Report for February 2009

1st February 2009 – 28th February 2009

Report for February 2009

Executive Summary

In February 2009, a total of four incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships were reported in the Asian region. All were actual incidents. Of the four incidents, one was an incident of piracy in accordance with the ReCAAP ISC's definition of piracy under Article 101 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

Compared to February 2008, there was a decline in the total number of incidents reported in February 2009. In February 2008, a total of six incidents of armed robbery were reported, of which four were actual incidents and two were attempted incidents. The number of actual incidents reported during February 2008 and February 2009 was the same. However, in terms of the significance level of incidents, there was one Category 1 (very significant) incident reported in February 2009 compared to one Category 2 (moderately significant) incident reported in February 2008. The other incidents reported during these two periods were Category 3 (less significant) incidents. The details of the incidents reported in February 2009 are described in the Annex.

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Part 1 - Definitions & Methodology Used

1.1 Definitions Adopted by ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre

The definitions of piracy and armed robbery against ships adopted by the ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ISC) are in accordance with the ReCAAP Agreement, wherein:

Piracy, in accordance with Article 101 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), is defined in Article 1 (Definitions) of the ReCAAP as:

(1)   For the purpose of this Agreement, "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, in accordance with the Code of Practice for the Investigations of Crime of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships of International Maritime Organisation (IMO) (MSC/Circ. 984, Article 2.2), is defined in Article 1 (Definitions) of the ReCAAP as:

(2)   For the purpose of this Agreement, "armed robbery against ships" means any of the following acts:

    (a)   any illegal act of violence or detention, or any act of depredation, committed for private ends and directed against a ship, or against persons or property on board such ship, in a place within a Contracting Party's jurisdiction over such offences;

    (b)   any act of voluntary participation in the operation of a ship with knowledge of facts making it a ship for armed robbery against ships;

    (c)   any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described in subparagraph (a) or (b).

1.2 Methodology for Classifying Incidents

1.2.1 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.

1.2.2 Using these indicators, the ReCAAP ISC categorises all incidents into one of the three categories to determine their overall significance.

Category	Significance of Incident
CAT 1	Very Significant
CAT 2	Moderately Significant
CAT 3	Less Significant

1.2.3 This classification of incidents allows the ReCAAP ISC to provide some perspective of the piracy and armed robbery situation in Asia.

1.3 Note on Sources of Information

The ReCAAP ISC makes use of various sources of information in producing its reports. The primary source is the ReCAAP ISC's Information Network System (IFN). Where necessary, the ReCAAP ISC leverages on other secondary sources of information, including those from the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), the International Chamber of Commerce-International Maritime Bureau (ICC-IMB), and other publicly available sources to facilitate analysis on patterns and trends, and to make recommendations. The ReCAAP ISC makes every effort to acknowledge these sources.

1.4 Note on Maps Used to Depict Location of Incidents

The maps used in this report are for illustrative purposes only. They are not drawn to scale, and do not imply the opinion on the part of the ReCAAP ISC concerning the status of any country or territory, or the delimitation of frontiers or boundaries.

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Part 2 - Report for February 2009

2.1 Number and Significance of Incidents

2.1.1 A total of four incidents were reported in February 2009. All were actual incidents. Overall, the total number of incidents reported in February 2009 has decreased compared to February 2008. However, the number of actual incidents reported during these two periods was the same. In February 2008, six incidents were reported of which four were actual incidents and two were attempted incidents. Please see Table 1 below.

	February 2009	February 2008
Actual	4	4
Attempted	0	2
Total	**4**	**6**

Table 1 - Actual and attempted incidents during February 2009 and February 2008

2.1.2 Of the four incidents reported in February 2009, one was a Category 1 incident and three were Category 3 incidents. Details of the incidents are described in the Annex. In February 2008, of the four actual incidents reported, one was a Category 2 incident and three were Category 3 incidents. Please see Table 2 below.

