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JANUARY 2019

MONTHLY REPORT

**PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY
AGAINST SHIPS IN ASIA**

INCIDENTS OF PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY AGAINST SHIPS IN ASIA IN JANUARY 2019

OVERVIEW

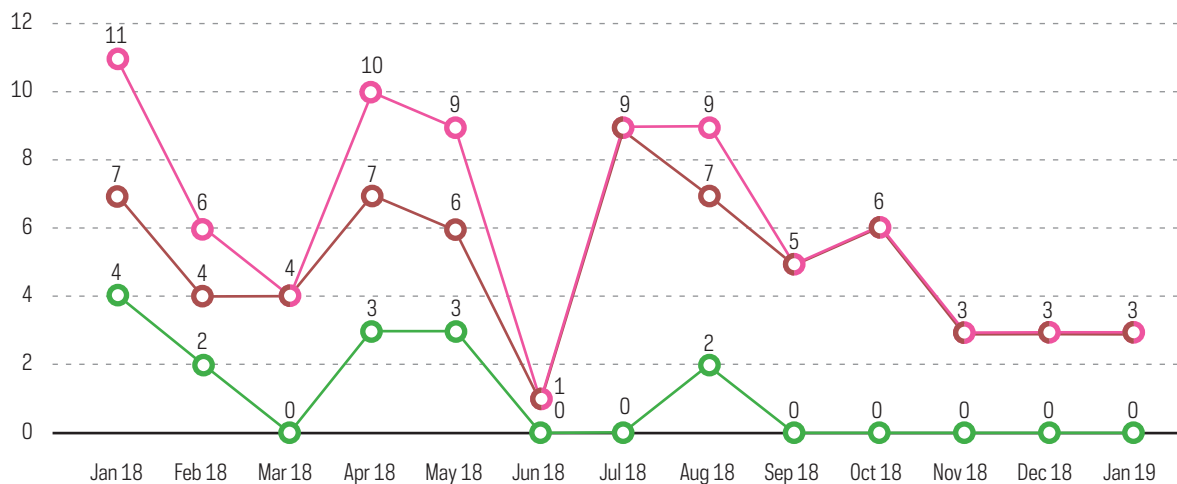
A total of three incidents of armed robbery against ships¹ were reported in Asia in January 2019. There was no report of abduction of crew in the Sulu-Celebes Seas and waters off Eastern Sabah; and no hijacking of ships for theft of oil cargo reported in January 2019. However, the abduction of crew for ransom in the Sulu-Celebes Seas and waters off Eastern Sabah remains a serious concern.

JANUARY 2019

NUMBER OF INCIDENTS

In January 2019, three actual incidents of armed robbery against ships were reported. The incidents have been verified and reported to ReCAAP ISC by ReCAAP Focal Points. Refer to the Appendix on page 13 for the description of the incidents.

Compared to January 2018, there was a 73% decrease in the number of incidents reported in January 2019. A total of 11 incidents were reported in January 2018. Graph 1 shows the number of incidents reported each month from January 2018 to January 2019.



Graph 1 - Number of incidents (January 2018 to January 2019)

● Total ● Actual ● Attempted

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 boarded the ship; and regardless of whether they stole any items from the crew, or took away any secured or unsecured items found on board the ship.

STATUS OF SHIPS

All three incidents reported in January 2019 occurred on board ships anchored; one at Caofeidian anchorage and one at Jingtang anchorage in China; and one at Ciwandan anchorage in Indonesia.

SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL OF INCIDENTS

Of the three incidents reported in January 2019, one was a CAT 3 incident and two were CAT 4 incidents. Chart 1 shows the significance level of incidents reported in January of 2007-2019.

