Situation on Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia

31 March 2015
Scope

- Situation update of Asia
- Assessment by ReCAAP ISC
- Specific Issues of Concern – Oil Siphoning
- Efforts by ReCAAP ISC
  - Close Coordination with LEAs
  - Cooperation with like minded organisations with expertise such as INTERPOL
- Sensitizing private shipping industry and Extracting Info
- Awareness enhancement through, Seminar, Conferences, symposium etc
- Production of Best Management Practices (BMP)

- Successful Case Studies
- Conclusion
Situation of Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Southeast Asia and recent “Alarmist” Reports regarding our region
Overall Situation in 2014

2014

- **183 incidents**
  - ☑️ 45 piracy, 138 robberies
  - ▶ 22% significant increase from 2013
  - ▶ Majority (62%) of incidents are less severe

- **Highest number of CAT 1 incidents**
  - ☑️ Majority siphoning of fuel/oil (12)
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Alarmist Reports

- “UN Declares: Southeast Asia has now become a global piracy spot” — AFP 2014/June
  - “In Southeast Asia / Malacca, we observe a slight decease though. No significant trend in the number of attacks or in their severity.
  - A significant shift of the Centre of Gravity for marine activities to Asia.” - UNITAR (UNITED NATIONS INSTITUTE of Training And Research) report

- “(BIMCO) Accusing the ReCAAP of being uncooperative and downplaying the situation, a source familiar with the matter told Lloyd’s List” — Lloyds List 2015/March
  - “They (the ReCAAP) have done a tremendous amount to improve the accuracy of reporting in the region. And they should take credit for that.
  - But to say that all the increase in piracy in the last two years is due to reporting might be a little naive,” - Lloyd’s List quoting BIMCO expert remarks.
Assessment by ReCAAP ISC
Assessment by ReCAAP

- Neither downplaying nor overplaying
- Quality vs Quantity
- Other possible factors
  - Increase of reporting
  - Insiders’ – indicated by like minded organisation INTERPOL
  - Interest Group
- Nevertheless, a significant increase of numbers and frequency of siphoning
  - A matter of concern
Specific issue of concern:
Siphoning of Ship Fuel/Oil
Siphoning Incidents

- **Siphoning incidents**
  - Illegal transfer of fuel/oil carried by victim vessel to another unknown vessel
  - Fuel siphoned includes MGO, MDO, MFO, ADF, gasoline, diesel, crude palm oil, lube oil

- **Increasing trend in Asia**

- **Majority occurred in the South China Sea**
  - Lack of enforcement

- **Modus operandi**
  - Small tankers targeted
  - During hours of darkness
  - Involve large group of perpetrators (> 8 men)
  - Armed with guns and knives
  - Tied/threatened crew, locked them in mess room/cabin.
  - Steered tanker to location further from coast
  - Another tanker/barge came alongside
  - Siphoning: approx. 6-10 hrs
  - Damaged navigational and comms equipment
  - Stole crew's cash and belongings
Siphoning Incidents (2014)

- 12 siphoning incidents
- Product/oil tankers
  - 7 (900-2000 GT)
  - 5 (> 2000 GT)
- Hours of darkness
  - 9 (during 1955-2345 hrs)
  - 3 (0055-0600 hrs)
- Type of fuel/oil
  - MGO, MDO, MFO, ADF, gasoline, diesel, crude palm oil, lube oil
- Number of perpetrators
  - 3 (5-7); 6 (8-10), 3 (>10)
- Weapons
  - 10 (guns and knives)
- Treatment of crew
  - Tied and locked
  - Crew discarded (1 incident)
**Actions taken by ReCAAP ISC**

- **Responses to siphoning incidents**
  - Timely and accurate information dissemination to shipping industry
    - (5 x Alerts, 6 x Updates, 2 x Special Reports)
  - Meet shipping company of victim vessels
    - Collate further information collaboration
    - Update on reality of incident

- **International and internal coordination by ReCAAP ISC and ReCAAP Focal Points**
Actions taken by ReCAAP ISC

- **Enhanced Situation awareness**
  - Issues of concern (e.g. ship type, location, time, items targeted)
  - Lessons learned, good practices, challenges

- **Moving forward...**
  - Collaborate with law enforcement agencies
    - Provide value added information
    - Share information with stakeholders concerned
  - Collective efforts by shipping industry, authorities, ReCAAP, etc.
Successful Case Studies
Sun Birdie (29 Jan 15)

- On 29 Jan 15, the owner reported to MMEA loss of contact with the tanker;
  - Laden with 700 metric tons of MFO; 11 crew onboard
  - Last known position: approximately 1 nm south of Tanjung Ayam, Malaysia

- The ReCAAP ISC informed its ReCAAP Focal/Contact points
  - Request to reports on sightings of the vessel and crew to the nearest coastal State
Sun Birdie (29 Jan 15)

- MMEA and Royal Malaysian Navy (RMN) deployed vessels
- On 29 Jan, the MMEA successfully recovered Sun Birdie at approximately 17.63 nm northeast of Tanjung Penawar, Malaysia
  - Detained 7 perpetrators onboard
- Two perpetrators jumped overboard, fled
- They picked up by passing ship, Challenger Premier

- High vigilance, timely reporting and quick response by LE agency led to arrest of the perpetrators and safeguarding the safety of the crew.
- Sharing of information by passing ship
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Recommendation (2014)

- Regional approach
- Close collaboration with law enforcement agencies
- Strengthen cooperation with likeminded governmental organisations, eg. INTERPOL, UNODC
- Promote situation awareness among the authorities
- Joint undertaking of stakeholders, both governmental and non-governmental, such as production of BMPs, annual convening of symposiums and conferences
- Encourage early reporting in collaboration with shipping industry

- Littoral States do more…
  - Increase surveillance and enforcement
  - Extend coordinated patrols
Thank you for your attention