Significance Level	February 2009	February 2008
Category 1 (Very Significant)	1	0
Category 2 (Moderately Significant)	0	1
Category 3 (Less Significant)	3	3
Total	**4**	**4**

Table 2 - Significance level of actual incidents during February 2009 and February 2008

2.1.3 Figure 1 shows the number of actual and attempted incidents occurred between February 2008 and February 2009. During this period, total activity was highest in April 2008 and lowest in January 2009. The ReCAAP ISC notes that no attempted incidents were reported since December 2008. The ReCAAP ISC will continue to monitor the overall activity level and its patterns and trends.
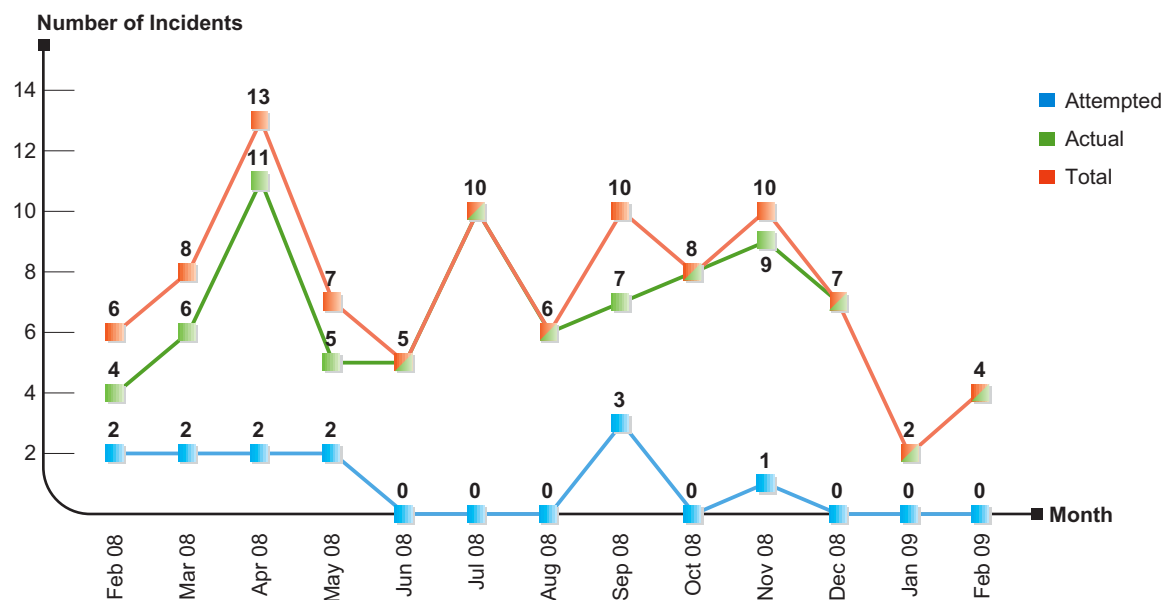
Graph 1 - Number of incidents from February 2008 to February 2009

2.2 Analysis of Incidents in February 2009

2.2.1 Location of Actual and Attempted Incidents

Table 3 shows the location of incidents reported in February 2009 and February 2008. Overall there has been a decrease in the number of incidents reported in February 2009 compared to February 2008. The decrease was relatively more apparent in India and Bangladesh. One incident was reported in India in February 2009 compared to two incidents reported there in February 2008. In Bangladesh, no incident was reported there in February 2009 compared to one incident reported in February 2008. Please see Table 3 below.

	February 2009		February 2008	
	Actual	Attempted	Actual	Attempted
Bangladesh			1	
India	1		2	
Malaysia	1		1	
Straits of Malacca & Singapore	1			1
South China Sea				1
Vietnam	1			
Total	**4**		**4**	**2**

Table 3 - Location of incidents during February 2009 and February 2008

2.2.2 Weapons Used

Table 4 shows the weapons used by robbers during the incidents reported during February 2009 and February 2008. The absence of information on the type of weapons used by robbers in most of the incidents reported during the two reporting periods has affected the analysis on weapons used by robbers. The ReCAAP ISC encourages ship masters to report the type of weapons used by robbers and other details of the incident when reporting to the authorities.

