

Allmode Intelligence Section

Advisory: 051 (South East Asia & BMP 4)

Advisory Type: Security Threat

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In light of the 4 recent hijacks (or disappearances suspected as hijacks) of Product Tankers and Cargo vessels in the South China Sea/SE Asia, it is worthwhile revisiting the security situation in the region - and to outline recommended security measures.

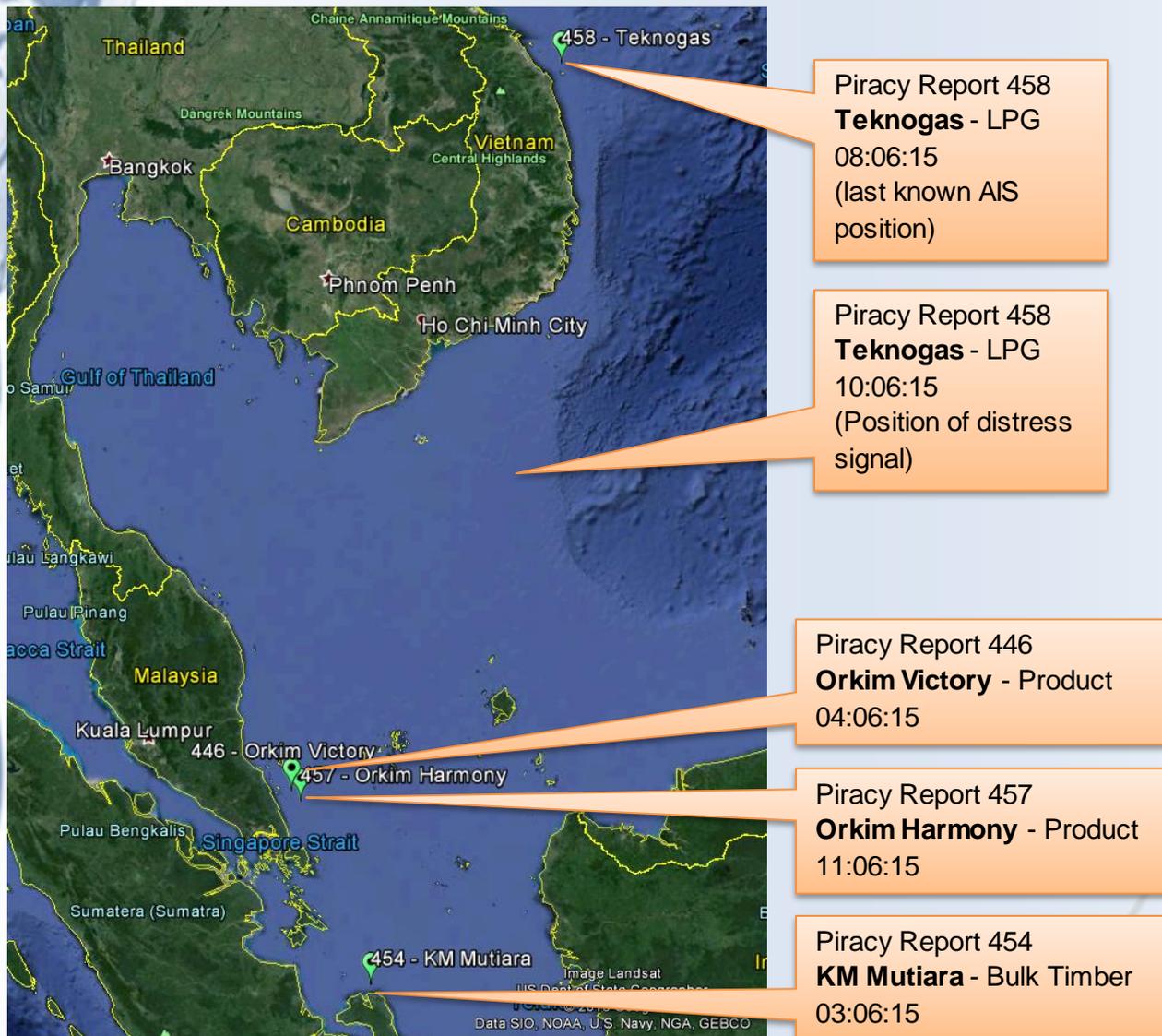
Background

See Allmode Piracy Reports:

