



## ICC INTERNATIONAL MARITIME BUREAU

# PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY AGAINST SHIPS

REPORT FOR THE PERIOD

**1 January – 30 September 2023**

### **WARNING**

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October 2023

## 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, interest groups and organizations to co-operate and exchange information with each other and the IMB, with a view of maintaining and developing a coordinated action in combating maritime fraud.

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

### **The key advantages and services of the PRC are:**

- A 24/7 manned operations centre.
- A single point of reporting for all vessels affected by piracy or armed robbery, as they trade through many different jurisdictions.
- Notifying the appropriate response agency of the reported incident and liaising with these agencies until the crew and vessel are safe.
- Warning vessels in the vicinity of a threat by broadcasting sitreps of incidents via Inmarsat-C SafetyNET service.
- Alerting CSOs and vessel managers of incidents via email.
- Keeping the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) updated of reported incidents.
- Assisting local law enforcement in apprehending and bringing the criminals to justice.
- Publish comprehensive quarterly and annual reports detailing incidents reported to the PRC.

The IMB PRC provides all its services ***free of charge*** to all ships irrespective of crew nationality, ownership, or flag.

This report is an analysis of 99 global maritime piracy and armed robbery incidents reported to the IMB PRC from 1 January to 30 September 2023. Incidents are occasionally reported late, resulting in changes to the tables and figures in subsequent reports.

Due to the continued debate concerning the Malacca Straits, these narrated incidents are shown separately.

For further details on the anti-piracy service or to report an incident contact the 24-hour manned IMB PRC at:

**ICC International Maritime Bureau**

**PO Box 12559, 50782 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**

**Tel ++ 60 3 2078 5763 Fax ++ 60 3 2078 5769**

**E-mail: [piracy@icc-ccs.org](mailto:piracy@icc-ccs.org) / [imbkl@icc-ccs.org](mailto:imbkl@icc-ccs.org)**

**WhatsApp / Telegram: +60 11 2659 3057**

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

## DEFINITIONS OF PIRACY & ARMED ROBBERY

The IMB PRC follows the definitions of Piracy as defined in Article 101 of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and Armed Robbery as defined by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) in its 26<sup>th</sup> Assembly session as Resolution A.1025 (26) “Code of Practice for the Investigation of Crimes of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships”.

### **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).*

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

The definitions of piracy and armed robbery are aimed to assign responsibility for responding to these illegal acts. It is worth noting that these definitions do not consider the resulting consequence on the crew, vessel and cargo, which in IMB’s experience ranges from opportunistic theft, cargo theft, taking crew hostage, assault and injury, kidnapping and in some cases death of a crew member.

It is vital that all actual and attempted incidents at the time of, or shortly after the incident, are reported and recorded.

This is the first essential step in the response chain.

Under the definitions of Piracy or Armed Robbery, the IMB PRC reports incidents as follows:

1. **Boarded:** An illegal act of perpetrators successfully gaining access onto the vessel.
2. **Hijacked:** An illegal act of perpetrators successfully gaining access onto the vessel and taking over the control of the vessel from the Master and crew.
3. **Fired Upon:** An illegal act of perpetrators discharging weapons towards the vessel while attempting to gain access onto the vessel.
4. **Attempted:** An illegal act of perpetrators attempting to approach a vessel with possible intention to board but remain unsuccessful due to the timely actions of the crew.

The consequences to the crew, vessel, or cargo, as a result of the above illegal acts:

1. **Crew:** Kidnap, hostage, death, threat, assault, injury, missing.
2. **Vessel:** Damage, especially due to the discharge of weapons or when perpetrators willfully damage vessel equipment and property.
3. **Cargo:** Theft or damage to cargo.

**Region specific severity of incident on Crew, Vessel and Cargo: (Chart G)**

As several agencies define and categorize incidents differently, the IMB reports under three generic Severity Levels – I, II, and III determined by the effect the incident has on the crew, vessel and cargo.