Incidents in February	Guns & Knives	Not stated/ Nil
February 2009	1	3
February 2008	1	3

Table 4 - Weapons used in actual incidents during February 2009 and February 2008

2.2.3 Type of Ships Targeted

Of the four incidents reported in February 2009, three involved bulk carriers and one involved a tug boat. See Table 5 below. This is in contrast to February 2008 when general cargo ships were targeted more frequently compared to the other type of ships. In February 2008, of the four incidents, two incidents involved general cargo ships, one involved a container ship and one involved a chemical tanker.

Type of Ships	February 2009	February 2008
Container Ship		1
Bulk Carrier	3	
Chemical Tanker		1
General Cargo Ship		2
Tug/Barge	1	
Total	**4**	**4**

Table 5 - Type of ships involved in actual incidents during February 2009 and February 2008

2.2.4 Status of Ships

Of the four incidents reported in February 2009, three involved ships that were anchored and one involved ship that was underway. In February 2008, of the four actual incidents, three involved ships that were anchored and one involved ship that was berthed. See Table 6 below.

	February 2009		February 2008	
	Actual	Attempted	Actual	Attempted
Berthed			1	
Anchored	3		3	
Underway	1			2
Total	**4**		**4**	**2**

Table 6 - Status of ships during incidents in February 2009 and February 2008

2.2.5 Status of Ships and Significance Level

Table 7 below shows the status of ships and its significance level. In February 2009, all three incidents involving ships that were anchored were Category 3 incidents and the incident involving the ship that was underway was a Category 1 incident. In February 2008, of the three incidents involving ships that were anchored, one was a Category 2 incident and two were Category 3 incidents. The incident involving the ship that was berthed was also a Category 3 incident.

Status of Ships	February 2009				February 2008			
	CAT 1	CAT 2	CAT 3	Total	CAT 1	CAT 2	CAT 3	Total
Berthed							1	1
Anchored			3	3		1	2	3
Underway	1			1				
Total	1		3	4	1		3	4

Table 7 - Status of ships and its significance level during incidents in February 2009 and February 2008

2.2.6 Time of Incidents

In February 2009 and February 2008, 75% of the number of actual incidents occurred between 1800 hrs and 0559 hrs.

	1800 hrs to 2359 hrs	2400 hrs to 0559 hrs	0600 hrs to 1159 hrs	1200 hrs to 1759 hrs	Total
February 2009	1	2		1	4
February 2008		3	1		4

Table 8 - Local time of incidents during February 2009 and February 2008

ReCAAP
Information Sharing Centre

•Beijing

•Seoul

Tokyo•

•New Delhi

•Dhaka

•Hanoi

•Hong Kong

Nay Pyi Taw

•Vientiane

•Manila

•Bangkok

•Phnom Penh

•Colombo

Kuala Lumpur

•Bandar Seri Begawan

Singapore

•Jakarta

Map 1: Location of Incidents Reported in February 2009

| Legend	
Actual (CAT 1)	●
Actual (CAT 3)	●

Part 3 - Details of Selected Incidents

3.1 Incident on board the *Arya Payam* off Tanjung Bulat, Johor

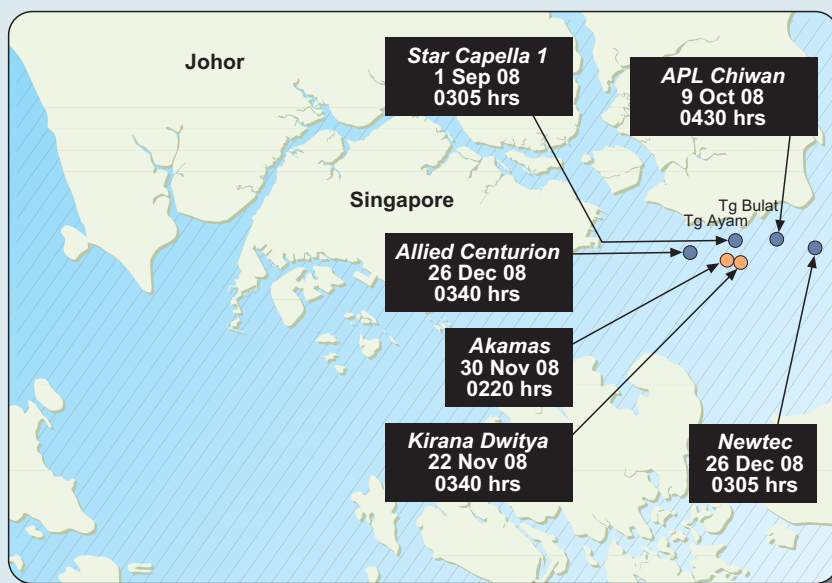|	
Name of Ship	: *Arya Payam*
Type of Ship	: Bulk carrier
Flag of Ship	: Cyprus
GT	: 32,474

