



ICC INTERNATIONAL MARITIME BUREAU

PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY

AGAINST SHIPS

REPORT FOR THE PERIOD

1 January – 31 December 2015

WARNING

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INTRODUCTION

The ICC International Maritime Bureau (IMB) is a specialised division of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC). The IMB is a non-profit making organisation, established in 1981 to act as a focal point in the fight against all types of maritime crime and malpractice. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) in its resolution A 504 (XII) (5) and (9) adopted on 20 November 1981, has *inter alia*, urged governments, all interests and organization to co-operate and exchange information with each other and the IMB with a view to maintaining and developing a coordinated action in combating maritime fraud.

This report is an analysis of world-wide reported incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships from 1 January to 31 December 2015.

Outrage in the shipping industry at the alarming growth in piracy prompted the creation of the IMB Piracy Reporting Centre (PRC) in October 1992 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The key services of the 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
- 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.

The IMB also locates ships seized by pirates and recovers stolen cargos on a chargeable basis.

The IMB Piracy Reporting Centre can be contacted at:

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24 Hours Anti-Piracy HELPLINE Tel: ++ 60 3 2031 0014

Piracy report on the Internet: The IMB posts updates of attacks on the Internet at www.icc-ccs.org. By posting the information on the internet, ship owners and authorities ashore as well as ships at sea can access these updates regularly and make informed decisions on the risks associated with certain sea areas.

Sometimes, incidents occurring in the previous quarter(s) are reported to the Centre after a time lag. This late reporting of incidents results in changes to the figures in the tables. The Centre has, as at 31 December 2015, received reports of 246 incidents but may receive details of more in the coming months relating to the same period.

Because of the recent debate concerning Malacca Straits, narrations of incidents in this area are shown as separate categories. Similarly because of the increasing serious incidents off Somalia, incidents in this area are also shown as separate categories.

Attacks in the Gulf of Aden and off the east coast of Somalia have been grouped together in the narrations for easy reading.

DEFINITIONS OF PIRACY & ARMED ROBBERY

Piracy is defined in Article 101 of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and Armed Robbery defined by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) in its 26th Assembly session as Resolution A.1025 (26).

Article 101 of UNCLOS defines Piracy as:

Definition of Piracy consists of any of the following acts:

a) any illegal acts 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 aircraft, or against persons or property on board such ship or aircraft;

(ii) against a ship, aircraft, 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).

The IMO defines Armed Robbery in Resolution A.1025 (26) “Code of Practice for the Investigation of Crimes of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships” as:

Armed robbery against ships” means any of the following acts:

.1 any illegal act of violence or detention or any act of depredation, or threat thereof, other than an act of piracy, committed for private ends and directed against a ship or against persons or property on board such a ship, within a State’s internal waters, archipelagic waters and territorial sea;

.2 any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described above

FUNDING

The Piracy Reporting Centre (PRC) funded purely on donations wishes to thank the following organisations that have financially contributed towards the Centre's 24 hour manned service:

- ANIA
- Assuranceforeningen Skuld
- Britannia Steam Ship Insurance Association Limited
- Gard AS
- Japan P&I Club
- The Standard Club Europe Ltd
- Steam Ship Insurance Management Services Limited
- Taipei Economic & Cultural Office in Malaysia
- The North of England P&I Association Ltd
- Justships Ltd
- Tsakos Shipping

The PRC is additionally non-financially supported by:

- ExactEarth (www.exactearth.com)
- Vesseltracker (www.vesseltracker.com)

TABLE 1: Locations of ACTUAL and ATTEMPTED attacks, January – December: 2011 – 2015

Locations	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
S E ASIA Indonesia	46	81	106	100	108
Malacca Straits	1	2	1	1	5
Malaysia	16	12	9	24	13
Myanmar (Burma)	1				
Philippines	5	3	3	6	11
Singapore Straits	11	6	9	8	9
Thailand				2	1
FAR EAST China	2	1			4
South China Sea	13	2	4	1	
Vietnam	8	4	9	7	27
INDIAN SUB Bangladesh	10	11	12	21	11
CONTINENT India	6	8	14	13	13
SOUTH AMERICA Brazil	3	1	1	1	
Colombia	4	5	7	2	5
Costa Rica	3	1			
Dominican Republic		1	1		
Ecuador	6	4	3		
Guyana	1		2	1	
Haiti	2	2			2
Peru	2	3	4		
Venezuela	4			1	1
AFRICA Algeria		1			
Angola	1			1	
Benin	20	2			
Cameroon		1		1	1
Dem. Republic of Congo	4	2		1	3
Dem. Rep. of Sao Tome & Principe				1	
Egypt	3	7	7		1
Gabon			2	1	
Ghana	2	2	1	4	2
Guinea	5	3	1		3
Gulf of Aden*	37	13	6	4	
Ivory Coast	1	5	4	3	1
Kenya	1	1	1		2
Liberia				1	2
Mauritania			1		
Morocco			1	1	
Mozambique		2	2	1	1
Nigeria	10	27	31	18	14
Red Sea*	39	13	2	4	
Sierra Leone	1	1	2	1	
Somalia*	160	49	7	3	
Tanzania		2	1	1	
The Congo	3	4	3	7	5
Togo	6	15	7	2	
REST OF Mediterranean Sea	1				
WORLD Oman	1*			2	
Papua New Guinea					1
Total at year end	439	297	264	245	246

All incidents with * above are attributed to Somali pirates

CHART A: The following five locations recorded 71% attacks from a total of 246 reported attacks for the period.