- 446 - **Orkim Victory** - Product tanker - 04:06:15
- 454 - **KM Mutiara** - Bulk Timber - 03:06:15
- 457 - **Orkim Harmony** - Product tanker - 11:06:15
- 458 - **Teknogas** - LPG - 08:06:15

Outline

Chart 1



Threat and Risk Assessment

The *Modus Operandi* of these pirate/criminal groups is now becoming vividly clear in light of so many similar attacks in the region. In the main, the target is the cargo - namely the product which can be siphoned in a STS transfer and sold on the black market (or even further refined in black-economy refineries).

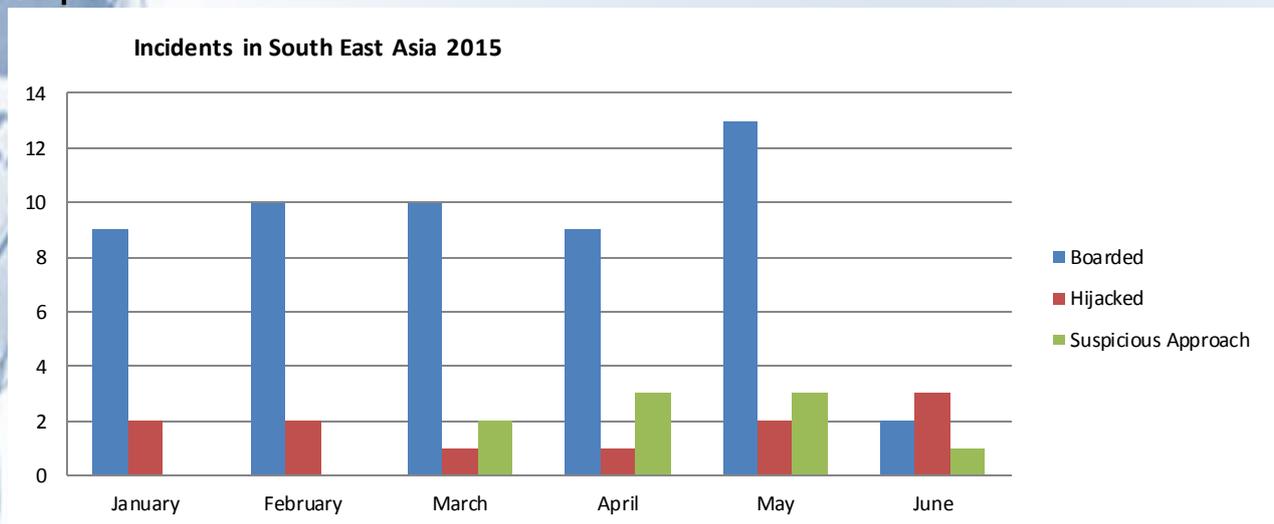
The crew themselves, as they are not being held for ransom, are seen by the aggressors as disposable; only valued as collateral and insofar as they can assist (under duress) with the manoeuvring and operation of the vessel. As such, they are at severe risk of serious or deadly violence should the attackers feel this is necessary (in order to ensure compliance).

The practice of immediately disabling/destroying all communications equipment is also a worrying trend, ensuring that a crew is unable to raise the alarm after boarding and delay any recovery effort - providing more time to achieve their goal of stealing the cargo.