3.1.1 On 12 February 2009 at 0448 hrs, the Cyprus-registered bulk carrier, *Arya Payam* was anchored at approximately 01˚ 18.86'N, 104˚ 14.42'E, off Tanjung Bulat when five robbers approached the ship. Please see map below. One of the robbers boarded the ship and attempted to steal stores from the ship. The duty crew saw the robber and informed the crew on the bridge who raised the alarm, sounded the ship's horn and informed ships in the vicinity via VHF. Upon hearing the alarm, the robber jumped overboard and escaped empty-handed.

Arya Payam
12 Feb 09
0448 hrs

Approximate location of incident

Legend

CAT 3
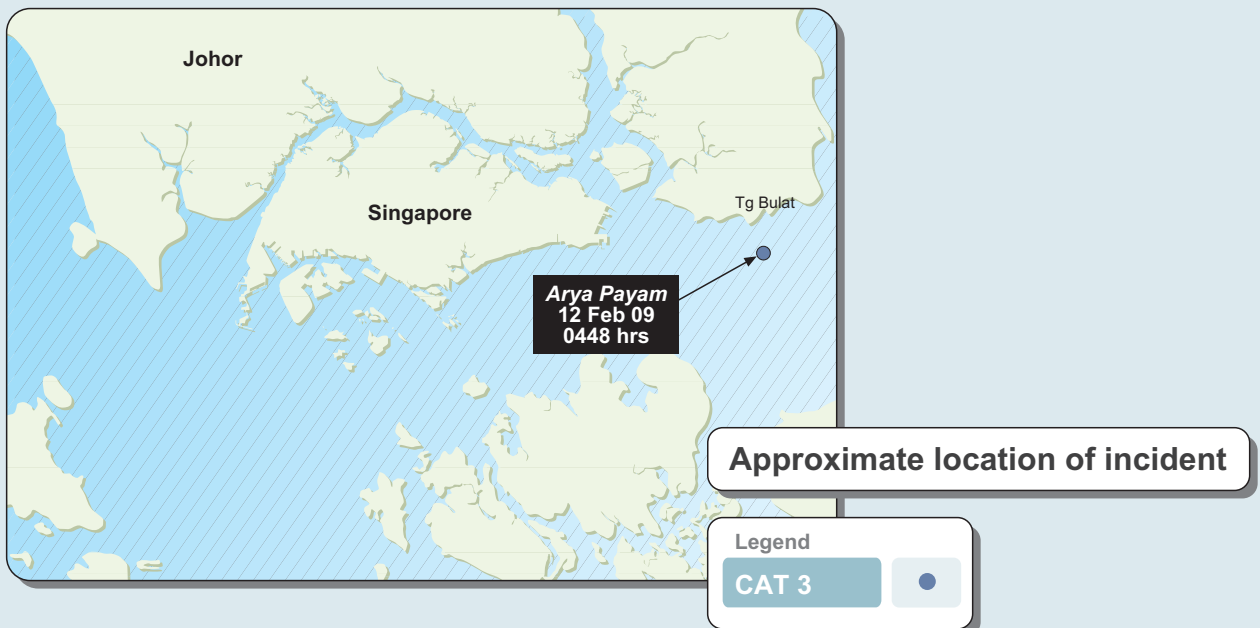
Past Incidents

3.1.2 This is the first incident of robbery against ship reported off Tanjung Bulat, Johor since the beginning of 2009. In 2008, a total of six incidents were reported in the vicinity off southern Johor between September 2008 and December 2008. The incidents involved robbers who operated in groups of between three to six men. Most of the incidents reported loss of ship stores and unsecured items except for one incident where the crew reported loss of personal items. Please see map below on the approximate location of incidents occurred in 2008.

