

OVERVIEW

Two actual incidents of armed robbery against ships (both CAT 4¹) in Asia were reported to ReCAAP ISC. The incidents occurred on 15 Nov 2023 onboard a petroleum/chemical tanker while anchored at Belawan Anchorage, Indonesia; and on 7 Dec 2023 onboard a bulk carrier while underway in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS). The details of incident are shown in table below.



Factors	Location	
	Indonesia	SOMS
	Belawan Anchorage (1 incident)	Off Pulau Karimun Kecil, Indonesia (1 incident)
Type of ship	Petroleum/chemical tanker	Bulk carrier
Date/Time	15 Nov at 0545 hrs	7 Dec at 0001 hrs
Number of perpetrators	3 men	Not known
Weapons	Not stated	Not stated
Treatment of crew	No injuries	No injuries
Items stolen	Nothing stolen	Engine spares
Significance level	CAT 4	CAT 4

AREA OF CONCERN

With the incident off Pulau Karimun Kecil on 7 Dec 2023, a total of 63 incidents were reported in the SOMS since January 2023. The ReCAAP ISC advises ships to continue to exercise enhanced vigilance when transiting SOMS; and the littoral States to increase patrols and enforcement in the area.

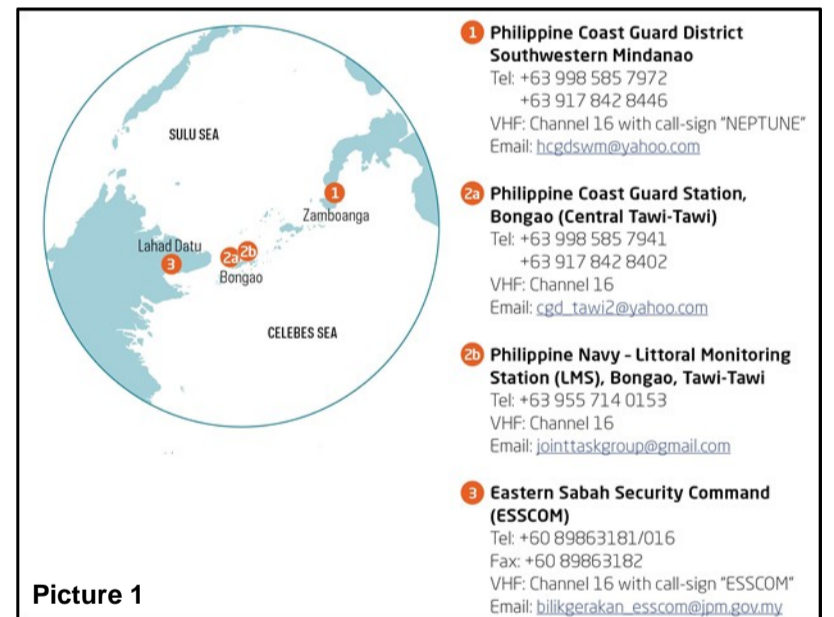
SITUATION OF ABDUCTION OF CREW IN THE SULU-CELEBES SEAS AND WATERS OFF EASTERN SABAH

Re-Assessment and Downgrading of threat level

The efforts by the Philippine Government in Zamboanga, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi through the conduct of continuous military operations led to the dismantling of the support base and neutralising the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) in Sulu archipelago. Against this backdrop, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), coordinated with other stakeholders and counterparts that have vital involvement in the maritime security of the Sulu-Celebes Seas, reviewed the threat situation and recommended further downgrading the threat level of 'Abduction of crew for ransom in the Sulu-Celebes Seas' from 'MODERATE' to '**MODERATE LOW**', which implies that '**Incidents are unlikely to occur due to perpetrators' perceived lack of capability to orchestrate an attack. Nevertheless, minimal damages are expected to the vessel and crew in case of an attack.**'

Update of ReCAAP ISC Advisory

- With downgrading of the threat on the 'Abduction of Crew for ransom in the Sulu-Celebes seas by the PCG, ReCAAP ISC have updated its Advisory for ships to **"exercise vigilance & adopt necessary preventive measures while transiting the area"**.
- For ships transiting the area, the **ship masters and crew are strongly encouraged to exercise extra vigilance and report** all incidents immediately to the Operation Centres of the Philippines and Eastern Sabah Security Command (ESSCOM) of Malaysia. The **Contact Details** of the Operation Centres of the Philippines and ESSCOM of Malaysia are as shown in Picture 1.



Picture 1

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ship master and crew are to report all incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships to the nearest coastal State RCC and flag State, referring to the Poster on *Contact Details for Reporting of Incidents of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia*, exercise vigilance and adopt appropriate preventive measures taking reference from the *Regional Guide 2 to Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia*.

Follow us on:	W: www.recaap.org	Twitter: https://twitter.com/recaapisc	LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/recaap-information-sharing-centre
Contact us at:	E: info@recaap.org	T: +65 6376 3063	F: +65 6376 3066

* Table at <https://www.recaap.org/resources/ck/files/Number%20of%20Incidents/2023/List%20of%20Incidents%20for%202023.pdf> for details of the incidents.

¹ **CAT (Category) 4** incident is classified as 'least significant' in nature. Under this category, the perpetrators are not armed, and the crew not injured.