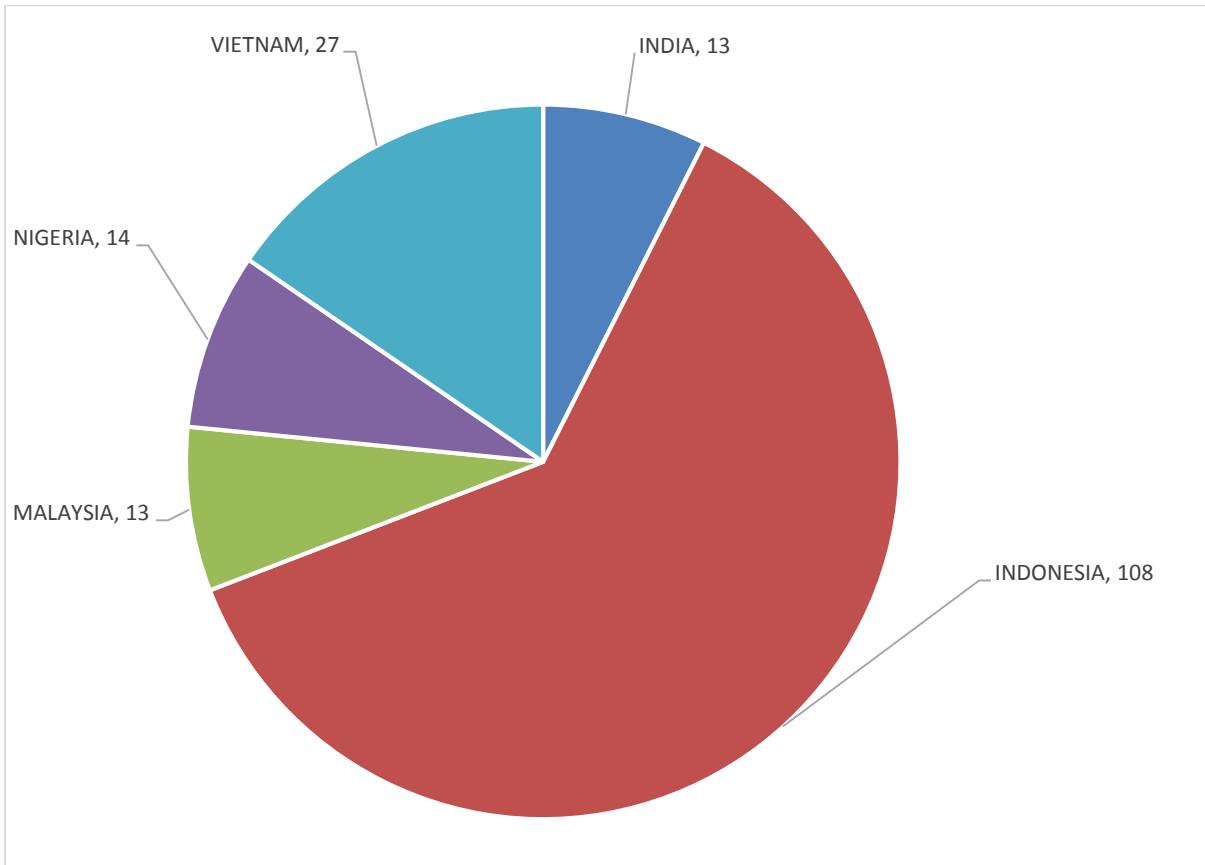


CHART B: Monthly comparison of incidents during January – December 2015

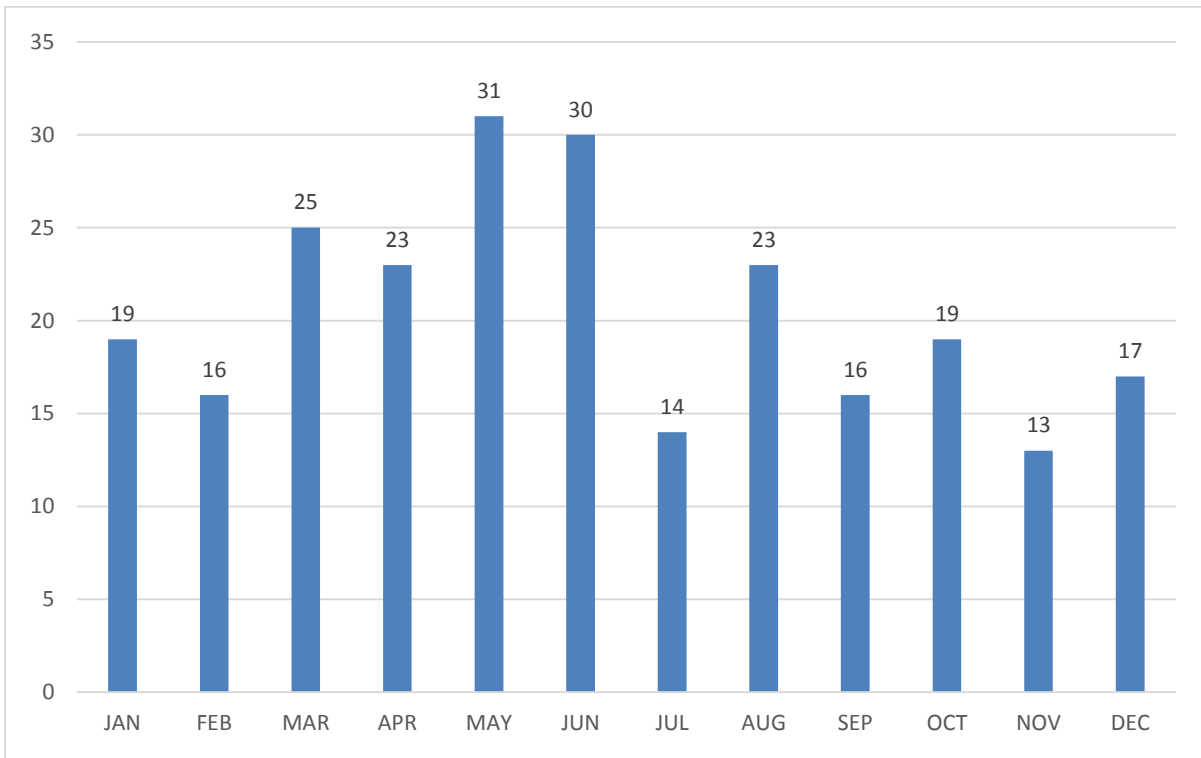


Chart C: Total incidents as per region of the world January – December 2015

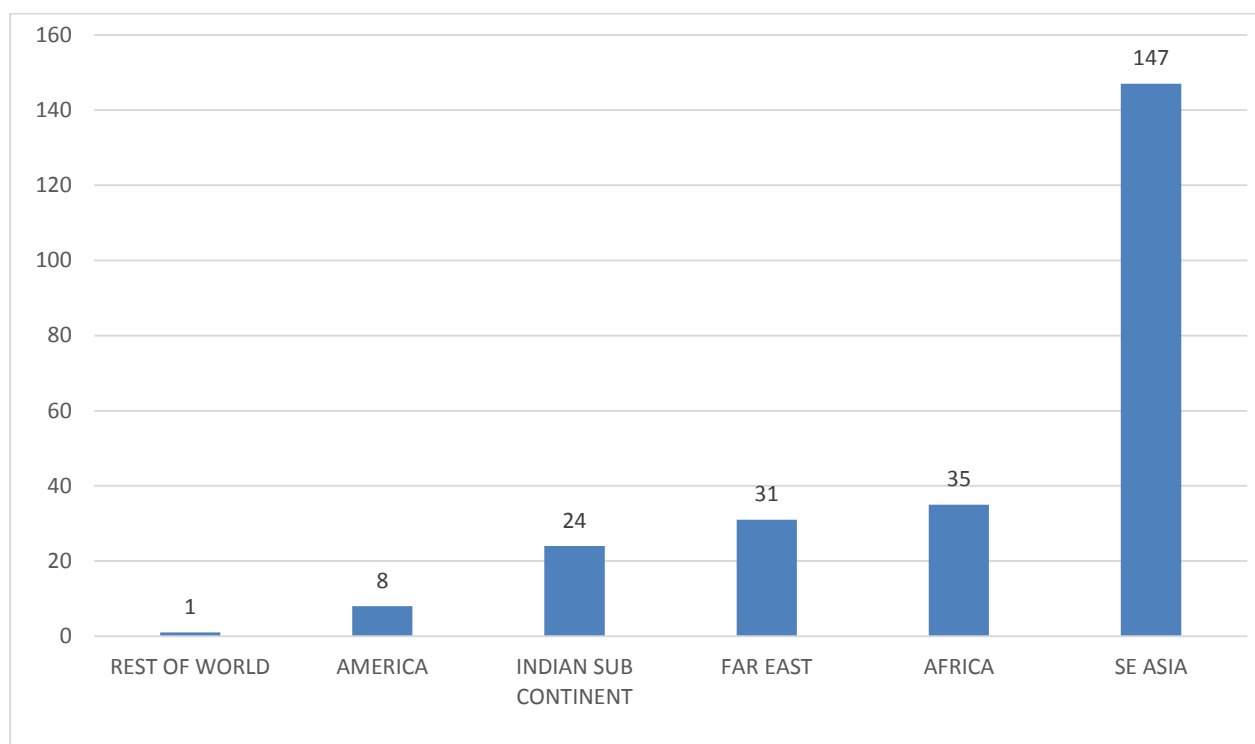


TABLE 2: ACTUAL and ATTEMPTED attacks by location, January – December 2015

Location	ACTUAL ATTACKS		ATTEMPTED ATTACKS	
	Boarded	Hijacked	Fired Upon	Attempted
S E ASIA Indonesia	94	3		11
Malacca Straits	1	4		
Malaysia	6	6		1
Philippines	8		1	2
Singapore Straits	8			1
Thailand	1			
FAR China	3			1
EAST Vietnam	26			1
INDIAN Bangladesh	10			1
SUB CONT India	13			
SOUTH Colombia	5			
AMERICA Haiti	2			
Venezuela	1			
AFRICA Cameroon	1			
Dem. Republic of Congo	3			
Egypt	1			
Ghana	1	1		
Guinea	1			2
Ivory Coast	1			
Kenya	1			1
Liberia	2			
Mozambique	1			
Nigeria	8	1		5
The Congo	4			1
REST OF WORLD Papua New Guinea	1			
Sub total	203	15	1	27
Total	246			

**TABLE 3: Ports and anchorages, with three or more reported incidents.
January - December 2015**

Country	Location	1.1.2015 to 31.12.2015
Bangladesh	Chittagong	10
Guinea	Conakry	3
India	Kandla	6
India	Sikka	3
Indonesia	Belawan	15
Indonesia	Dumai	5
Indonesia	Jakarta / Tanjung Priok	4
Indonesia	Karimun Besar / Kecil	24
Indonesia	Pulau Nipah	26
Indonesia	Pulau Takong Kecil	11
Indonesia	Taboneo	4
Malacca Straits	Malacca Straits	5
Malaysia	Sandakan	3
Nigeria	Lagos	4
Philippines	Batangas	3
Singapore Straits	Singapore Straits	9
The Congo	Pointe Noire	5
Vietnam	Vung Tau	15

TABLE 4: Status of ships during ACTUAL attacks, January - December 2015

LOCATION	BERTHED	ANCHORED	STEAMING	NOT STATED
S E ASIA				
Indonesia	6	28	62	1
Malacca Straits			5	
Malaysia	1	3	8	
Philippines	2	5	1	
Singapore Straits		2	6	
Thailand	1			
FAR				
China		3		
EAST				
Vietnam	3	22	1	
INDIAN				
Bangladesh		9	1	
SUB CONT				
India	2	11		
SOUTH				
Colombia		5		
AMERICA				
Haiti		2		
Venezuela		1		
AFRICA				
Cameroon	1			
Dem. Rep. of Congo		3		
Egypt		1		
Ghana			2	
Guinea		1		
Ivory Coast	1			
Kenya	1			
Liberia	1	1		
Mozambique	1			
Nigeria	2	3	4	
The Congo		4		
REST OF WORLD				
Papua New Guinea			1	
Sub Total	22	104	91	1
Total			218	