Johor

Star Capella 1
1 Sep 08
0305 hrs

APL Chiwan
9 Oct 08
0430 hrs

Singapore

Tg Bulat
Tg Ayam

Allied Centurion
26 Dec 08
0340 hrs

Akamas
30 Nov 08
0220 hrs

Kirana Dwitya
22 Nov 08
0340 hrs

Newtec
26 Dec 08
0305 hrs

Approximate location of past incidents

Legend
CAT 2
CAT 3

Observations

3.1.3 The ReCAAP ISC observes that the robbers operating in the vicinity normally come alongside the ship in a boat between 0200 hrs and 0500 hrs when the ships were anchored. They climbed up the ship, stole ship stores and any unsecured items on board the ship. The robbers usually fled when detected or when the alarm was raised. In some of the incidents, they even left the ship empty handed.

3.1.4 There was no evidence to suggest that the robbers specifically targeted certain type of ships as bulk carriers, container ships, tankers and diving support vessel have been attacked. The ReCAAP ISC assessed that the attacks were likely to be opportunistic in nature.

Recommendations

3.1.5 The ReCAAP ISC notes that the vicinity where the attacks took place was outside the Johor port limit where ships usually anchored for trans-loading, bunkering, waiting for pilot or the designated time to enter port. With increasing activities in the area, ship masters are encouraged to exercise vigilance and maintain surveillance when their ships were anchored there, particularly during hours of darkness.

3.1.6 Ship masters are encouraged to report all incidents of piracy and armed robbery to the nearest RCC, coastal or port state authorities, whichever appropriate, immediately after an actual or attempted attack. This enables the authorities to take the necessary follow-up actions and issue precautionary warnings to ships in the vicinity.

3.2 Incident on board the *MLC Nancy 5* in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore

Name of Ship	: *MLC Nancy 5*
Type of Ship	: Tug boat
Flag of Ship	: Singapore
GT	: 247

Name of Ship	: *Miclyn 3316*
Type of Ship	: Barge
Flag of Ship	: Singapore

3.2.1 On 19 February 2009 at about 1430 hrs, the Singapore-registered tug boat, *MLC Nancy 5* towing a barge, *Miclyn 3316* was en route to Singapore from Mumbai, India when she was attacked by 12 armed men in a small boat at approximately 80 nm west of Penang in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore. Please refer to map below for the approximate location.

3.2.2 The armed men took all the navigational equipment including navigation aids, VHF radios, SSB radios as well as the crew's personal belongings. They abducted the master and the chief engineer and fled with them in their boat. No crew was injured. The 2nd Officer with the remaining crew made their way to Penang to seek assistance from the nearest coastal state authorities.

MLC Nancy 5
19 Feb 09
1430 hrs

Malaysia

Indonesia

Approximate location of incident

Legend

CAT 1

3.2.3 The ship owner reported the incident to Singapore's Port Operation Control Centre (POCC) which is also the ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore). The POCC initiated a broadcast of the incident on Navtex and safety net to warn ships in the vicinity and request them to lookout for the tug boat and the barge.

3.2.4 The master and the chief engineer were released on 23 February 2009 and returned to their hometown. The ReCAAP ISC has classified this incident as a Category 1 (very significant) incident.

Kidnapping Incident in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore

3.2.5 This is the first kidnap incident reported in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore this year. The last of such incident reported in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore was on 13 August 2007 when 10 robbers armed with guns boarded the Malaysia-registered tug boat *Brantas 25* towing a barge, the *Singa Besar* at approximately 30 nm north of Belawan, Indonesia. The *Brantas 25* was underway from the port of Penang to the port of Belawan when the incident occurred. Upon boarding, the robbers destroyed all communication equipment, took the crew's personal belongings and the tug boat's documents and abducted the ship master and the chief engineer before fleeing in their boat. The crew continued their journey to the port of Belawan and reported the incident to the authorities. On 27 August 2007, it was reported that the robbers released the ship master and the chief engineer after a ransom was paid. The detail of the ransom and the robbers involved were not reported.

