

**8th ASEAN Regional Forum  
Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security  
(ARF ISM on MS)  
6 & 7 April 2016**

**ICC International Maritime Bureau**

**Government and Industry Cooperation in  
Addressing Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea**

**How to strengthen industry cooperation in the region addressing piracy and armed robbery at sea?**

**Relevant best practices and initiatives in the Asia Pacific region**

Introduction

Considering ways to strengthen industry cooperation and considering the available best practices and initiatives in the Asia Pacific region are two very important topics in the discussion of suppressing the crimes of piracy and armed robbery.

When initiating such a discussion it is important to bear in mind that such considerations are not solely aimed at protecting the free movement of global trade, a key factor in protecting regional economic growth. Whilst this is of course an important goal, it is only one of several.

Amongst the other concerns is the protection of the marine environment. Crimes at sea put the marine environment at risk. One can easily imagine the environmental consequences if a hijacked ship were to run aground or become involved in a collision in the narrow and congested sea lanes. Both scenarios come with potentially severe impacts on the marine environment resulting from pollution.

However, and perhaps most importantly, are the consequences suffered by the seafarers and their families. The threats of being physically assaulted or held hostage place a psychological strain on seafarers that workers in few other professions ever face. The impact on the families of seafarers injured, held for ransom or murdered is equally significant and deserving of our best efforts to address.

In seeking to protect the safety and welfare of seafarers and their families, no detail is too small, and no effort is too great.

This afternoon it is a challenge to cover every aspect of potential options to strengthen industry cooperation and relevant best practices in detail within the allotted fifteen minutes.

What is possible, however, is to share some food for thought which can be taken forward and considered as efforts are made to continuously improve the initiatives aimed at the suppression of piracy and armed robbery in this region and beyond, in an efficient and effective manner, making best use of the limited resources available.

In September 2015 the IMB held a two-day meeting in Kuala Lumpur that addressed these very issues on a global level, whilst also considering the varied security conditions and initiatives taken at regional levels.<sup>1</sup> Over 200 delegates from 30 countries participated, reflecting the cooperation between national authorities and commercial entities. The meeting was co-hosted by the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency, Interpol and the Royal Malaysian Police. The outcome of those discussions are timely for today's session.

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<sup>1</sup> ICC-IMB International Meeting on Piracy, Armed Robbery and Maritime Security, Addressing risks in a changing threat environment, 14-15 September 2015, Shangri-la Hotel, Kuala Lumpur, Organised by ICC-IMB, MMEA, INTERPOL, RMP

A detailed report for the September 2015 meeting is available from the ICC IMB website.  
<https://icc-ccs.org/>

Speakers and panellists at the meeting represented a broad spectrum of stakeholders. Those listed below accepted invitations to actively participate;

Bergen Risk Solutions	International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF)
BIMCO	ITF Seafarers' Trust
CoS EuNAVFOR	Lambrook Consultancy
DG Shipping India	Maritime Institute Of Malaysia (MIMA)
EU DG Move	Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA)
EUNavFor	NATO
Former Under Secretary National Security Council, Malaysian Prime Minister's Department	Oceans Beyond Piracy
Hong Kong Shipowners Association (HKSOA)	Oil Companies International Marine Forum (OCIMF)
ICC International Maritime Bureau (IMB)	Royal Malaysian Police
Indonesian Marine Police	Salama Fikira
International and Strategic Affairs Directorate of the French MOD	Security Association for the Maritime Industry (SAMI)
INTERPOL	Shell SE Asia
INTERTANKO	UK Chamber of Shipping
International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN)/Maritime Piracy Humanitarian Response Programme (MPHRP)	United Kingdom Marine Trade Operations (UKMTO)
	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
	United States Department of Defense (US DoD)
	Watkins Syndicate

In view of the time limitations I will seek to convey several key elements of the IMB's views whilst providing some related background details for the sake of context, in an effort to facilitate further informed discussions.

## **Part I: How to strengthen industry cooperation in the region addressing piracy and armed robbery at sea?**

### **The short answer;**

Simplify the reporting process;

1. Improve the exchange of information between all stakeholders
2. Simplify the categories of attacks

### **The long answer;**

Merchant shipping is an international business that benefits greatly from international solutions and harmonised standards.

Harmonised regulations and practices lay a solid foundation for globalisation, the benefits of economic development, and set the stage for a level playing field for all countries engaged in international trade and for the companies that provide their transportation needs whether by sea, land or air.