**Severity Level I:** Any incident which has a direct impact on the crew. To include:

- a. Crew being taken hostage, assaulted, injured, killed, kidnapped, missing, threatened.
- b. A hijacking where the command of the vessel is taken over by those boarding.
- c. An incident where the crew retreats into the citadel.

**Severity Level II:** To include a vessel being fired upon, security teams firing on approaching threat, robbers / pirates identified with weapons of any type (violence is offered) whether boarded or otherwise.

**Severity Level III:** To include an incident that does not fall into either Level I or Level II

## **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
- Justships Ltd
- Merchant Shipping Cyprus
- Steamship Insurance Management Services Limited
- NorthStandard Limited
- Tsakos Shipping and Trading SA

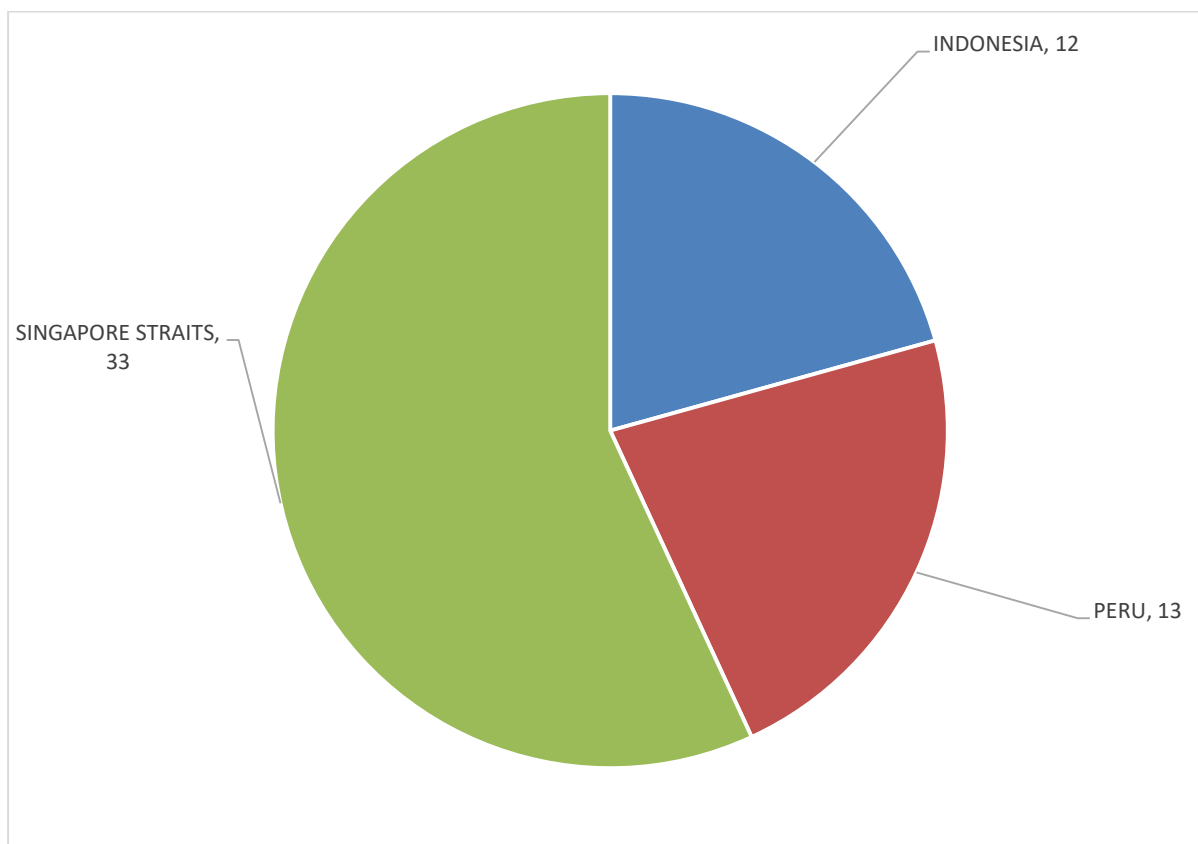
The PRC is additionally non-financially supported by:

