



MEDIA RELEASE

London, 15 April 2025

Pronounced spike in low-level crimes in Singapore Straits

The ICC International Maritime Bureau (IMB) has revealed a rise in global piracy and armed robbery incidents in the first quarter of 2025 – driven by a spike of incidents in the Singapore Straits.

A total of 45 cases of piracy and armed robbery against ships were recorded in the first three months of 2025 – an almost 35 percent increase compared to the same period in 2024.

Of the incidents reported, 37 vessels were boarded, four were hijacked and four had attempted attacks. The threat to crew safety remains high with 37 crew members taken hostage, 13 kidnapped, two threatened and one injured.

Rise of incidents in Singapore Straits

The Q1 report highlights a spike in recorded incidents in the Singapore Straits as 27 incidents were reported from vessels transiting these waters compared to seven for the same period in 2024.

While most incidents were considered low-level opportunistic crimes, crew members were at great risk with guns reported in 14 incidents. For the whole of 2024, guns were reported in 26 incidents globally. Ten crew members were taken hostage in six separate incidents, two were threatened and one was reported injured.

Ninety-two percent of all vessels targeted in the Singapore Straits were successfully boarded, including nine bulk carriers and tankers over 100,000 deadweight tonnage in size.

IMB Director Michael Howlett said: “The reported rise of incidents in the Singapore Straits is concerning, highlighting the urgent need to protect the safety of seafarers navigating these waters. Ensuring the security of these vital routes is essential and all necessary measures must be taken to safeguard crew members.”

Caution advised in the Gulf of Guinea

Although the number of reported incidents within the Gulf of Guinea waters and adjoining littoral states continues to be at its lowest in nearly two decades, the IMB urges continued caution as crew members remain at risk.

All 13 kidnapped crew were reported in these waters in two separate attacks – with a total of six incidents reported in the first quarter of the year. In March, pirates hijacked a bitumen tanker southeast of Santo Antonio, in Sao Tome and Principe, kidnapping 10 crew members – while a fishing vessel south of Accra, Ghana, was boarded by armed pirates who kidnapped three crew members.

“While we welcome the reduction of incidents, the safety of crew members in the Gulf of Guinea remains at greater risk. It is essential to maintain a strong regional and international naval presence to address these incidents and ensure the protection of seafarers,” Mr. Howlett said.



Somali piracy threat remains



Between 7 February and 16 March 2025, two fishing vessels and a dhow were hijacked off the coast of Somalia. In these incidents, 26 crew members were taken hostage, demonstrating the continued capabilities of Somali pirates. Reports indicate all crew have been released along with the vessels.

The IMB advises ships navigating these waters to exercise caution and to strictly follow the latest version of the Industry Best Management Practice (BMP).

About the IMB Piracy Reporting Centre

Since its founding in 1991, IMB's Piracy Reporting Centre has served as a crucial, 24-hour point of contact to report crimes of piracy and lend support to ships under threat. Quick reactions and a focus on coordinating with response agencies, sending out warning broadcasts and email alerts to ships have all helped bolster security on the high seas. The data gathered by the Centre also provides key insights on the nature and state of modern piracy.

IMB encourages all shipmasters and owners to report all actual, attempted and suspected global piracy and armed robbery incidents to the Piracy Reporting Centre as a vital first step to ensuring adequate resources are allocated by authorities to tackle maritime piracy.

Request a copy of the 2025 Jan - Mar Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships report [here](#).

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About the International Chamber of Commerce

The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) is the institutional representative of more than 45 million companies in over 170 countries. ICC's core mission is to make business work for everyone, every day, everywhere. Through a unique mix of advocacy, solutions and standard setting, we promote international trade, responsible business conduct and a global approach to regulation, in addition to providing market-leading dispute resolution services. Our members include many of the world's leading companies, SMEs, business associations and local chambers of commerce.

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