For the ASEAN region, there are opportunities to strengthen industry cooperation by building upon the foundations of proactive initiatives that have already proven their worth both in the region and in other parts of the world.

Turning to our agenda under Maritime Security Issues, specifically, government and industry cooperation in addressing piracy and armed robbery at sea, the related efforts to establish and enhance such cooperation have been pursued since the 1980s.

#### **1981**

35 years ago, the ICC - International Maritime Bureau (IMB) was established to act as a focal point in the fight against all types of maritime fraud, malpractice and piracy.

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) in its resolution A 504 (XII) (9) adopted on 20 November 1981, amongst other other things urged all governments, interests and organisations to exchange information and provide appropriate co-operation with the IMB.

At present the IMB also has observer status with the International Criminal Police Organization (ICPO/INTERPOL) and an MOU with the World Customs Organisation (WCO).

#### **1984**

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) began compiling reports of piracy and armed robbery in 1984.

In 1993 the IMO wrote; "The collection, collation, assessment and dissemination of accurate information and statistics on attacks by pirates and armed robbers at sea is critical in countering the threat."

The IMO continued, emphasising that, "The possession of such information will allow agencies such as the IMB's RPC (*Regional Piracy Centre, as it was known at the time*) to issue appropriate warnings to ships and owners that seek advice. This service is already available from the RPC based in Kuala Lumpur, although it is hampered by limited statistical evidence.

**The work of the Centre needs to be enhanced and supported by all the agencies involved."**

The problem of underreporting had already been recognised at that time, with many estimating that only half of all incidents were being reported. This concern remains to this very day, hence the IMO's views in 1993 are no less valid in 2016.

## **1992**

Outrage in the shipping industry at the alarming growth in piracy prompted the creation of the IMB RPC in October 1992 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The name was subsequently changed to Piracy Reporting Centre, as it is known today.

The key services of the IMB PRC are:

- Issuing daily status reports on piracy and armed robbery to ships via broadcasts on the Inmarsat-C SafetyNET service,
- Reporting piracy and armed robbery at sea incidents to law enforcement, MRCCs and the IMO,
- Helping local law enforcement apprehend pirates and assist in bringing them to justice,
- Assisting shipowners whose vessels have been attacked or hijacked,
- Assisting crewmembers whose vessels have been attacked,
- Providing updates on pirate activity via the Internet,
- Providing free updates to CSOs and ship managers in-charge of the safety and security of their vessels, and
- Publishing comprehensive quarterly and annual reports detailing piracy statistics.

The services of the PRC are provided free of charge to all ships irrespective of their ownership or flag.

In addition the IMB also provides assistance with locating ships seized by pirates and the recovery of stolen cargoes on a chargeable basis.

## **Information exchange**

### **Collating of reports**

In 1993 the IMO wrote;

“This is best done by a central agency possessing the necessary skills and resources. To maintain credibility with Government and commercial sectors, such an agency must be;

- accurate,
- authoritative,
- efficient, and
- impartial

in both its product and its dealings with others.”

### **Who collated reports of piracy and armed robbery in 1993?**

1. IMB Regional Piracy Centre (now Piracy Reporting Centre)
2. Indonesian Government
3. Singapore National Shipping Association
4. United States Department of Energy

### **Who does this now?**

Today there are many commercial security companies providing their clients with statistics, risk assessments and advice.

On an international level both the IMB and the IMO collate reports and issue reports.

For the 291 incidents reported to the IMO in 2014, the following thirteen stakeholders submitted reports (in alphabetical order);

1. Colombia
2. IMB PRC
3. India
4. Indonesia
5. Liberia
6. Malaysia
7. Marshall Islands
8. Nigeria
9. Philippines
10. ReCAAP ISC
  1. ReCAAP ISC via India Focal Point
  2. ReCAAP ISC via Japan Focal Point
  3. ReCAAP ISC via Singapore Focal Point
  4. ReCAAP ISC via Thailand Focal Point
  5. ReCAAP ISC via United Kingdom Focal Point
  6. ReCAAP ISC via Vietnam Focal Point
11. Singapore
12. Singapore Information Fusion Centre
13. Togo

**Other reporting centres**  
**(Collating reports and/or issuing statistics and/or analysis)**

Global

- Ship Registries (Flag States. IMO currently has 171 member States)
- US Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI)