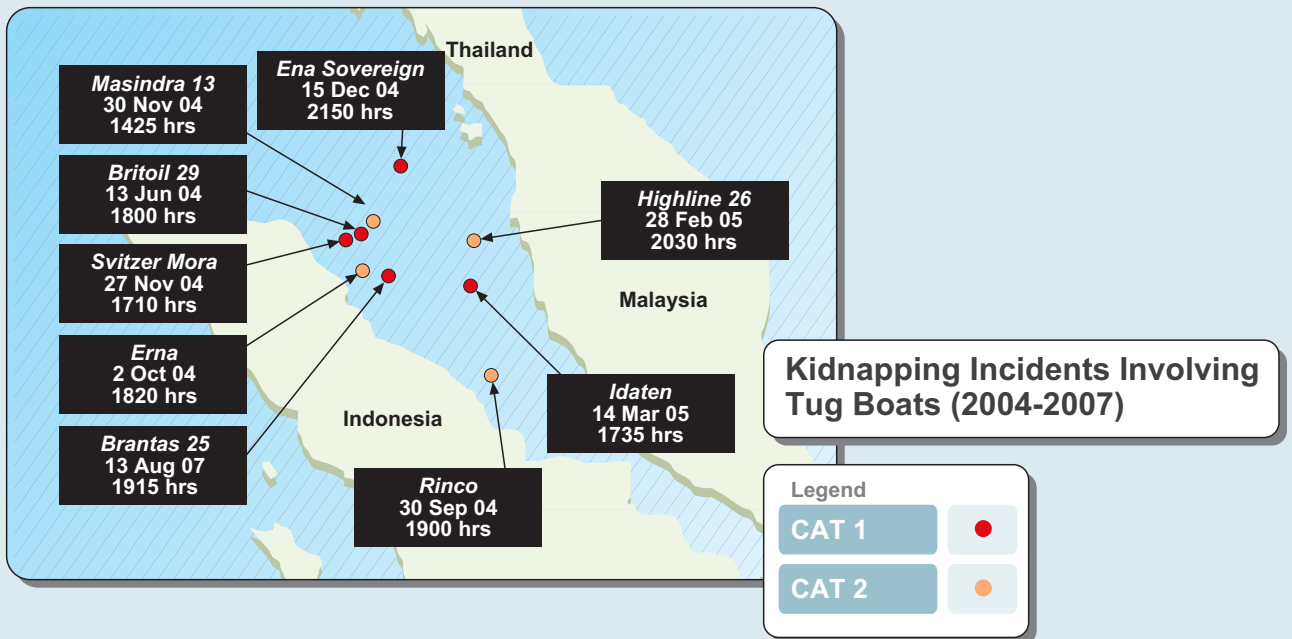## Past Kidnapping Incidents Involving Tug Boats in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (2004 - 2007)

3.2.6 A total of 18 incidents of kidnap were reported in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore during the period 2004 - 2007. There was no kidnapping incident reported in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore in 2008. Of the 18 incidents reported between 2004 and 2007, half of them involved tug boats while underway. Please see map below.

3.2.7 Tug boats are believed to be more susceptible to attack when underway as they have low free boards and move at relatively slow speeds when engaged in towing. The ReCAAP ISC notes that six out of nine reported incidents occurred between 1710 hrs and 1915 hrs, one incident occurred at 1425 hrs and two incidents during the hours of darkness between 2030 hrs and 2150 hrs.

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Part 3 - Details of Selected Incidents

Thailand

Masindra 13
30 Nov 04
1425 hrs

Ena Sovereign
15 Dec 04
2150 hrs

Britoil 29
13 Jun 04
1800 hrs

Highline 26
28 Feb 05
2030 hrs

Svitzer Mora
27 Nov 04
1710 hrs

Malaysia

Erna
2 Oct 04
1820 hrs

Brantas 25
13 Aug 07
1915 hrs

Indonesia

Idaten
14 Mar 05
1735 hrs

Rinco
30 Sep 04
1900 hrs

Kidnapping Incidents Involving Tug Boats (2004-2007)

Legend

CAT 1	●
CAT 2	●

Update on the Situation in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore