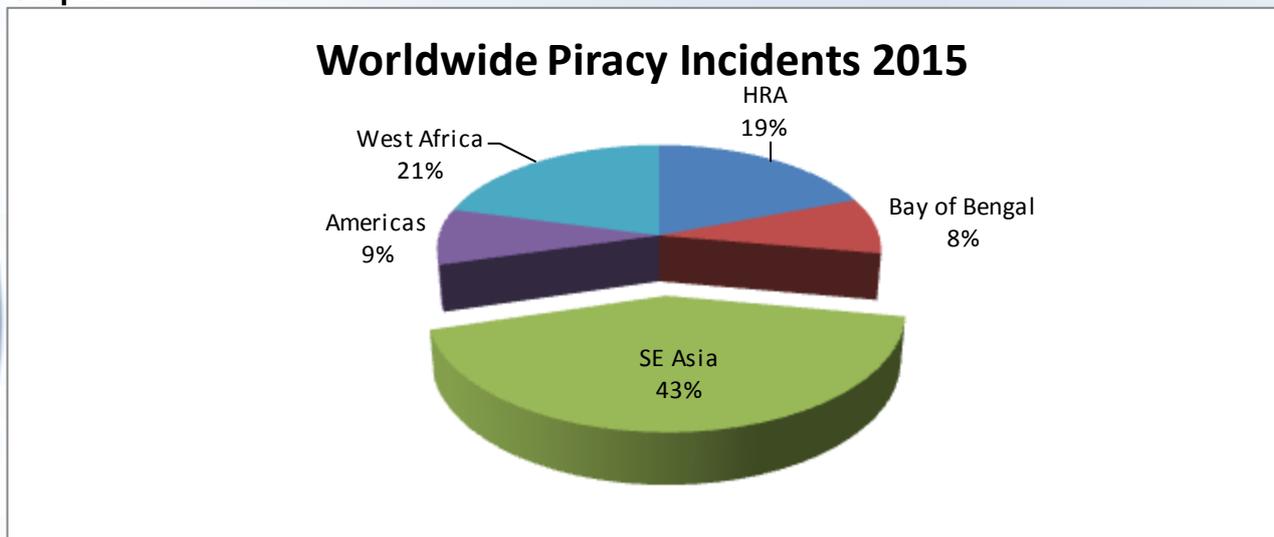
Singapore has recently called for members of the littoral states to increase patrols in the lower portion of the South China Sea in order to combat the growing piracy threat.

As can be seen from IMB figures, this type of attack appears to be on the rise: (See successful "Hijacked" below, NB figures for first half of June only)

Graph 1



Graph 2



It is worthy to note that 43% of worldwide piracy incidents (of any nature) occur in SE Asia. (And ALL but One [1] successful hijack has occurred in this region)

Allmode Comment

Due to this increase in the frequency and intensity of attacks in the region, International Marine Transportation (the UK based affiliate of Exxon Mobil) has taken the prudent decision to begin employing the tried-and-tested [BMP-4](#) countermeasures, in liaison with their Maritime Security service provider, for their vessels transiting this area.

Although BMP-4 was developed in response to Indian Ocean Piracy, there is much that can be of use in safeguarding vessels from all forms of hostile action, in all areas of the world - when implemented by professionals with an in-depth knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the defensive measures and their specific relevance to particular types of attack - based on previous intelligence, situational awareness and personal/corporate experience.

BPM-4 is not merely a set of instructions, but guidelines forming the basis of a security **system**, of which physical hardening is only one facet. As BMP-4 was tailored to long oceanic transits, and not littoral operations with many ports of call and regional territorial waters, it is essential that it should be further tailored, by experienced security advisors, to suit this different scenario and environment.

The conduct of training, education drills and the supplementing of the watch routine (with consideration for the crew's busy work schedule) is just as important as physical hardening of the vessel - something which is very challenging to implement by merely following a set of printed instructions.

In order to implement this system satisfactorily, and safeguard the vessel/crew, the use of unarmed security advisors is the recommended option. Not only will they be able to conduct crew (re)training and assist in the design and construction of the physical security measures, but be able to assist the Master and SSO in a management review of their SSP, and develop and implement "one-off" security measures - valid only for the portion of the transit at which the vessel is at risk.

Rather than misappropriate the time, energy and effort of senior appointments (such as CSO, HS(S) EQ manager etc.) within the shipping company/organisation to "re-invent the wheel", it is ventured that it is cheaper, easier and quicker to entrust this crucial aspect of your business continuity to 3rd party experts - who can concentrate on their core competencies, while the ships' management concentrates on theirs.

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