Regional

Asia

- Information Fusion Centre (IFC), Changi Naval Base, Singapore
- ReCAAP ISC

Gulf of Aden & Indian Ocean

- European Union Naval Force ATALANTA (EU NAVFOR)
- Maritime Security Centre: Horn of Africa (MSCHOA)
- Nato Shipping Centre (NSC)
- Operation Ocean Shield (OOS) NATO
- United Kingdom Marine Trade Operations (UKMTO)

Gulf of Guinea

- Maritime Trade Information Sharing Centre (MTISC)
- Nato Shipping Centre (NSC)
- Naval Cooperation and Guidance for Shipping (NCAGS)

Mediterranean

- Operation Active Endeavour (OAE) NATO

US coastal waters

- US Coast Guard

## **IMB Views**

Based on over thirty years of experience with receiving reports from seafarers and shipowners in addition to assisting with the response efforts by liaising between shipowners, ship operators and coastal authorities and other naval commands, the IMB feels that a key issue is to make the reporting of incidents as simple as possible so the IMB and the enforcement agencies and responding forces get a more comprehensive picture of the true extent of piracy and armed robbery.

This position was echoed by the NATO representative during the IMB's September meeting in Kuala Lumpur.

### **NATO's View:**

- We ask too much of the mariner through different formats
- This leads to;
  - limited reporting from shipping
  - confused data
  - incorrect recording of valuable data

The Gulf of Guinea was used as an example.

NATO reported that between January and September 2015, 50 incidents were believed to have taken place.

However, a lack of coordination between the known reporting organisations left some doubt with respect to the actual level of activity.

These figures illustrate the basis for concern;

The number of individual incidents from 1 January 2015 to September 2015: 50

The total number of Reports from individual organisations; 72

Amongst the four known reporting organisations, the number of incidents ranged from 6 to 22.

MTISC-GoG <sup>2</sup>	22
IMO GSIS	22
IMB	22
ONI	6

Further complicating the situation, not all of these four known reporting centres submit their reports to the IMO, hampering cross-referencing efforts.

The **Hong Kong Shipowners' Association** described why a simple reporting system that is globally harmonised is advantageous;

- Useful post incident analysis and development of accurate global risk assessments is dependent on an efficient collection and compilation mechanism, one that both ensures that details of attacks are complete whilst avoiding duplication.
- Such a mechanism should also facilitate the efficient sharing of information amongst all stakeholders, national authorities and industry partners alike.
- This should consider that vessels operate across the globe and any initiative should be in line with reporting arrangements worldwide.

## Potential for a single global reporting centre

The idea of a single global reporting centre such as the IMB, which relays and freely exchanges information with enforcement agencies fulfils many of the criteria identified by the IMO, namely the IMB PRC is;

- long established (set up in 1992),
- recognised by the industry,
- rises above local political issues and interagency conflicts, and
- has been effective throughout its 24 years of operation.

## Examples of IMB effective support of response efforts

Since 1981 the IMB has provided assistance involving many merchant ships under attack or hijacked in many different regions. The following cases illustrate some examples of the IMB PRC's recent engagement with regional authorities in support of response and recovery efforts, some of which have resulted with the arrest of the attackers.

### 2015

MT DONGFANG GLORY	Malaysian Authorities
MT ORKIM HARMONY	Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) Royal Australian Air Force Malaysian Navy Vietnam Coast Guard

### 2014

MT AI MARU	Malaysian Navy MMEA Malaysian Marine Police IFC/Singapore Navy
MT ORIENTAL GLORY	Malaysian Authorities Malaysian Navy Indonesian Authorities

### 2012

MT ZAFIRAH	Malaysian Authorities Vietnamese Marine Police
MT REHOBOT	Indonesian Marine Police Philippine Authorities
MT SUN BIRDIE	MMEA

Although IMB's engagement is not publicised in press releases or other promotional activities, visitors to the IMB PRC office in Kuala Lumpur will see many letters of gratitude received from navies and other authorities in recognition of such assistance.

## **The threat is not static**

Regional reporting centres could outlive their purpose as the crimes of piracy and armed robbery shift between regions, intensifying in some whilst vanishing from others. Therefore the IMB encourages a global system which deals both with today's hotspots and tomorrow's high risk areas (so far unknown). A system which is long term, efficient and sustainable.