3.2.8 The Star Online dated 16 February 2009 reported that the Malaysian Marine Police have crippled a pirate gang who has been preying on vessels in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore. A shootout between the Marine Police and the gang occurred on 16 February 2009 morning. Seven men from the gang were arrested, one of them was shot during the clash while three others had escaped after a 30-minute chase at Tanjung Gemuk in Sedili. The men were armed with pistols, parang (machetes) and hand grenades. None of the Marine Police was injured. The men aged between 21 and 53 were believed to be responsible for several cases involving losses of more than RM400,000 in 2008. The police revealed that the men operated by contacting shipping companies on the pretext of selling fuel. They would go to sea and rendezvous with the ships to carry out the fuel transfer. However, they would board the ship and hold the crew at gunpoint before robbing them of cash and belongings[1].

Recommendation

3.2.9 The ReCAAP ISC advises the master of tug boats to be more alert and maintain vigilance at all times and take necessary security precaution when underway in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore.

[1]The Star Online dated 16 February 2009

3.3 Incident on board the *Port Shanghai* at Kakinada, India

Name of Ship	: *Port Shanghai*
Type of Ship	: Bulk carrier
Flag of Ship	: Panama
GT	: 32,400

3.3.1 The ReCAAP Focal Point (India) reported an incident of robbery on board the Panama-registered bulk carrier, *Port Shanghai* at the port of Kakinada, India on 9 February 2009. At 2330 hrs, a crew during the routine check of the upper deck of the carrier discovered that one mooring line eye, two steel plates and some canvas covers were missing. The incident was reported to the Indian Coast Guard at Kakinada who was investigating the incident. The local agent of the bulk carrier has also filed a report of the incident with the local marine police.
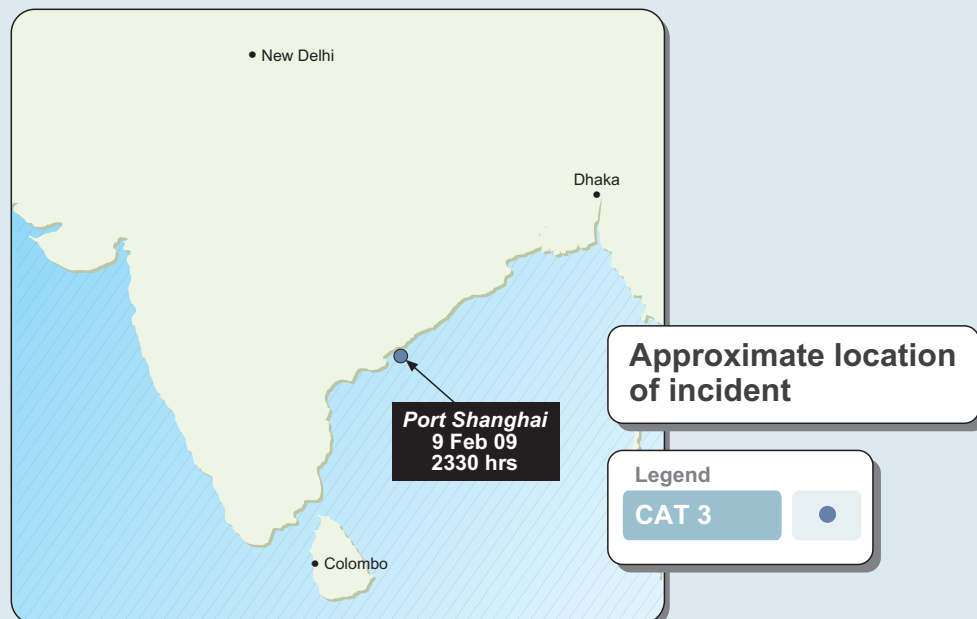
Observation

3.3.2 There was no information on the sighting of boat coming alongside the bulk carrier, boarding by the robbers, number of robbers involved and their description as the items were only discovered missing during a routine check carried out by the crew.

Recommendation

3.3.3 The ReCAAP ISC recommends that ship masters and crew maintain anti-piracy watches and remain vigilant while their ships were at anchor or berth.