- Spire Global Inc. ( <https://spire.com/> )
- Vesseltracker ( <https://www.vesseltracker.com/> )

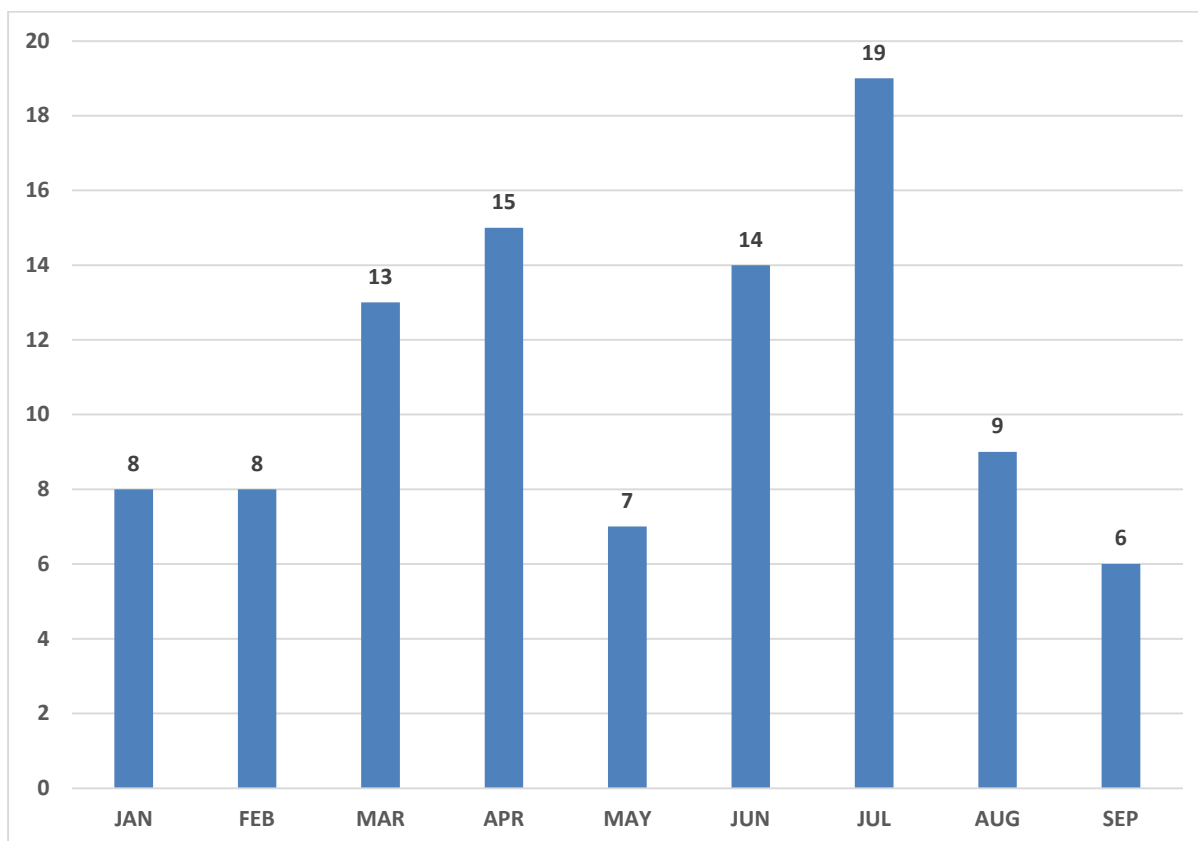
**TABLE 1: Locations of ACTUAL and ATTEMPTED incidents, January - September 2019 – 2023**