During the September meeting in Kuala Lumpur, discussion of the geographical shifts of piracy hotspots exposed a related development, the proliferation of reporting centres which are established in unison with each new risk area. This proliferation creates several challenges:

- Increased confusion amongst seafarers as to which centre to contact
- Inaccurate statistics and analysis due to inefficiencies of information sharing between centres (as illustrated by the earlier example for the Gulf of Guinea)
- More than one reporting centre within a region
- Silos hindering the exchange of information between reporting centres, even for some within the same jurisdiction
- Varied reporting requirements, some based on territorial waters, others based on risk zones, in addition to other considerations such as flag state requirements
- Lack of uniformity with respect to the information required when lodging a report
- Superfluous reporting centres that remain operational after the cessation of the piracy and armed robbery activity

Not only does such proliferation reflect an inefficient use of limited resources, the confusion this creates may cause unnecessary delays in providing adequate response to ships under attack.

Seafarers are the main source of the information, as such it is critical that confusion is minimized at the initial stage, namely at the time of an attack.

The immediate pressing goal must be to ensure that the ship under attack is provided with the most rapid response possible.

Useful post incident analysis and development of accurate global risk assessments is dependent on an efficient collection and compilation mechanism, one that both ensures that details of attacks are complete whilst avoiding duplication.

Such a mechanism should also facilitate the efficient sharing of information amongst all stakeholders, national authorities and industry partners alike.

## **A Global Solution With Regional Connectivity**

In practice the response to incidents varies. It could be;

- local
- regional and/or
- global

depending on the nature of the attack and the intentions of the attackers.

Recognising this, and the nature of the merchant shipping business, reporting mechanisms should be global to be truly effective.

A truly effective system will be achieved when the global centre and all participating regional centres share information freely between each other. In respect to information exchange there remains much room for improvement, failing which inefficiencies will continue as will a lack of accuracy in respect to statistical risk analysis.



## The Silver Bullet

Is there a 'one-size-fits-all' solution? Probably not. However there are ample opportunities for improvement.

Establishment of a single global reporting centre could be seen as the primary collator of incident reports received both from merchant ships and shipowners as well as from other sources, including established regional reporting centres.

Establishment of a single global reporting centre would not replace the indispensable roll played by the IMO in compiling incident reports. In collating incident reports the IMO has provided several important functions, such as;

- Making the reports available to all its 171 member countries, 77 international non-governmental organizations in consultative status with IMO (of which ICC-IMB is one), and 65 intergovernmental organizations.
- Making the reports widely available to all concerned parties via the IMO Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GSIS)

## Quality Control and Political Will

Two additional important roles played by the IMO are worthy of mention. In view of the ongoing problem of underreporting and the proliferation of reporting centres, achieving 100% reporting and establishing universal agreement on reporting procedures may be distant goals, if they are indeed achievable.

In the meantime, the IMO has functioned well in maintaining the integrity of statistics, specifically when in receipt of reports of a single incident from multiple sources. In the process of compiling the reported incidents the IMO ensures that one incident is not erroneously multiplied by the number of reports received by applying efficient evaluation of all reports, resulting when appropriate with single incidents being attributed to multiple reporting parties, as shown in this example (IMO MSC.4/Circ.218, 21 January 2015);

N°	Ship Name Type of Ship Flag Gross Tonnage IMO Number	Date Time	Position of the incident*	Reporting State or international organization
1	2	3	4	9
<b>IN TERRITORIAL WATERS</b>				
13	EPHESUS Bulk carrier Marshall Islands 19846 9412622	25/12/2014 00:30 LT	SOUTH CHINA SEA Campha pilot boarding area Viet Nam 20° 41.10' N 107° 12.60' E	Marshall Islands ReCAAP ISC via ReCAAP Focal Point (Viet Nam), ICC-IMB Piracy Reporting Centre Kuala Lumpur

In turn, by providing its member states with accurate statistics, the IMO fosters a rational discussion regarding the actual magnitude and consequences of the activities, generating the appropriate level of political will needed to pursue and implement effective measures in proportion to the actual risks.

For these and other reasons the role of the IMO unquestionably vital.

## **Simplify the categories of incidents**

In order to benefit from a harmonised global system, terms and definitions should be both clear and simplified.

Turning to the categories of piracy and armed robbery, addressing the concerns raised by the HKSOA during the IMB Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in September 2015, another speaker outlined the advantages of simplifying such categories in a manner that would clearly paint a true and easily understandable picture for all stakeholders.

An example of a potential way to achieve this would see incidents placed in three clearly understandable tiers;

1. **Hijacking**: regardless of duration or intent,
2. **Attack**: In which weapons are involved, including failed boardings during which shots are fired,
3. **Theft and/or Pilferage**: Incidents in which property has been stolen without violence or detected weapons.

