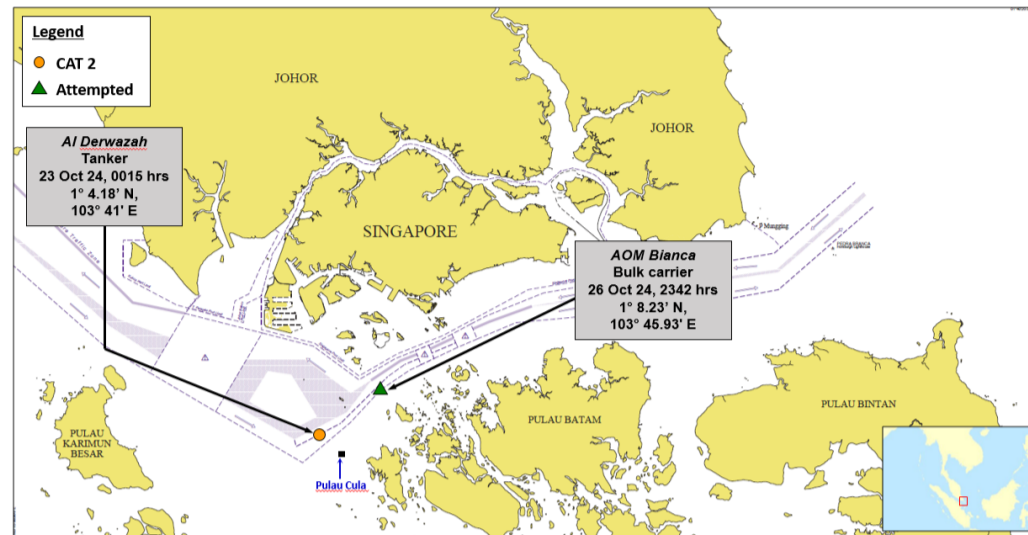


### OVERVIEW

Two incidents of armed robbery against ships in Asia (one actual<sup>1</sup> incident and one attempted<sup>2</sup> incident) were reported to the ReCAAP ISC. Both incidents occurred in the eastbound lane of the Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) of the Singapore Straits (SS). The actual incident (CAT 2<sup>3</sup>) occurred onboard a tanker while underway northwest of Pulau Cula, Indonesia, on 23 Oct 2024. The attempted incident occurred onboard a bulk carrier while underway northeast of Pulau Cula, Indonesia, on 26 Oct 2024. Details of the incidents are shown in table (\*).



| Factors                | Location  |   |
|------------------------|---|---|
|                        | Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS)         |   |
|                        | About 2.5 nm northwest of Pulau Cula, Indonesia | About 6.7 nm northeast of Pulau Cula, Indonesia |
| Type of ship           | Tanker  | Bulk carrier                                    |
| Date/Time              | 23 Oct at 0015 hrs                              | 26 Oct at 2342 hrs                              |
| Number of perpetrators | 6 men   | 2 men   |
| Weapons                | Knives  | Not armed                                       |
| Treatment of crew      | Threatened                                      | No injuries                                     |
| Significance level     | CAT 2   | Attempted                                       |
| Items stolen           | Personal belongings                             | Nil   |

### AREA OF CONCERN

With the two incidents in SS, a total of 41 incidents were reported in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS) since January 2024. The ReCAAP ISC advises ships to exercise enhanced vigilance when transiting SOMS and the littoral States to increase patrols and enforcement in these areas.

### 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 and flag State, referring to the Poster on the 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; both produced by the ReCAAP ISC.

|                |   |  |   |
|----------------|---|--|---|
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| Contact us at: | E: <a href="mailto:info@recaap.org">info@recaap.org</a> | T: +65 6376 3063   | F: +65 6376 3066  |

\* Table at <https://www.recaap.org/resources/ck/files/Number%20of%20Incidents/2024/List%20of%20Incidents%20for%202024.pdf> for details of the incidents.

<sup>1</sup> **Actual incident** refers to incident whereby the pirates/robbers boarded the ship; regardless of whether they stole any items from the crew or took anything onboard the ship.

<sup>2</sup> **Attempted incident** refers to incident whereby the pirates/robbers tried but failed in their attempt to board the ship.

<sup>3</sup> **CAT (Category) 2** incident is moderately significant. Under this category, the perpetrators are likely to be armed with knives/machetes and in some incidents armed with guns. The crew is threatened or held hostage temporarily and, in some cases, the crew suffered injury and physical violence.