TABLE 5: Status of ships during ATTEMPTED attacks, January – December 2015

LOCATION	BERTHED	ANCHORED	STEAMING	NOT STATED
S E ASIA				
Indonesia		2	9	
Malaysia			1	
Philippines			3	
Singapore Straits			1	
FAR				
China		1		
EAST				
Vietnam		1		
INDIAN SUB CON				
Bangladesh	1			
AFRICA				
Guinea		2		
Kenya	1			
Nigeria	2	3		
The Congo		1		
Sub Total	4	10	14	
Total			28	

TABLE 6: Types of arms used during attacks, January - December 2011 - 2015

Types of Arms	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Guns	245	113	71	62	33
Knives	69	73	81	83	97
Not stated	117	104	109	93	108
Other weapons	8	7	3	7	8
Total	439	297	264	245	246

TABLE 7: Comparison of the type of attacks, January - December 2011 – 2015

Category	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Attempted	105	67	28	28	27
Boarded	176	174	202	183	203
Fired upon	113	28	22	13	1
Hijack	45	28	12	21	15
Total	439	297	264	245	246

TABLE 8: Types of violence to crew, January – December 2011 – 2015

Types of Violence	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Assaulted	6	4		1	14
Hostage	802	585	304	442	271
Injured	42	28	21	13	14
Kidnap/Ransom	10	26	36	9	19
Killed	8	6	1	4	1
Missing			1	1	
Threatened	27	13	10	9	14
Total	895	662	373	479	333

TABLE 9: Type of violence to crew by location, January – December 2015

Location	Hostage	Threatened	Assault	Injured	Killed	Kidnap	Missing
S E ASIA Indonesia	59	4		4			
Malacca Straits	45			3			
Malaysia	110			1			
FAR EAST Vietnam		6					
INDIAN SUB CONT Bangladesh	2			2			
SOUTH AMERICA Haiti				2			
AFRICA Egypt				1			
Ghana	45				1		
Guinea	1	3					
Mozambique		1					
Nigeria	9		1	1		19	
REST OF WORLD Papua New Guinea			13				
Sub total	271	14	14	14	1	19	
Total	333						

TABLE 10: Types of arms used by geographical location, January – December 2015

LOCATIONS	Guns	Knives	Other Weapons	Not Stated
S E ASIA Indonesia	5	55	3	45
Malacca Straits	4	1		
Malaysia	6	3		4
Philippines	2	1		8
Singapore Straits	1	2		6
Thailand		1		
FAR EAST China		1		3
Vietnam		10	2	15
INDIAN SUB CONT Bangladesh	2	7		2
India		3	2	8
AMERICA Colombia	1	1		3
Haiti		2		
Venezuela				1
AFRICA Cameroon				1
Dem. Republic of Congo		2		1
Egypt		1		
Ghana	2			
Guinea	2			1
Ivory Coast		1		
Kenya		2		
Liberia				2
Mozambique		1		
Nigeria	7	1	1	5
The Congo		2		3
REST OF WORLD Papua New Guinea	1			
Sub total	33	97	8	108
Total	246			

TABLE 11: Types of vessels attacked, January – December 2011 – 2015

Type	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Barge / Barge Carrier		2			
Bulk Carrier	100	66	53	55	86
Cable Ship					1
Cement Carrier				1	
Container	62	39	30	20	30
Deck Cargo Ship	1				
Dhow	1	5	1		
Diving Support Vessel	1				
Drilling Ship	1				
FPSO / FSO					2
General Cargo	35	15	17	14	15
Guard Vessel		1			
Heavy Load Carrier	2			1	
Hopper Dredger					1
Landing Craft		1	1		
Livestock Carrier	2		1	1	
Naval Auxiliary		1			
Offshore Processing Ship				1	
Ore Carrier					1
Passenger	1			1	1
Pipe Layer Crane Vessel		1			1
Refrigerated Cargo	4	2	2		3
Research Ship		1		2	
RORO	3	2	1	2	
Salvage Vessel		1			
Seismographic Research	1				
Supply Ship	1	8	5	3	2
Support Ship		1		1	
Tanker Asphalt /Bitumen	1		3	4	
Tanker Bunkering		2		2	1
Tanker Chem / Product	100	76	82	86	62
Tanker Crude Oil	61	32	39	24	20
Tanker LNG		2		1	
Tanker LPG	6	10	9	13	4
Trawler/Fishing	11	5	2	3	2
Tug	32	23	18	7	10
Vehicle Carrier	7			2	1
Water barge				1	
Wood Chips Carrier	1	1			2
Yacht	4				1
Not stated	1				
Total at year end	439	297	264	245	246