	<b>Locations</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
<b>SE ASIA</b>	Indonesia	20	23	6	9	12
	Malacca Straits			1		
	Malaysia	10	4	1	2	1
	Philippines	4	8	9	6	7
	Singapore Straits	1	15	20	31	33
	Thailand		1			
<b>EAST ASIA</b>	China	3				
	Vietnam	2	3	1		2
<b>INDIAN SUB-CONT</b>	Bangladesh		2		6	1
	India	3	6	1	2	2
<b>AMERICAS</b>	Brazil	2	4	3	5	1
	Colombia	3	1	5		2
	Dominican Republic	1				
	Ecuador	3	4	2		1
	Guyana				2	
	Haiti	1	4	2	1	
	Mexico	1	4	1		
	Panama	1				1
	Peru	5	5	15	8	13
	Venezuela	6			2	
<b>AFRICA</b>	Angola		5	3	5	3
	Benin	1	7	2		
	Cameroon	5		1		3
	Democratic Rep. of Congo	1		1	1	
	Dem. Rep. of Sao Tome and Principe		1	5		
	Egypt				1	1
	Equatorial Guinea	2	2			
	Gabon		2	3		1
	Ghana	3	5	5	6	5
	Guinea	2	1	3		2
	Gulf of Aden*			1		
	Ivory Coast	1	2		1	2
	Kenya	1				
	Liberia	2			1	
	Morocco	1				
	Mozambique	2	3	1		1
	Nigeria	29	17	4		2
	Sierra Leone	1				2
	South Africa				1	
	The Congo		1	1		1
	Togo	2	1			
<b>REST OF WORLD</b>	Iraq		1			
<b>Subtotal for nine months</b>		<b>119</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>Total at year end</b>		<b>162</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>115</b>	

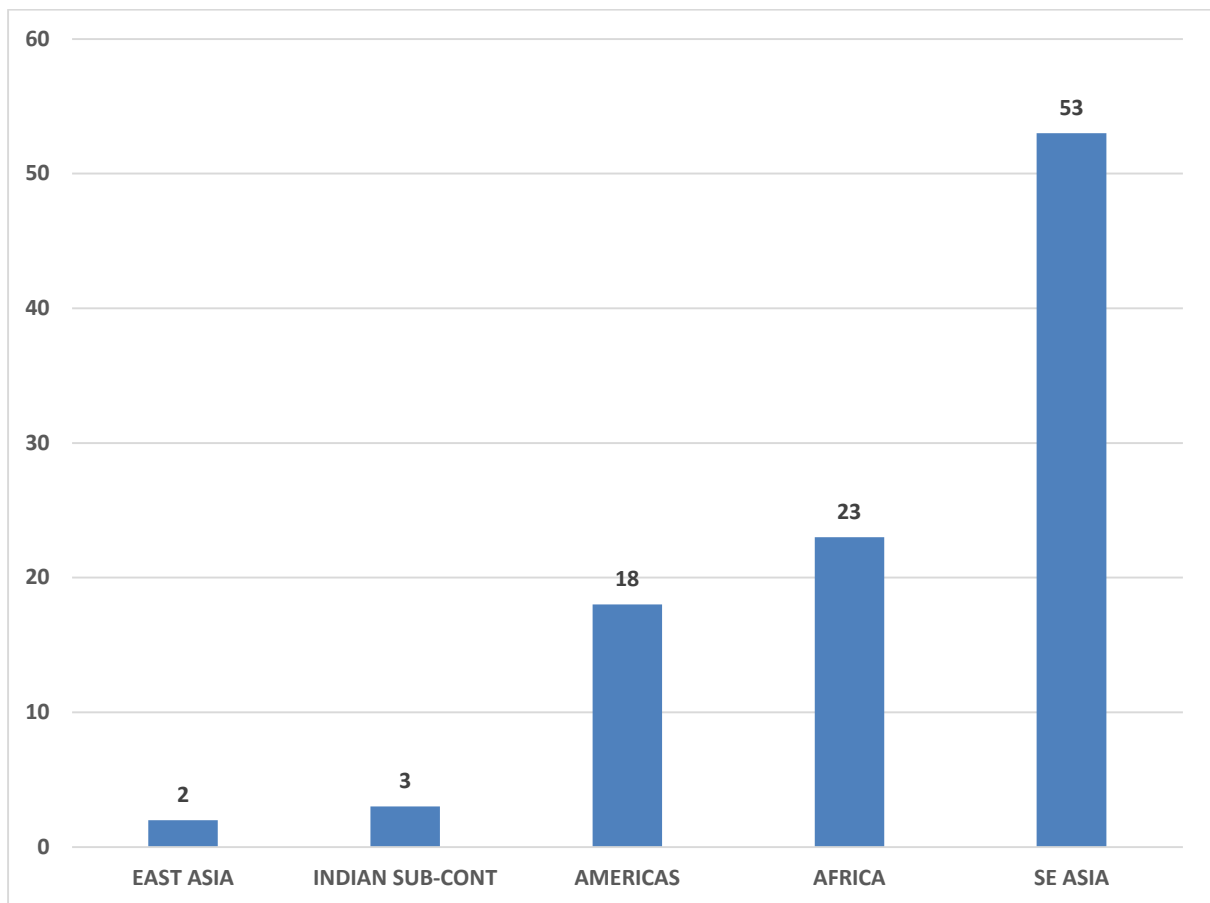
**CHART A: The following three locations contributed 58% of the total 99 incidents reported in the period January – September 2023**