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Part 4 - Observations for February 2009

4.1 The number of reported incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships in the Asian region in February 2009 has decreased compared to February 2008. Overall, the following observations can be made for incidents reported in February 2009:

a. In February 2009, a total of four incidents of which one was a piracy incident were reported compared to February 2008 when six incidents of armed robbery were reported.

b. Of the four incidents reported in February 2009, one was a Category 1 (very significant) incident and three were Category 3 (less significant) incidents. Of the six incidents reported in February 2008, four were actual incidents and two were attempted incidents. Of the four actual incidents, one was a Category 2 (moderately significant) incident and three were Category 3 (less significant) incidents.

c. Three of the four incidents reported in February 2009 involved bulk carriers. This is in contrast to February 2008 when general cargo ships were targeted more frequently compared to other type of ships.

d. Of the four incidents reported in February 2009, three incidents involved ships that were anchored and one incident involved ship that was underway.

Annex

DETAILS OF INCIDENTS IN FEBRUARY 2009

Actual Incidents

S/N	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, IMO No., GT	Date Time	Location of Incident	Status of Ship	Details of Incidents	Reporting Agency	Significance Level (classified by the ReCAAP ISC)
1.	*Bossclip Trader* Bulk Carrier Bahamas 9320295 19,918	01/02/2009 0130 hrs	Ho Chi Minh City mooring buoys, Vietnam	Anchored	Robbers boarded the bulk carrier when it was moored to mooring buoys. They stole ship's stores, opened the hose pipe cover and escaped through the hose pipe. The incident was later reported to the authorities.	IMO	CAT 3
2.	*Port Shanghai* Bulk Carrier Panama 9423528 32415	09/02/2009 2330 hrs	17° 00.90'N 82° 21.60'E Kakinada Anchorage	Anchored	A crew during the routine check of the upper deck of the carrier discovered that one mooring line eye, two steel plates and some canvas covers were missing. The incident was reported to the Indian Coast Guard at Kakinada who was investigating the incident. The local agent of the bulk carrier has also filed a report of the incident with the local marine police.	ReCAAP Focal Point (India) IMO	CAT 3
3.	*Arya Payam* Bulk Carrier Cyprus 9328522 32,474	12/02/2009 0448 hrs	01° 18.86'N 104° 14.42'E Off Tanjung Bulat, Malaysia	Anchored	Five robbers in a wooden boat approached the bulk carrier at anchor. One of the robbers boarded the ship and attempted to steal stores from the ship. The	IMO	CAT 3

DETAILS OF INCIDENTS IN FEBRUARY 2009

Actual Incidents

S/N	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, IMO No., GT	Date Time	Location of Incident	Status of Ship	Details of Incidents	Reporting Agency	Significance Level (classified by the ReCAAP ISC)
					duty crew saw the robber and informed the crew on the bridge who raised the alarm, sounded the ship's horn and informed ships in the vicinity via VHF. Upon hearing the alarm, the robber jumped overboard and escaped empty-handed.		
4.	*MLC Nancy 5* Tug Boat Singapore 9257539 247 *Miclyn 3316* Barge Singapore	19/02/2009 1430 hrs	05˚ 10.5'N 99˚ 6.03'E 80 nm west of Penang, Straits of Malacca & Singapore	Underway	The tug boat towing a barge was under way in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore when she was attacked by 12 armed men in a small boat at approximately 80 nm west of Penang in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore. The armed men took all the navigational equipment including navigational aids, VHF radios, SSB radios as well as the crew's personal belongings. They abducted the master and the chief engineer and fled with them in their boat. No crew was	ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore)	CAT 1

DETAILS OF INCIDENTS IN FEBRUARY 2009

Actual Incidents

S/N	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, IMO No., GT	Date Time	Location of Incident	Status of Ship	Details of Incidents	Reporting Agency	Significance Level (classified by the ReCAAP ISC)
					injured. The 2nd Officer with the remaining crew made their way to Penang to seek assistance from the nearest coastal state authorities. The ship owner reported the incident to Singapore's Port Operation Control Centre (POCC) which is also the ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore). The POCC initiated a broadcast of the incident on Navtex and safety net to warn ships in the vicinity and request them to lookout for the tug boat and the barge. The master and the chief engineer were released on 23 February 2009 and returned to their hometown.		