CHART D: Type of vessels attacked January – December 2015

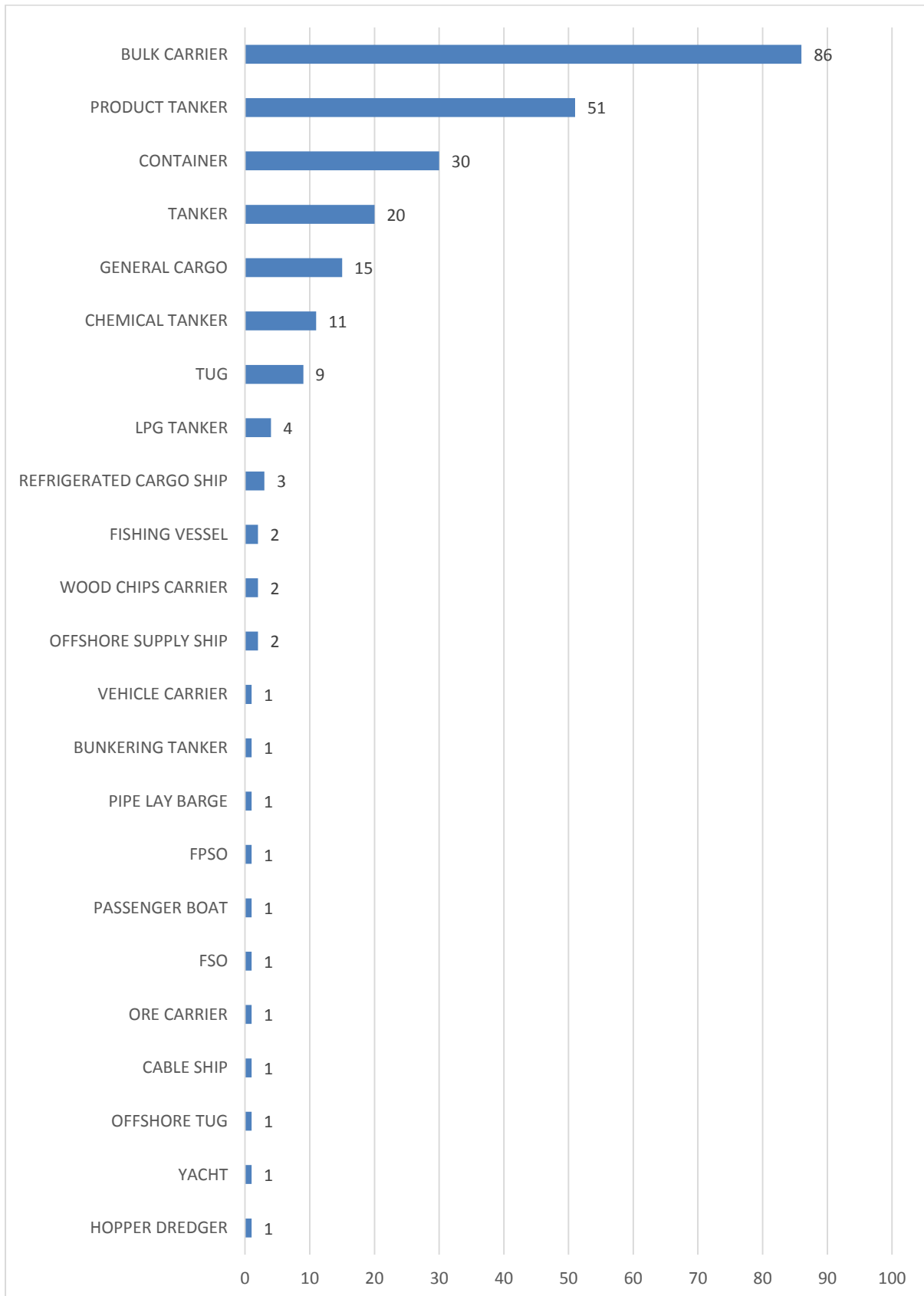


TABLE 12: Nationalities of ships attacked, January - December 2011 – 2015

Flag State	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Algeria	1				
Antigua and Barbuda	16	5	7	5	9
Australia	1				1
Austria	1				
Bahamas	11	16	7	4	5
Bangladesh		1			
Barbados	2		1		
Belgium	2				3
Belize					1
Bermuda				1	
Bolivia		1			
Cayman Island	1	1	2		
Chile			1		
China	4		2	1	
Comoros	2	1	1		1
Cook Islands					1
Croatia			1		
Curacao		3			1
Cyprus	8	1	1	2	7
Denmark	7	7	6	4	3
Dominica	1			1	
Egypt					1
Ethiopia	2	1			
France	6		1		1
Gabon			1		
Germany	5	4			
Ghana				1	1
Gibraltar	2	2	3	1	
Greece	12	3	3	4	3
Honduras		1		2	
Hong Kong (SAR)	21	17	20	16	19
India	4	7	4	4	2
Indonesia	5	2		2	2
Iran			1		1
Isle of Man	3	4	2	3	3
Italy	8	5	4	7	
Japan	1				
Kiribati	1		1	1	
Korea North		1			
Korea South	1	1		1	1
Liberia	57	45	43	20	28
Libya	2		1		
Luxemburg	1	2	2		2
Malaysia	14	12	10	9	12
Malta	25	8	8	6	11
Marshall Islands	45	21	31	36	40
Moldavia	1				
Mongolia	3	1		2	
Netherlands		1	2	7	1
Nigeria		1	2	3	2
Norway	8	3	4	4	1
Oman		3			
Panama	71	49	32	44	38
Papua New Guinea					1
Philippines	4	4	2	3	1
Portugal					1
Russia		1			
Saudi Arabia	1			2	1

Seychelles	1				
Sierra Leone			1	1	
Singapore	32	43	39	32	32
Spain	2	2			
Sri Lanka	1				
St. Kitts & Nevis	1	3		1	
St. Vincent & Grenadines	4	2	4		
Switzerland			1	1	
Taiwan	1				
Thailand	1	1	5	6	5
Togo	1				
Turkey	6	1	2		
Tuvalu	1	2			
UAE	6				
United Kingdom	6	3	2		1
USA	5	2	2	2	
Vanuatu	1		1		2
Vietnam	3		1	5	1
Yemen	5	3			
Not Stated	2			1	
Total year end	439	297	264	245	246

CHART E: Flag States whose ships attacked 12 times or more, January – December 2015

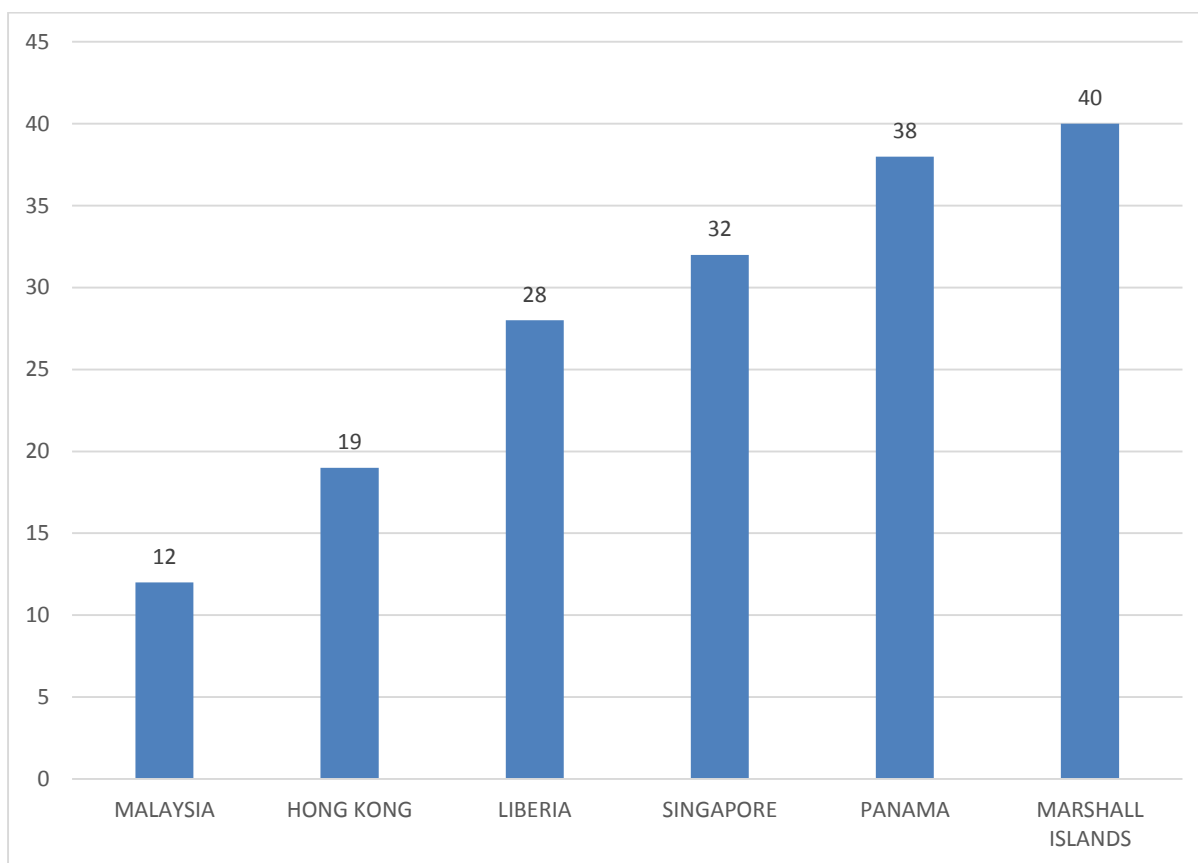
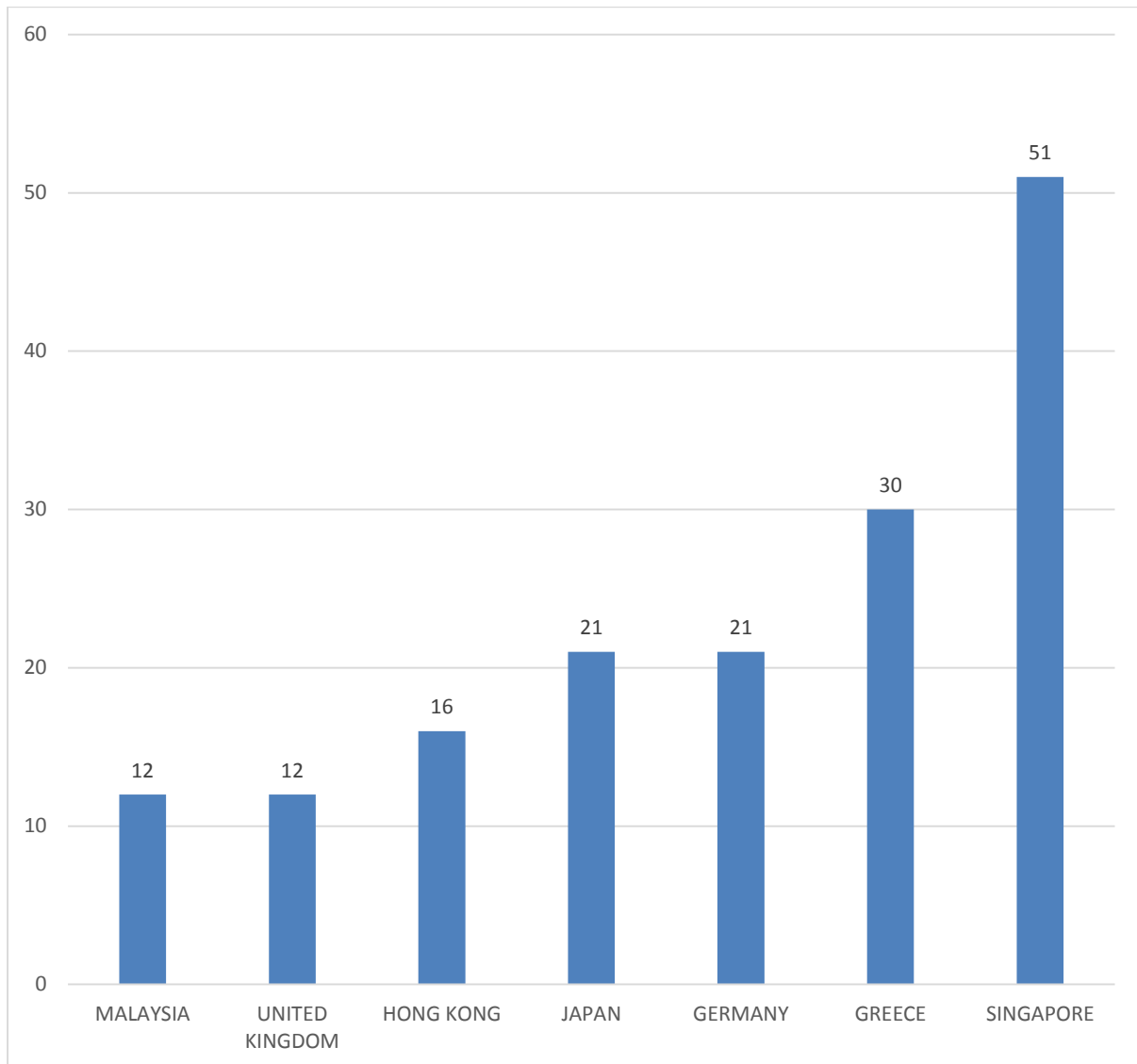