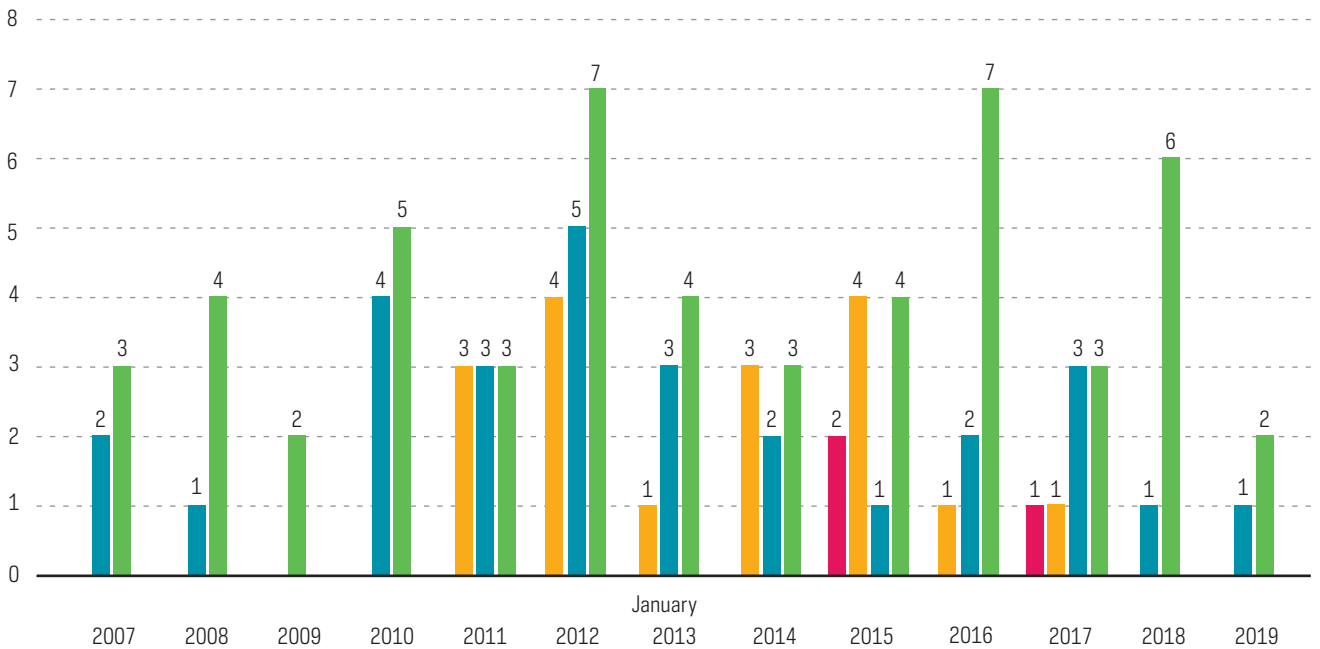


Chart 1 - Significance level of incidents (January of 2007 - 2019)

● CAT 1 ● CAT 2 ● CAT 3 ● CAT 4

LOCATION OF INCIDENTS

The location of the incidents reported in January 2019 is shown in Map 1.



Map 1 - Location of incidents in January 2019

● CAT 3 ● CAT 4

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| 1 <i>Mito</i>
General cargo ship
11 Jan 19
0700 hrs | 2 <i>Name withheld</i>
Bulk carrier
12 Jan 19
0430 hrs | 3 <i>FMG Northern Spirit</i>
Bulk carrier
30 Jan 19
0055 hrs |
|---|--|--|

UPDATE ON SITUATION OF ABDUCTION OF CREW IN THE SULU-CELEBES SEAS AND WATERS OFF EASTERN SABAH

RESCUE OF REMAINING ONE ABDUCTED FISHERMAN OF *SRI DEWI 1*

On 15 Jan 19, the Philippine authorities rescued the remaining one abducted fisherman of *Sri Dewi 1*. Fishing boat *Sri Dewi 1* was sailing in waters off Gaya Island, Semporna, Sabah on 11 Sep 18 when two masked men armed with firearms boarded the fishing boat and abducted two fishermen. One of the abducted fishermen was rescued earlier by the authorities on 5 Dec 18.

STATUS OF ABDUCTED CREW

As of 31 Jan 19, nine crew is still held in captivity³. The Philippine authorities continue to conduct pursuit operations and intensify its military operations to rescue the abducted crew and neutralise the militant group.

ReCAAP ISC ADVISORY

As the threat of abduction of crew in the Sulu-Celebes Seas and waters off eastern Sabah remains, ReCAAP ISC maintains its advisory issued via the ReCAAP ISC Incident Alert dated 21 Nov 16 to all ships to reroute from the area, where possible. Otherwise, ship masters and crew are strongly urged to exercise extra vigilance while transiting the area, and report immediately to the Operation Centres of Philippines and Eastern Sabah Security Command (ESSCOM) of Malaysia.

To ensure timely responses to the reports of incidents by ships transiting the Sulu-Celebes Seas, the Philippine Coast Guard has included an additional contact of the Philippine Coast Guard Station Bongao in Tawi-Tawi; and updated the contact numbers and email addresses of the Philippine Coast Guard District Southwestern Mindanao (CGDSW) and the Philippine Navy – Littoral Monitoring Station (LMS) Bongao in Tawi-Tawi. The contact details of the Operation Centres of Philippines and ESSCOM of Malaysia (updated on 3 Jan 19) are as follows:

View [page 6](#) for contact details 

³ Between March 2016 and January 2019, a total of 66 crew had been abducted. Of these, 34 had been released, 16 rescued, seven killed and nine still held in captivity.