The clarity achieved by such simplified categorization will enable coastal authorities to understand the extent of the related risks and to allocate appropriate resources to protect merchant ships plying their waters. The same holds true with respect to the industry being able to employ preventative measures proportionate to the existing risks found in different areas.

The approach cited above is similar to the three categories used by the IMO in 1993 (although in reverse order with respect to the potential perils faced by seafarers);

1. **Low-Level Armed Robbery** (LLAR)
2. **Medium-Level Armed Assault and Robbery** (MLAAR) (with/without hijack)
3. **Major Criminal Hijack** (MCHJ)

## **The need to use commonly understood definitions of attacks**

The IMB holds that adopting internationally accepted definitions (possibly as part of a future Global BMP) would ensure that:

- seafarers,
- law enforcement and
- other stakeholders

are all speaking the same language.

Definitions must be simple, clear and internationally applied, unlike the present trend we have seen in which new "categories" are introduced, generating confusion amongst seafarers and other stakeholders alike.

## **Part II: Relevant best practices and initiatives in the Asia Pacific region**

Seafarers have traditionally applied available means to protect their ships from the perils of the seas, including the threats posed by pirates and armed robbers.

Since the 1980s when the threat of piracy and armed robbery received intensified attention as the frequency and magnitude of attacks increased, a series of voluntary guidelines and eventually mandatory maritime security measures have been introduced.

Those identified here serve to illustrate the proliferation of such guidelines and requirements as well as the organisations behind their development and introduction.

### **The 1990s**

The IMO Findings in 1993 fostered the political will and momentum for the pursuit of the initial measures to suppress and prevent piracy and armed robbery. The findings noted several factors, including;

- Piracy surge in the 1980s
- Specific areas;
  - off West Africa
  - SE Asia, Straits of Malacca, Phillips and Singapore, parts of South China Sea.
  - Northern coast of South America
  - Philippine territorial waters
  - Horn of Africa and southern Red Sea (possibly related to terrorism).
- A concern that piracy profits in other areas might be used to finance terrorist activities.

### **Asian Initiatives**

Initiatives taken in the area of the Straits of Malacca, Phillips and Singapore resulted in reduction of incidents from July 1992

- coordinated patrols and counter-measures taken by the three coastal States
- improved protective measures taken by many merchant ships

This coincided with the establishment of the IMB PRC in Kuala Lumpur in 1992.

The IMB Piracy Reporting Centre is the world's only independent office to receive reports of pirate attacks 24-hours-a-day from across the globe.

IMB strongly urges all shipmasters and owners to report all actual, attempted and suspected piracy and armed robbery incidents to the IMB Piracy Reporting Centre. This first step in the response chain is vital to ensuring that adequate resources are allocated by authorities to tackle piracy.

Transparent statistics from an independent, non-political, international organization can act as a catalyst to achieve this goal.

### **IMO Observations**

In 1993 the IMO reported that: Establishing co-ordinated patrols by all three Malacca Strait States was "the most significant factor in the reduction of acts of piracy and armed robbery in these areas."

At the same time the IMO proposed that ships under attack use "Not under command" lights to warn nearby ships and inform responding security forces of their precise location, a measure that foreshadowed the eventual requirement for Ship Security Alert Systems (SSAS).

## Subsequent Guidance and Requirements

**1993** IMO Maritime Safety Committee guidance to shipowners, shipmasters, crews and coastal states, initially addressing incidents in Asia, subsequently revised to cover global piracy and armed robbery concerns.

IMO Maritime Safety Committee Circ. 622  
Recommendations to Governments for combatting piracy and armed robbery against ships

IMO Maritime Safety Committee Circ. 623  
Guidance to shipowners and ship operators, shipmasters and crews on preventing and suppressing acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships

**1997**<sup>3</sup> Pirates and Armed Robbers: Guidelines on Prevention for Masters and Ship Security Officers (International Chamber of Shipping (ICS/ISF))

**1998** BIMCO published the first edition of the ShipMaster's Security Manual, providing guidance on the prevention of piracy and armed robbery, drug smuggling and stowaways. Later this publication was expanded to address the ISPS Code and Boat People.

**2003** ICS: Maritime Security: Guidance for Ship Operators on the IMO International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code

**2004 to 2006** implementation of the SOLAS International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code, requiring merchant ships;

- to implement the measures contained in approved Ship Security Plans and
- to have functioning Ship Security Alert Systems (SSAS) installed and functional

**2006** ReCAAP ISC established. The Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP). The first regional government-to-government agreement to promote and enhance cooperation against piracy and armed robbery in Asia.