TABLE 13: Countries where victim ships controlled / managed, January – December 2015

Country	No of Ships
Australia	1
Bahamas	1
Belgium	5
Canada	1
China	6
Cyprus	4
Denmark	9
Egypt	2
France	2
Germany	21
Greece	30
Hong Kong	16
India	4
Indonesia	1
Iran	1
Japan	21
Korea South	2
Malaysia	12
Monaco	4
Netherlands	2
Nigeria	4
Norway	5
Oman	1
Papua New Guinea	1
Philippines	2
Poland	3
Portugal	1
Russia	2
Singapore	51
Taiwan	3
Thailand	5
Turkey	4
UAE	2
United Kingdom	12
USA	4
Vietnam	1
Total	246

CHART F: Managing countries whose ships attacked 12 times or more, January –December 2015



OFF SOMALIA / GULF OF ADEN ATTACK FIGURES UPDATE

From 1 January to 31 December 2015, the IMB PRC has received no new incidents.

The combined efforts of the Navies in the region, along with the increased hardening of vessels, BMP4 compliance, employment of Privately Contracted Armed Security Personnel (PCASP), and the stabilizing factor of the central government within Somalia have resulted in this positive sign.

As the IMB PRC continues to monitor the situation in the region it cautions ship owners and Masters against complacency. Somali pirates still have the capability and capacity to carry out attacks. The IMB PRC believes that a single successful hijacking of a merchant vessel, will rekindle the Somali pirates' passion to resume its piracy efforts.

As of 31 December 2015, suspected Somali pirates continue to hold 29 crew members for ransom.

PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY PRONE AREAS AND WARNINGS

Mariners are warned to be extra cautious and to take necessary precautionary measures when transiting the following areas:

SOUTH EAST ASIA AND INDIAN SUB CONTINENT

Bangladesh: Robbers targeting ships preparing to anchor. Most attacks reported at Chittagong anchorages and approaches. Attacks in Bangladesh have fallen significantly over the past few years because of the efforts by the Bangladesh Authorities.

China: Tianjin/Caofeidian – New area emerged. Incidents mostly at anchorage area.

India: Sikka and Kandla: Incidents reported at port and anchorage areas.

Indonesia: Tanjung Priok – Jakarta, off Bintan Island, Dumai, off Karimun Island, Nipah, Pulau Takong Kecil and Belawan anchorage and surrounding waters. Pirates / robbers normally armed with guns / knives and / or machetes. Generally be vigilant in other areas. Many attacks may have gone unreported. Pirates / robbers normally attack vessel during the night. When spotted and alarm sounded, the pirates / robbers usually escape without confronting the crew.

Continued cooperation between the Indonesian Marine Police (IMP) and the IMB PRC has resulted in positive actions by the Indonesian Authorities. This has resulted in reduced number of incidents. The IMP have advised all ships intending to anchor to do so at / near the following areas which are being patrolled to ensure ship protection.

1. Belawan: 03:55.00N-098:45.30E
2. Dumai: 01:42.00N-101:28.00E
3. Nipah: 01:07.30N-103:37.00E
4. Tanjung Priok: 06:00.30S-106:54.00E
5. Gresik: 07:09.00S-112:40.00E
6. Taboneo: 04:41.30S-114:28.00E
7. Adang bay: 01:40.00S-116:40.00E
8. Muara Berau: 00:17.00S-117:36.00E
9. Muara Jawa: 01:09.00S-117:13.00E
10. Balikpapan: 01:22.00S-116:53.00E
11. Bintan Island: 01:21.00N-104:29.00E

Ships are advised to maintain and follow strict anti-piracy measures and report immediately, all attacks and suspicious sightings to the local authorities and IMB PRC who will also liaise with the local authorities to render necessary assistance.

Malacca Straits: Although the number of attacks have dropped substantially due to the increase and aggressive patrols by the littoral states authorities since July 2005, ships are advised to continue maintaining strict anti-piracy / robbery watches when transiting the Straits. Currently, there are no indications as to how long these patrols will continue or reduce.

Singapore Straits: Vessels are advised to remain vigilant and to continue maintaining adequate anti-piracy / robbery watch and measures. Pirates / robbers attack ships while underway or while at anchor especially during the night.

South China Sea: Although attacks have dropped significantly in the vicinity off Tioman / off Pulau Aur / off Anambas / Natuna / Mangkai Islands / Subi Besar / Merundung areas, vessels are advised to continue to remain vigilant. In the past, a number of hijackings of small product tankers occurred off the coast of Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and in the South China Sea area. This trend started in April

2014 and has abated recently. The IMB is monitoring the situation. It has been reported that some criminals have been arrested by local Authorities.

Vietnam: Vung Tau and Ho Chi Minh: Significant increase in attacks especially at anchorages.

AFRICA AND RED SEA

Africa:-

Nigeria (Lagos): Pirates / robbers are often well armed, violent and have attacked hijacked and robbed vessels / kidnapped crews along the coast, rivers, anchorages, ports and surrounding waters. In the past, attacks reported up to about 170nm from coast. In many past incidents, pirates hijacked the vessels for several days and ransacked the vessels and stole part cargo usually gas oil. A number of crewmembers were also injured and kidnapped in past attacks. Generally, all waters in/off Nigeria remain risky. Vessels are advised to be vigilant, as many attacks may have gone unreported. Attacks also reported at Apapa in the past.

Benin (Cotonou): Although the number of attacks has dropped significantly, the area remains risky. Past attacks showed that the pirates / robbers in this area are well armed and are violent and in some incidents have fired upon and hijacked ships. The pirates force Masters to sail to unknown location where ship's properties and sometimes part cargo is stolen (gas oil). Crewmembers have been injured in the past. Recent patrols by Benin and Nigerian Authorities has resulted in a drop in the number of attacks. However, vessels are advised to continue to be vigilant and maintain strict anti-piracy / robbery watches and measures.

Togo (Lome): Attacks have dropped but the area remains a concern and risky. Pirates / robbers in the area are well armed, violent and dangerous. Attacks can occur at anchorages and off the coast and usually at night. Some attacks resulted in vessels being hijacked for several days and ransacked and part cargo stolen (gas oil).

Red Sea / Gulf of Aden / Somalia / Arabian Sea / Indian Ocean: Attacks related to Somali pirates have reduced. However, the risk of being approached or attacked still exists. Vessels are advised and encouraged to remain vigilant and comply with all BMP4 procedures. The threat of these attacks still exist in the waters off southern Red Sea / Bab el Mandeb, Gulf of Aden including Yemen and the northern Somali coast, Arabian sea / off Oman, Gulf of Oman and off the eastern and southern Somali coast. In the past vessels have been attacked off Kenya, Tanzania, Seychelles, Madagascar, Mozambique as well as in the Indian ocean and off the west and south coasts of India and west Maldives. Incidents have also been reported close to the east African coastlines.

Somali pirates tend to be well armed with automatic weapons and RPG and sometimes use skiffs launched from mother vessels, which may be hijacked fishing vessels or dhows, to conduct attacks far from the Somali coast. Masters and ship owners are encouraged to follow the latest BMP procedures and ensure that the vessel is hardened prior to entering the High Risk Area. While transiting through these waters it is essential to maintain a 24-hour visual and radar watch. Early sightings / detection enable an accurate assessment, keeping in mind the warnings and alerts for the area, allowing the Masters and PCASP to make informed decisions to keep clear of small boats, dhows, fishing vessels and if necessary take evasive actions, increase speed and request assistance as needed.

Masters are reminded that fishermen in this region may try to protect their nets by attempting to aggressively approach merchant vessels. Some of the fishermen may be armed to protect their catch and they should not be confused with pirates.

Ivory Coast: Abidjan: Attacks dropped but remains risky.

Guinea: Conakry

The Congo: Pointe Noire

SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN WATERS

Ecuador: Guayaquil. Attacks stopped but ships advised to be vigilant.

Reporting of incidents

Ships are advised to maintain strict anti-piracy watches and report all piratical attacks (actual and attempted) and suspicious sightings to the IMB Piracy Reporting Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Tel: +60 3 2078 5763 Fax: +60 3 2078 5769 E-mail: imbkl@icc-ccs.org

The Centre's 24 Hours Anti-Piracy HELPLINE is: +60 3 2031 0014

IMB Maritime Security Hotline

The International Maritime Bureau (IMB) has also launched a dedicated hotline for seafarers, port workers, shipping agents, shipyard personnel, brokers, stevedores, and all concerned parties to report any information that they may have seen / heard / known etc. relating to maritime crime and security including terrorism, piracy and other illegal activities.

