and hooks.</p> <p>The master and crew splashed hot water onto the perpetrators who opened fire at the ship for about two minutes and re-positioned themselves at about 400 to 500 meters away from the ship. The master also activated two flares. The perpetrators escaped quickly.</p>



S/N	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, GT, IMO No.	Date Time	Location of Incident	Details of Incident
				<p>in the motorized bancas and sped heading towards Basilan. Three crew suffered minor injuries on their hands due to the glass debris from the ship's porthole mirror which was broken because of the gun shot.</p> <p>The authorities was alerted to the distress signal and immediately responded by deploying the multi-role vessel (MRRV-4402) to the location of the incident. The PCG boarded the ship and provided medical treatment to the injured crew. Maritime patrol was also conducted in the area.</p> <p>The PCG and Philippine Navy (PN) escorted the ship safely towards the port of Zamboanga City.</p> <p>[ReCAAP Focal Point (Philippines)]</p>

DETAILS OF PAST INCIDENT⁷ IN JANUARY 2018

ACTUAL INCIDENT

S/N	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, GT, IMO No.	Date Time	Location of Incident	Details of Incident
6	Port Hainan Bulk carrier Hong Kong, China 33036 9456422	31/01/18 0455 hrs	21° 48' N, 91° 48' E Kutubdia Anchorage B, Bangladesh	<p>While at anchor, five perpetrators armed with knives boarded the bulk carrier. They threatened the crew, stole ropes and escaped. The incident was reported to Chittagong Port Control and the Bangladesh Coast Guard investigated immediately. The stolen ropes were recovered and returned to the ship at 1630 hrs on the same day.</p> <p>[ReCAAP Focal Point (Bangladesh)]</p>

⁷ Incident was not included in ReCAAP ISC January 2018 Report as it was being verified at the time of the report. The incident has been verified and will be included in ReCAAP ISC's statistics.



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

Infinite Studios

21 Media Circle, #05-04, Singapore 138562

T +65 6376 3091 **F** +65 6376 3066

E info@recaap.org **W** www.recaap.org