**2007** IMB, ReCAAP ISC, BIMCO; Tips on avoiding Piracy Robbery and Theft (A pamphlet for seafarers aimed at raising awareness as a quick-reference guide.)

**2010** IMO Code of Practice for the Investigation of Crimes of Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships (updated)

**2011** ReCAAP ISC, BIMCO; Anti-Piracy Poster, titled: Prevent Piracy (Produced to be displayed on ships as a regular reminder, raising awareness of the threats, preventative measures and reporting.)

**2011** Best Management Practices to Deter Piracy off the Coast of Somalia and in the Arabian Sea Asea (**BMP**).

Contributors:

BIMCO	CLIA
ICS	IG P&I
IMB	IMEC
Intercargo	InterManager
INTERTANKO	IPTA
ISF	ITF
JWC/JHC	Mission to Seafarers
OCIMF	SIGTTO
WSC	

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<sup>3</sup> This publication is now superseded by BMP4.

**2011** Piracy, the Menace at Sea. Multi-media DVD  
Steamship Mutual P&I Club in collaboration with; EU NAVFOR, UK Royal Navy, ICC IMB, INCE & Co., INTERTANKO, NATO/OTAN, BIMCO, IMO, Intercargo, OCIMF. Financed by The Ship Safety Trust

**2013** ReCAAP ISC and Information Fusion Centre (IFC); Tug Boats and Barges Guide Against Piracy and Sea Robbery

**2015** Guide for Tankers Operating in Asia Against Piracy and Armed Robbery Involving Oil Cargo Theft. Contributors: ReCAAP ISC, IFC, RSIS

**2015** ReCAAP ISC Regional Guide to Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia  
Contributors: ReCAAP ISC, IFC, RSIS, ASF, FASA, INTERTANKO, OCIMF, SSA

**20....????** Global BMP... The concept of developing a Global BMP is now receiving much attention. If and when a Global BMP is established remains to be seen.

It should be noted that whilst not all anti-piracy measures are Asia-specific, the majority of measures that are recommended are useful in protecting merchant ships regardless of the region in which they operate. The very nature of merchant ships, having varied designs and equipment, requires a degree of flexibility in terms of protective measures employed on board.

### **Best Practices; Where do we go from here?**

Like the proliferation of reporting centres, a similar proliferation of maritime security related regulations and guidelines can also contribute to a degree of confusion amongst not only the seafarers but also other stakeholders seeking to assist with the suppression of piracy and armed robbery.

Recognising that some characteristics of this activity vary between regions, a Global BMP could be useful in compiling the universally effective preventative measures and key reporting points, with the possibility of highlighting region-specific characteristics, counter-measures and reporting guidance in respective chapters or annexes.

## Conclusions

### ***How to strengthen industry cooperation in the region addressing piracy and armed robbery at sea?***

Enhance information exchange between all stakeholders; merchant ships, ship operators, responders and report collators. Much progress has been achieved in this area, yet there remain opportunities for further improvements.

Keep it simple                      Maintain a manageable number of reporting centres  
Simplify incident definitions

Maintain a constructive dialogue and vibrant exchange of ideas between all stakeholders.

The key issue is to make reporting of incidents as simple as possible to establish a more comprehensive and accurate picture of the criminal activity.

To be truly effective, recognising that the response to piracy can be local or regional, reporting mechanisms should be global, thereby reflecting the nature of the shipping business.

The IMB encourages pursuit of a system that deals with today's hotspots and tomorrow's high risk areas (so far unknown) which is long-term and sustainable. One that avoids the continuing proliferation of reporting centres which unduly confuse the mariner.

The idea of a single global reporting centre such as the IMB which already relays and freely exchanges information with enforcement agencies ticks many of the boxes;

- it is long established,
- it is recognised by the industry,
- it rises above local political issues and interagency conflicts, and
- it has been effective.

As the IMO said in 1993;

*"The collection, collation, assessment and dissemination of accurate information and statistics on attacks by pirates and armed robbers at sea is critical in countering the threat."*

IMB sees its continuing role as supporting response agencies in whichever way they wish, as a long-established and trusted intermediary for Masters and owners.

### ***Relevant best practices and initiatives in the Asia Pacific region***

- Build on what works
- Avoid duplication
- Adapt to meet changing threat scenarios

Development of a Global BMP could be useful for harmonising reporting procedures and terminology (definitions), whilst assimilating effective and practical preventative measures.

We don't need to reinvent the wheel, but we can look at ways to improve it's efficiency and effectiveness.