All information received will be treated in strict confidence and will be passed on to relevant Authorities for further action. Maritime crime and security concerns us all and with your help, we can try to minimize the risks and help save lives and property.

The Maritime Security Hotline can be contacted 24 hours every day at:

Tel: +60 3 2031 0014 Fax: +60 3 2078 5769 E-mail: imbsecurity@icc-ccs.org

REMEMBER: Your information may save lives. All information will be treated in strict confidence.

OBSERVATIONS

Narrations of the 246 attacks for 01 January to 31 December 2015 are listed on pages 31 to 67. The following serious incidents, in chronological sequence are described in more detail.

Egypt:

On 07 November 2015, a Marshall Islands flagged Container Ship MV Eclips was attacked by armed robbers while anchored at position Latitude 31:12 North and Longitude 029:44 East, around 9.42nm west of Alexandria, Egypt at approximately 0230 LT. Two robbers armed with knives successfully boarded the anchored ship using a hook attached to a rope. A duty crew on routine rounds noticed the robbers on the quarter deck. Before he could report the boarding, the robbers attacked him, hit him on his neck and under his eye resulting in him fainting. The robbers also tried to stab him with their knives during the incident. On regaining consciousness, the crew reported the incident to the duty officer, who alerted the remaining crew. A search was carried out. The incident was reported to Port Control and other ships in the vicinity.

Ghana:

On 14 January 2015, a Panamanian Bulk Carrier MV Ocean Splendor was attacked by armed pirates while underway at position Latitude 03:24 North and Longitude 001:21 East, around 157nm SSE of Accra, Ghana at approximately 2130 UTC. Around eight heavily armed pirates attacked and successfully boarded the drifting ship. They opened fire with their AK47 to intimidate the crew members. They threatened to kill the crew members and burn the ship. The pirates destroyed the ship's communication equipment, manhandled some of the crew members and stole crew and ship's cash and properties. Before leaving the ship on 15 January 2015 at 0215 UTC, the crew members were warned not to sail until sunrise. The ship's windows and other parts were damaged due to gunshots.

On 30 January 2015, a Ghanaian Fishing Vessel FV Lu Rong Yuan Yu 917 was attacked and hijacked by armed pirates while underway at position Latitude 04:26 North and Longitude 001:43 West, around 27nm south of Takoradi, Ghana at approximately 0500 LT. Armed pirates attacked and successfully boarded the fishing vessel. They hijacked the vessel while the Togo Navy responded and engaged the pirates. Twenty crew members jumped overboard in an attempt to escape and were rescued by the patrol boat. The remaining seven crew members were taken hostage as the pirates fled with the fishing vessel headed out to sea. The pirates later left the fishing vessel and the crew sailed the vessel towards a safe port. One crew reported killed in the incident and three crew members were missing.

Guinea:

On 15 May 2015, a Marshall Islands Bulk Carrier MV Honey Badger was attacked and boarded by armed robbers while anchored at position Latitude 09:22 North and Longitude 013:43 West, Conakry Anchorage, Guinea at approximately 0345 UTC. Six robbers armed with AK47 rifles boarded an anchored ship. The Second Officer saw two robbers on the poop deck and immediately raised the alarm and informed the Master. The robbers aimed their AK47 towards the Second Officer and the Duty AB who immediately retreated into the citadel. The robbers broke into the Master's cabin, fired a few rounds and demanded money from the Master. The robbers also stole crew properties and ship's cash. Port control was informed.

Haiti:

On 15 April 2015, an Australian Sailing Yacht Pelikaan was attacked and boarded by armed robbers while anchored at position Latitude 19:36.52 North and Longitude 072:59.82 West, Baie de Port-a-Piment, Haiti at approximately 2300 LT. Around 10-15 robbers armed with machetes, clubs and sticks in a boat came alongside the yacht. They were very violent and assaulted the Captain and his wife. They also tried to throw the Captain overboard and hang his wife. The robbers ransacked the yacht, stole personal belongings and navigational equipment and escaped. Mayday calls on VHF was transmitted but no response received. The following morning locals assisted the couple and informed the police.

The couple was severely beaten and needed hospitalisation. The Captain's fingers and arms were broken and his wife was badly bruised.

Indonesia:

On 28 January 2015, an Indonesian Tanker MT Rehobot was attacked and hijacked by armed pirates while underway in the vicinity of Lembeh Island, North Sulawesi, Indonesia at approximately 2230 LT. About eight armed pirates in a fast boat boarded and successfully hijacked the tanker. All the crew members were set adrift in a life raft and was later saved by local fisherman. The Indonesian Marine Police arrested two suspects and together with the cooperation of IMB and the Philippine Authorities / Coast guard, the tanker was located aground off Davao city, Philippines.

On 09 March 2015, a Malaysian Product Tanker MT Singa Berlian was attacked and hijacked by armed pirates while underway at position Latitude 01:43 North and Longitude 105:50 East, around 37nm south of Pulau Repong, Indonesia at approximately 2108 UTC. Around seven pirates in a small speed boat wearing masks and armed with guns and long knives attacked and boarded the tanker successfully. They took hostage all 10 crew members, damaged all the communication and navigational equipment and transferred the MFO cargo into another unknown tanker and escaped. One crew member suffered minor injury during the incident. The Owners informed MMEA who had dispatched their patrol vessel for investigations.

On 01 April 2015, a Malaysia flagged Product Tanker MT Dongfang Glory was attacked and hijacked by armed pirates while underway in position Latitude 02:09.50 North and Longitude 107:32.32 East around 62nm north of Pulau Uwi, Indonesia at approximately 1303 UTC. About 15 to 25 pirates armed with pistols attacked and successfully boarded the tanker. They took hostage all crew members, damaged all communication equipment and stole crew personal belongings. The pirates later transferred the tanker's gas oil cargo into another vessel/barge and escaped. All crew reported safe.

On 09 September 2015, a Hong Kong flagged Container ship MV MOL Brightness was boarded by robbers at approximately 0500 LT while underway in position around 6.4nm SE of Pulau Karimun Kecil, Indonesia. The duty engineer noticed the Chief Officer bound, gagged with mouth bleeding. Upon raising the alarm and searching the vessel it was reported that robbers had boarded unnoticed, stolen ship's spares and escaped.

On 29 September 2015 a Marshall Island flagged Product Tanker MT Overseas Atalmar was boarded at around 0220 LT by four robbers armed with machetes while at Dumai anchorage in position Latitude 01:42.10 North and Longitude 101:30.53E. The OOW contacted the aft duty crew to check and report on an intrusion alarm. When no reply was received the OOW instructed the crew stationed forward to investigate and they found the aft duty crew was found gagged and tied up. Alarm was raised and crew alerted. Seeing the alerted crew the robbers escaped without stealing anything. Attempts to contact port control were futile.

Malacca Straits:

On 13 February 2015, a Thai Product Tanker MT Lapin was attacked and hijacked by armed pirates while underway at position Latitude 03:11 North and Longitude 100:43 East, in the Malacca Straits at approximately 1955 LT. About eight pirates armed with guns and long knives in a speed boat attacked and successfully boarded the tanker. They took all 15 crew members hostage and hijacked the tanker. The pirates then transferred all the fuel oil cargo and some bunker oil into another unknown pirate tanker. The pirates also stole the crew and ship's properties and valuables. On 14 February 2015, the pirates disembark from the tanker and escaped. All crew members were reported safe. The tanker then sailed to a safe port in Thailand where the local Authorities boarded for investigations.

On 02 May 2015, a Singapore flagged Product Tanker MT Ocean Energy was attacked and hijacked by armed persons while underway at position Latitude 02:14 North and Longitude 101:56 East, around 11nm SSE of Tanjung Tuan, Malaysia in the Malacca Straits at approximately 2130 LT. Around eight masked armed persons carrying guns and long knives attacked and boarded the tanker loaded with gas

oil. The tanker was enroute from Singapore to Myanmar. They held the Third Officer at gunpoint and took control of the bridge. They locked the Master in a cabin and all other crew members in the ship's hospital room and hijacked the tanker. They also damaged all the communication equipment and anchored the tanker in position Latitude 02:19.3 North and Longitude 101:40.4 East around 13nm SSW of Port Dickson, Malaysia in the Malacca Straits. Later another vessel came alongside and the gas oil cargo was transferred. Before they departed from the tanker, they stole ship's and crew cash, Iridium phone and crew personal belongings. All crew members were reported safe. Master managed to inform the Owners. The Malaysian Authorities boarded the tanker for investigations.

On 08 August 2015 a Singapore flagged Product Tanker MT Joaquim was boarded and hijacked by armed pirates at 2000 LT while enroute to Malaysia in position Latitude 02:03.4 North and Longitude 101:59.3 East, Malacca Straits. The authorities launched a search for the missing tanker and located it on 09 August 2015. The pirates had stolen part of the oil cargo and escaped after disabling all communication equipment. Two crew members were reported injured during the incident and were provided medical attention.

