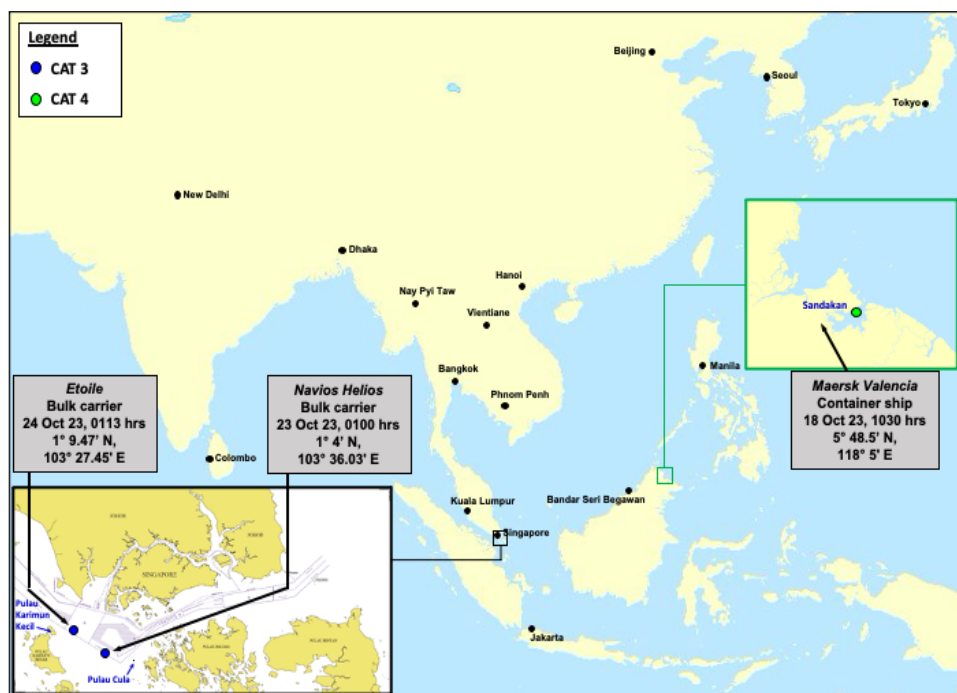


OVERVIEW

Three actual incidents of armed robbery against ships (two CAT 3¹ and one CAT 4²) in Asia were reported to ReCAAP ISC. Of the three incidents, one occurred on 18 Oct 23 to a container ship while berthed at container terminal, Sandakan, Malaysia. The other two incidents occurred on 23 and 24 Oct to bulk carriers, while underway in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS). Details of incidents are shown in table (*).



Factors	Location	
	Malaysia	SOMS
	Sandakan (1 incident)	Off Pulau Cula, and Off Karimun Kecil, (Indonesia) (2 incidents)
Type of ship	Container ship	(1) Bulk carrier (2) Bulk carrier
Date/Time	18 Oct at 1030 hrs	(1) 23 Oct at 0100 hrs (2) 24 Oct at 0113 hrs
Number of perpetrators	Not known	(1) 4 to 5 men (2) 3 men
Weapons	Not stated	(1) Knives (2) Knives
Treatment of crew	Not injured	(1) Not injured (2) Not injured
Items stolen	Outboard engine	(1) Some engine spares (2) Nothing was stolen
Significance level	CAT 4	(1) CAT 3 (2) CAT 3

AREA OF CONCERN

With the two incidents off Pulau Cula and off Karimun Kecil, a total of 61 incidents were reported in the SOMS since January 2023. The ReCAAP ISC is concerned with the continued occurrence of incidents in the SOMS. The Centre advises ships to continue to exercise enhanced vigilance when transiting SOMS; and the littoral States to increase patrols and enforcement in the area.

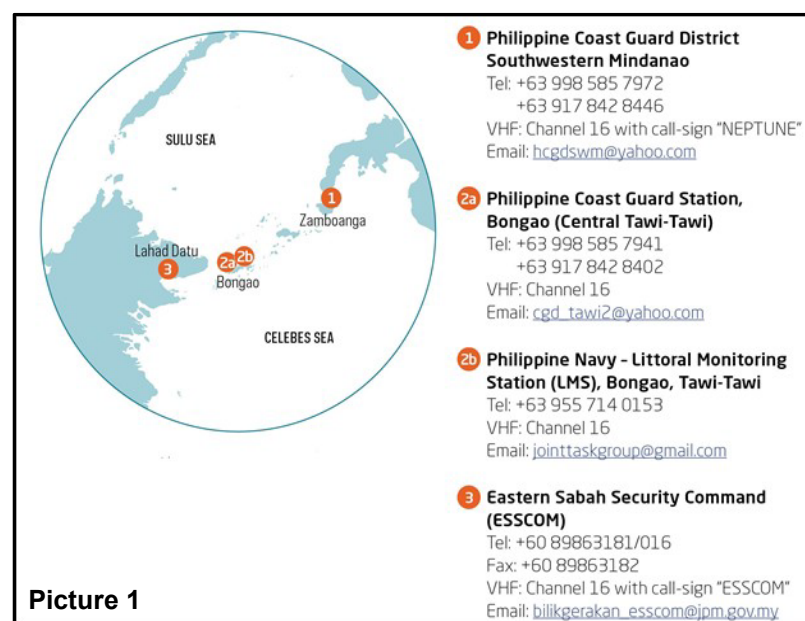
SITUATION OF ABDUCTION OF CREW IN THE SULU-CELEBES SEAS AND WATERS OFF EASTERN SABAH

Downgrading of threat level

- The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), after careful consideration of inputs from stakeholders and counterparts with vital involvement in securing the Sulu-Celebes Seas maritime security measure, recommends the downgrading of the threat on the 'Abduction of Crew for ransom in the Sulu-Celebes Seas' from 'POTENTIALLY HIGH' to 'MODERATE'. The MODERATE threat level implies that '**Incidents are possible to occur but are relatively less severe in nature**'.

Update of ReCAAP ISC Advisory

- As the threat of abduction of crew in the Sulu-Celebes Seas has diminished since January 2020 due to successful military operations and robust law enforcement initiatives, the ReCAAP ISC updates its Advisory to all ships to **consider re-route from the area as an option based on its prerogative**.
- 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*.

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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) 3 incident is 'less significant' in nature. Under this category, the perpetrators are armed with knives/machetes or other items such as sticks or rods. Although the crew can be subjected to duress or threat during the incident, they are not harmed physically. In most CAT 3 cases, nothing is stolen. In cases where losses are reported, stores and engine spares are commonly stolen items.

² CAT (Category) 4 incident is classified as 'least significant' in nature. Under this category, the perpetrators are not armed, and the crew not injured.