Map 2 - Contact details of the centres

1 Philippine Coast Guard District Southwestern Mindanao
 Tel: +63 998 585 7972
 +63 917 842 8446
 VHF: Channel 16 with call-sign "NEPTUNE"
 Email: hcgdswm@yahoo.com

2a Philippine Coast Guard Station, Bongao (Central Tawi-Tawi)
 Tel: +63 998 585 7941
 +63 917 842 8402
 VHF: Channel 16
 Email: cgd_tawi2@yahoo.com

2b Philippine Navy - Littoral Monitoring Station (LMS), Bongao, Tawi-Tawi
 Tel: +63 955 714 0153
 VHF: Channel 16
 Email: jointtaskgroup@gmail.com

3 Eastern Sabah Security Command (ESSCOM)
 Tel: +60 89863181/016
 Fax: +60 89863182
 VHF: Channel 16 with call-sign "ESSCOM"
 Email: bilikgerakan_esscom@jpm.gov.my

3 Between March 2016 and January 2019, a total of 66 crew had been abducted. Of these, 34 had been released, 16 rescued, seven killed and nine still held in captivity.

CONCLUSION

The situation of piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia in January 2019 has improved compared to the same period in 2018. Three incidents of armed robbery against ships were reported in January 2019 compared to 11 incidents in January 2018.

The ReCAAP ISC commends the efforts of the Philippines authorities for the rescue of the remaining abducted crew of *Sri Dewi 1* on 15 Jan 19. As the abduction of crew for ransom in the Sulu-Celebes Seas and waters off Eastern Sabah continues to pose a serious threat in Asia, ReCAAP ISC urges the shipping industry to exercise extra vigilance when transiting the Sulu-Celebes Seas and waters off Eastern Sabah, and report immediately to the reporting centres.

Despite the improvement of situation of piracy and sea robbery in Asia in January 2019, the ReCAAP ISC reiterates the need for law enforcement agencies to enhance surveillance, increase patrols and respond promptly to reports of incident. Ships transiting areas of concern are to exercise enhanced vigilance, maintain all round lookout for suspicious boats, report all incidents to the nearest coastal State and flag State immediately, and implement preventive measures recommended in the *Regional Guide to Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia*.

APPENDICES

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	v 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.

CONTACT 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: mbcengagement@abf.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		
Marine Police Royal Brunei Police Force 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@gicoms.go.kr	+82-44-200-5895 to 98	+82-44-200-5886 to 88
Laos		
International Organisations Department UN Political and Security Affairs Division Ministry of Foreign Affairs Email: unpolsec.mfalaos@gmail.com	+856-21-414025	+856-21-414025
Myanmar		
MRCC Ayeyarwaddy (Myanmar Navy) Email: mrcc.yangon@mptmail.com.mm mrcc.myanmar2012@gmail.com	+95-313-1651	+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	+63 998 585 7972 +63 917 842 8446 VHF: Channel 16 with call sign "NEPTUNE"	

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: nhqdno@yahoo.com nhqdno@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 2392-211941	+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	+84-4-3355-4378	+84-4-3355-4363

Correct as at 28 January 2019

DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENTS

Actual Incidents

● CAT 3 ● CAT 4

	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, GT, IMO No.	Date Time	Location of Incident	Details of Incident
1	Mito General cargo ship Panama 9815 9587788	11/01/19 0700 hrs	5° 59.2' S, 105° 56.1' E Ciwandan anchorage, Indonesia	While at anchor, the engineer on duty discovered that the door to the spare parts room was broken. He reported the incident to the chief engineer and 1 st officer. Upon inspection, spare parts of the generator were found missing. The crew was not injured. [ReCAAP Focal Point (Japan)]
2	Name withheld Bulk carrier Hong Kong, China 94866	12/01/19 0430 hrs	38° 53.4' N, 118° 36.6' E Caofeidian Large Oil Tank anchorage, China	While at anchor, two perpetrators armed with a steel bar came alongside the ship in a boat and boarded the ship via the port quarter using a rope. The crew spotted the perpetrators who upon realising the crew had been alerted, they escaped empty-handed immediately. The crew was not injured. [ReCAAP Contact Point (Hong Kong)]
3	FMG Northern Spirit Ore carrier Hong Kong, China 134693 9753595	30/01/19 0055 hrs	38° 52.8' N, 119° 11.8' E Jingtang anchorage, China	While at anchor, the crew on the bridge wing noticed a barge close to the ship side on the starboard quarter and raised the alarm. As the crew rushed out to the bridge wing starboard side, they noticed two perpetrators on board. The perpetrators were lowering hoses to the barge from the starboard quarter. Once the hoses were lowered, the perpetrators slid down a rope tied to the gangway base onto the barge, where another perpetrator was waiting. The barge went astern and escaped. Upon checking the area where the perpetrators were sighted, the sounding caps of MDO storage and MDO service tanks were found opened. The MDO storage tank had oil stains around the sounding pipe. However, nothing was missing. The crew was not injured. [ReCAAP Contact Point (Hong Kong)]



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