On 15 August 2015 a Malaysian flagged fishing vessel KHF 1989 was boarded and hijacked by pirates at 2330 LT while underway in position Latitude 06:14 North and Longitude 098:59 East, around 38nm West of Pulau Langkawi, Malaysia in the Malacca Straits. The five pirates armed with rifles boarded the vessel via a speed boat and forced the Master and crew to board their speed boat and sail away. On receiving information about the hijack from the Fisheries Department, the MMEA contacted with the Royal Thailand Marine Police who launched a search and located the fishing vessel off Taratao Island on 17 August 2015. On 19 August 2015 a MMEA vessel escorted the fishing vessel safely to Kuala Kedah for investigations. It is understood that the fishing vessel was hijacked to demand a ransom from its owner.

Malaysia:

On 20 February 2015, a Thai Product Tanker MT Phubai Pattra 1 was attacked and hijacked by armed pirates while underway at position Latitude 02:08.6 North and Longitude 104:39.2 East, around 18nm SE of Pulau Aur, Johor, Malaysia, at approximately 2130 LT. Around seven masked pirates in a small boat armed with guns attacked and boarded the tanker successfully. All 19 crew members were taken hostage and pirates thereafter transferred part of the cargo of gasoline in to another unknown pirate tanker. The pirates also stole crew's and ship's valuables and properties prior to disembarking.

On 22 March 2015, a Vanuatu offshore tug TB David Tide II and Singapore Barge Miclyn 259 were attacked and hijacked by armed pirates while underway at position Latitude 02:50.6 North and Longitude 104:30.7 East, around 18nm East of Tioman Island, Malaysia, at approximately 2215 LT. Around ten pirates armed with guns and knives attacked and boarded the tug towing a barge. They successfully entered the bridge, apprehended the bridge team, then took them to the Chief Engineer's cabin where they robbed and held them hostage. The pirates thereafter took the Chief Engineer to the Engine Room and transferred part of the tug's bunkers into a small unknown tanker. Before departing, the pirates stole some equipment and damaged the tug's communication and CCTV equipment. The entire operation lasted about five hours.

On 15 May 2015, a Malaysia flagged Product Tanker was attacked and hijacked by armed pirates while underway at position Latitude 03:35.00 North and Longitude 110:35.50 East, around 64nm NW of Tanjung Sirik Lighthouse Mukahi, Sarawak, Malaysia at approximately 0600 LT. More than 10 pirates wearing masks and armed with pistols, knives and axe in two big fishing boats and four small boats approached and boarded the tanker underway. They took hostage all crew members, damaged ship's communication equipment and hijacked the tanker. They then transferred the fuel oil cargo into another vessel, stole crew personal belongings and escaped on 16 May 2015. All crew reported safe. The Malaysian Authorities boarded the tanker for investigation.

On 04 June 2015, a Malaysia Product Tanker MT Orkim Victory was attacked and hijacked by armed persons while underway at position Latitude 02:21.76 North and Longitude 104:22.81 East, about 8nm

SW of Pulau Aur, Johor, Malaysia at approximately 0015 LT. Armed persons attacked and successfully boarded the tanker underway. They hijacked the tanker and took hostage all crew members. They altered the course and sailed the tanker to unknown location until she rendezvoused with another vessel. They then transferred part of the oil cargo into the vessel. Before escaping, they stole the crew and ship's properties and destroyed all communication equipment. All crew reported safe.

On 11 June 2015, a Malaysia flagged Product Tanker MT Orkim Harmony was attacked and hijacked by armed pirates while underway at position Latitude 02:08.9 North and Longitude 104:27.3 East, around 17nm south of Pulau Aur, Johor, Malaysia, at approximately 2100 LT. Armed pirates boarded and hijacked the tanker laden with unleaded Gasoline oil cargo. The tanker was enroute from Singapore to Kuantan, Malaysia. The Owners reported to the MMEA that they were unable to establish contact with the tanker. The MMEA and Navy deployed patrol vessels and aircrafts to search for the tanker. The IMB PRC also issued a missing vessel broadcast via Inmarsat C EGC Safety Net to ships at sea to lookout for this tanker. On 17 June 2015, during the search, a RAAF aircraft reported that a tanker with a similar name and description was located in position Latitude 09:21 North and Longitude 102:44 East. The MMEA and Navy dispatched their vessel and aircraft and intercepted the tanker. The pirates threatened the Navy to keep well clear failing which they would harm the crew. Later, under cover of darkness, the pirates managed to escape using the tanker's lifeboat. The tanker was then boarded by the Navy/MMEA personnel on 19 June 2015 and all crew members rescued. One crew member had been shot by the pirates and hospitalised. The tanker sailed to a safe port. The pirates were later identified and detained by the Vietnam Coast Guard.

Nigeria:

On 11 January 2015, a Cook Islands Product Tanker MT Mariam was attacked and hijacked by armed pirates while underway at position Latitude 03:44 North and Longitude 004:59 East, around 63nm SW of Bayelsa, Nigeria at approximately 0500 LT. Around 10 pirates armed with AK47 rifles attacked and boarded the tanker. They hijacked the tanker and took hostage all nine crew members. Later, they transferred the fuel oil cargo into another unknown vessel where two pirates departed with that vessel. The Ghanaian Navy dispatched a naval vessel to investigate as the tanker moved into its waters. The naval boarding team arrested the remaining eight pirates. During the incident the crew members were mistreated by the pirates.

On 19 March 2015, a Belize Offshore supply ship MV Maridive 603 was attacked and boarded by armed pirates while anchored at position Latitude 04:14.1 North and Longitude 008:02.1 East, around 19nm south of Kwa Ibo, Nigeria at approximately 0030 LT. Around six pirates armed with rifles boarded the vessel. Master raised the alarm, sent SSAS Alert and all crew mustered. Two crew members were kidnapped and ship's properties stolen. The Nigerian Navy dispatched a patrol boat to the location 15 minutes after the call. Remaining crew reported safe.

On 21 March 2015, the Marshall Islands flagged FPSO Yoho was attacked and boarded by armed pirates while anchored at position Latitude 04:02 North and Longitude 007:31 East, around 36nm SE of Bonny Islands, Nigeria at approximately 2230 LT. Six pirates armed with guns from a small craft boarded the vessel. They entered the accommodation area but were deterred by the sounding of the alarm. The pirates fled after kidnapping three crew members.

On 18 May 2015, a Nigerian flagged Offshore Supply Vessel was attacked and boarded by armed pirates while underway at position Latitude 04:13 North and Longitude 007:57 East, around 19nm south of Kwa Ibo, Nigeria, at approximately 2340 LT. Six pirates armed with guns in a speed boat boarded the drifting vessel. They assaulted two duty crew members of which one was injured. Alarm was raised and other crew members took shelter in the safe room. Attempts to contact the security vessel received no response. At 0400 LT the next day, the crew members emerged from the safe room and found that five crew members had been kidnapped. The pirates also stole ship's properties. After negotiations, on 03 June 2015, the five abducted crew members were released.

On 19 October 2015, a Comoros flagged Refrigerated Cargo Ship MV Solarte was attacked by armed pirates while underway at position Latitude 03:58 North and Longitude 005:25 East, around 36nm SW of Bayelsa Coast, Nigeria at approximately 1954 UTC. Pirates armed with submachine guns attacked and successfully boarded the ship. They opened fire, damaged some equipment and stole the ship's cash. They then kidnapped the Master, Chief Officer, Second Officer and an AB and escaped. The remaining crew members were able to retreat to the engine room and reported to be safe. The Nigerian Authorities were notified. On 12 November 2015, all four kidnapped crew members were released safely.

On 26 November 2015, a Cyprus flagged General Cargo Ship MV Szafir was attacked by armed pirates while underway at position Latitude 04:00 North and Longitude 006:00 East, around 70nm SW of Port Harcourt, Nigeria at approximately 2300 UTC. Armed pirates in two speedboats attacked and successfully boarded the ship. Eleven crew members managed to retreat and secure themselves in the engine room. The Master, Chief Officer, Second Officer, Third Officer and one AB were kidnapped and taken ashore by the pirates. On 8 December 2015, the five crew members were released safely.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The IMB appreciates the assistance and vital cooperation provided by the Coalition naval forces / EU naval force (EUNAVFOR ATALANTA) / MSCHOA / US Navy / French Alindien / NATO / UKMTO / Indian Navy / Iranian Navy / Malaysian Navy / Russian Navy / Chinese Navy / South Korean Navy / Japanese Maritime SDF/ Singapore Navy/ Royal Thai Navy / and Yemeni Coast Guard and Navy for assisting the many vessels that have been attacked in the past by suspected Somali pirates both in the Gulf of Aden and off eastern / southern Somali coast, Indian Ocean, Arabian Sea and other areas. The positive actions by the Navies including pre-emptive and disruptive counter piracy tactics had resulted in the drop in the number of attacks.

TRENDS

A total of 246 incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships have been reported to the IMB Piracy Reporting Centre (PRC) in 2015. The number is similar in total to 2014, where 245 incidents were reported.

The 2015 figures are broken down as 203 vessels boarded, 27 attempted attacks, 15 hijackings and one vessel fired upon. Whilst the year on year totals are almost constant, the number of vessels boarded has increased by 11% – up from 183 in 2014. No vessels were reported hijacked in the last quarter of 2015. There has also been a reduction in the number of guns reported during attacks, with guns featuring in 33 reports in 2015 compared with 62 in 2014.

The number of crew taken hostage has also dropped from 442 in 2014 to 271 in 2015. Crew kidnapped has however increased from nine in 2014 to 19 in 2015 – with all 2015 kidnappings occurring in five separate events off Nigeria.

The regular hijacking of small coastal product tankers in SE Asia appears to have abated with the last incident in August 2015. In this respect, the robust actions taken particularly by the Indonesian and Malaysian authorities in prosecuting two of the gangs should once again be commended. The subsequent arrest of the alleged masterminds behind some of these attacks should also be applauded.

The number of all vessels boarded once underway (but not hijacked) is also proportionately higher in Indonesia and Malaysia. Ships are therefore advised to maintain anti-piracy watch and measures especially in high risk areas.

The IMB PRC continues to work closely with the Indonesian Marine Police and other Indonesian authorities with the monitoring of high risk port areas. Of the 11 previously nominated high risk ports, only Belawan and Nipah have recorded noticeable increases in 2015 with 15 and 26 incidents respectively. These incidents are largely aimed at theft from vessels.

There has also been an increase in the number of incidents reported against anchored vessels in Vietnam, with 27 in 2015 compared to seven in 2014. Whilst viewed as low level thefts, the 15 reports were received in the waters in and around the port of Vung Tau.

Conversely there has been a reduction in the number of low level reported incidents in Bangladesh, with 11 incidents in 2015 compared to 21 for the corresponding period in 2014.

There were no incidents reported for Somalia in 2015. The December 2015 reduction of the High Risk Area is a new definition and not necessarily indicative of the real risk of Somali piracy. The situation ashore in Somalia remains increasingly fragile and it is important that vessels continue to be vigilant as they sail through these waters.

Elsewhere in Africa, 14 incidents were recorded for Nigeria. Vessels were boarded in nine of the reports including the hijacking of a product tanker at the beginning of 2015.

The IMB PRC is the world's only independent office to receive reports of pirate attacks 24-hours-a-day from across the globe. IMB strongly urges shipmasters and owners to report all actual, attempted and suspected piracy and armed robbery incidents to the IMB PRC. 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.

PIRACY NEWS

INDONESIA MARINE POLICE (IMP) AND IMB COLLABORATION

The continued IMP patrols along the designated anchorages has resulted in a significant reduction of reported incidents in nine of the 11 designated locations.

Merchant ships are advised to cooperate by anchoring within these areas and maintaining strict anti-piracy and robbery watches. All attacks and suspicious sightings should be reported to the local Authorities and the IMB PRC who will also liaise with local and regional Authorities to render necessary assistance.

The below table shows total reported incidents since 2013.

	Locations	2013 Total	2014 Total	2015 Total
1	Belawan: 03:55.00N - 098:45.30E	18	9	15
2	Dumai: 01:42.00N - 101:28.00E	12	1	5
3	Nipah: 01:07.30N - 103:37.00E	14	-	26
4	Tanjung Priok: 06:00.30S - 106:54.00E	6	9	4
5	Gresik: 07:09.00S - 112:40.00E	4	1	-
6	Taboneo: 04:41.30S - 114:28.00E	8	2	4
7	Adang Bay: 01:40.00S - 116:40.00E	4	-	-
8	Muara Berau: 00:17.00S - 117:36.00E	4	6	1
9	Muara Jawa: 01:09.00S - 117:13.00E	4	-	-
10	Balikpapan: 01:22.00S - 116:53.00E	5	1	-
11	Bintan Island: 01:21.00N - 104:29.00E	-	35	1

INDONESIAN NAVY ARREST MASTERMIND OF HIJACKED MT ORKIM HARMONY

Indonesian authorities are said to have arrested a second person suspected of planning to hijack the Malaysian tanker MT Okrim Harmony.

A news source reported in early December 2015 that police in Batam had detained Heintje Lango, described as one of the main conspirators behind the tanker hijacking.

The tanker was boarded by eight armed pirates on 11 June 2015 while on voyage in the South China Sea carrying 6,000 tonnes of gasoline. The vessel and its 22-man crew were later found in the Gulf of Thailand with the ship's name changed to Kim Harmon. The pirates are said later to have been detained near Vietnam. In late August the Indonesian navy arrested Albert Yohanes or Johanes, allegedly the financier and brains behind the hijacking. The news reports do not disclose the nationalities of Lango or Johanes, but Johanes was said to have been found in west Jakarta and Lango detained in Batam.

INDONESIAN NAVY ARREST GANG OPERATING IN THE MALACCA STRAITS

The Navy's Western Fleet Command (Koarmabar) has reported the arrest of five members of a gang involved in boarding and stealing equipment from ships underway in the Malacca Strait. The five men were caught in their hideout in Pamijahan sub district, Bogor, West Java, on the slopes of Mount Salak on 11 November 2015.

One of the alleged gang members indicated that on a monthly basis the gang could earn around USD1,000 by selling stolen ship's spares.

Koarmabar commander Rear Admiral Achmad Taufiqoerrahman said, "They are not pirates. They are just sea criminals who climb on to vessels and steal parts. The purpose of the crime was to steal and sell the parts to other people who are also members of the gang."

OPERATION PULO SHIELD

Over 1,600 pirates, militants and criminals were reportedly arrested by Nigerian military officials in 2015.

The arrests were made in the Niger Delta region as part of a security operation named PULO SHIELD. The suspects are believed to have been involved in piracy and illegal bunkering as well as kidnapping. A further 50 vessels, 200 barges and weapons were seized as part of the security operation.

SOMALI PIRACY – DOES THE REDUCED HRA CHANGE THE RISK?

The revised High Risk Area (HRA) came into effect on 1 December 2015.

The previous HRA was created for inclusion in BMP4 which was released in August 2011 at a time when Somali pirates were continually increasing their scope and range of operations. Its insertion was designed to replace specific geographical areas with a more general definition of the high risk areas. It is not envisaged that a fully revised version of BMP4 will be required to incorporate these revised HRA changes. A new edition of the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office Maritime Security Chart – Red Sea, Gulf of Aden and Arabian Sea (Q6099) was published in December.

The HRA is now defined as being bounded by the following co-ordinates and an image of the old and new area reproduced overleaf:-

Northern limit Red Sea:	Latitude 15°N
Northern limit Gulf of Oman:	Latitude 22°N
Eastern limit:	Longitude 065°E
Southern limit:	Latitude 5°S

Although the geographical size of the HRA has been reduced – a considerable reduction of approximately 55% or 1.7 million square miles of ocean. It was primarily driven by concerns from coastal states who have been vocal over the implications of being designated as part of the existing HRA.

The contraction of the HRA has given rise to a few other issues.

It may give the perception that the Somali piracy threat has now been eliminated and ships can now revert to pre-2008 sailing conditions. Reportedly, momentum is building to do away with ship hardening measures including the carriage of armed security teams and speed recommendations. At a time of

severely depressed freight markets any prospect of operating cost reductions can be alluring. However, from all accounts the situation ashore in Somalia is increasingly fragile and it is important that vessels continue to be vigilant as they sail through these waters.

The decision to extend the EU NAVFOR mandate beyond December 2016 is to be taken in Brussels within the next few months. Policy makers at the EU should not consider the reduction of the HRA as an indication that the threat of Somali piracy has gone away.

Pirate leaders in Somalia are probably also considering the implications of the reduction in HRA. They may for example feel that more vulnerable vessels can be found east of 65 degrees East Longitude. In practice however many of the armed teams are taken on board and discharged off Galle in Sri Lanka and therefore will be on board vessels in the South Eastern approaches of the Somali basin east of the HRA.

The Indian Navy and Coast Guard must continue to ensure that the waters east of 65 degrees remain safe for merchant vessels.

It takes only one successful attack to reverse the current trend and rekindle the pirates' appetite for this criminal activity. The authorities in South Central Somalia remain far from capable of mounting a robust, responsible action to retrieve a hijacked vessel and punish the pirates.

Along with the reduction in the HRA it is essential that appropriate messaging is directed at stakeholders in Somalia to ensure that the reduction can be sustained over the long term. This is merely a new definition of the HRA not necessarily indicative of the real risk of Somali piracy.