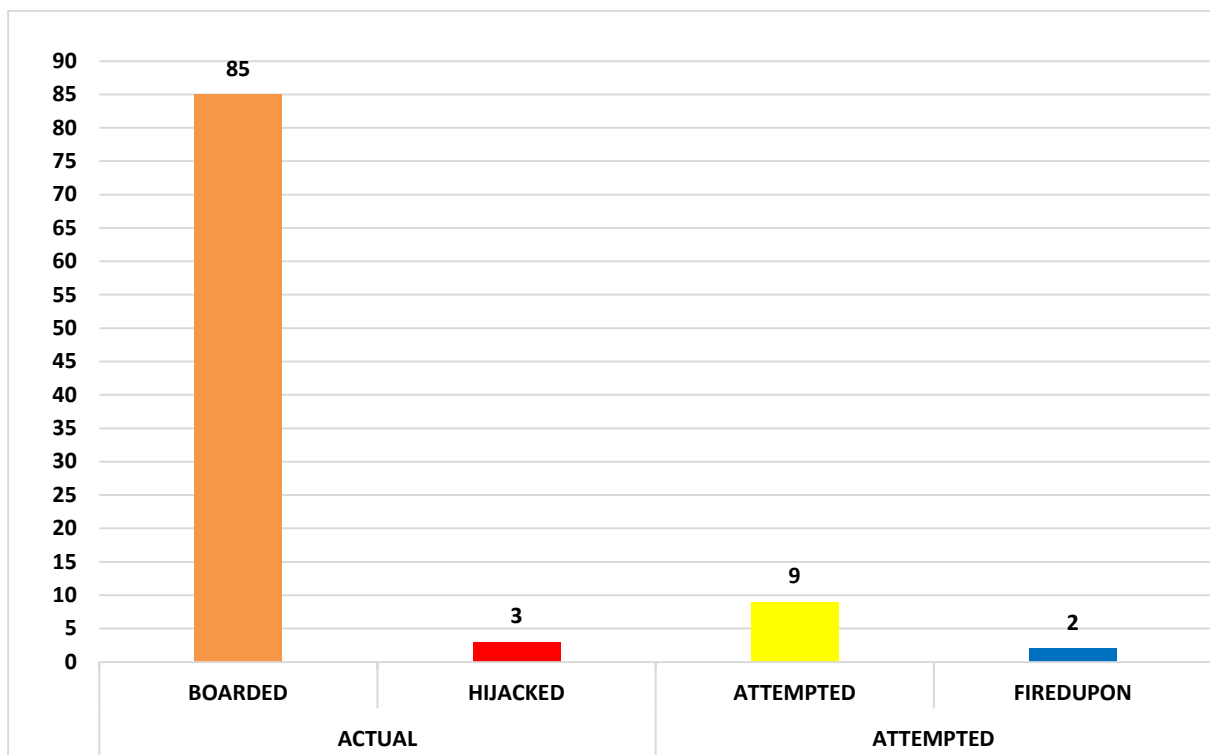
**CHART B: Monthly comparison of incidents during January – September 2023**



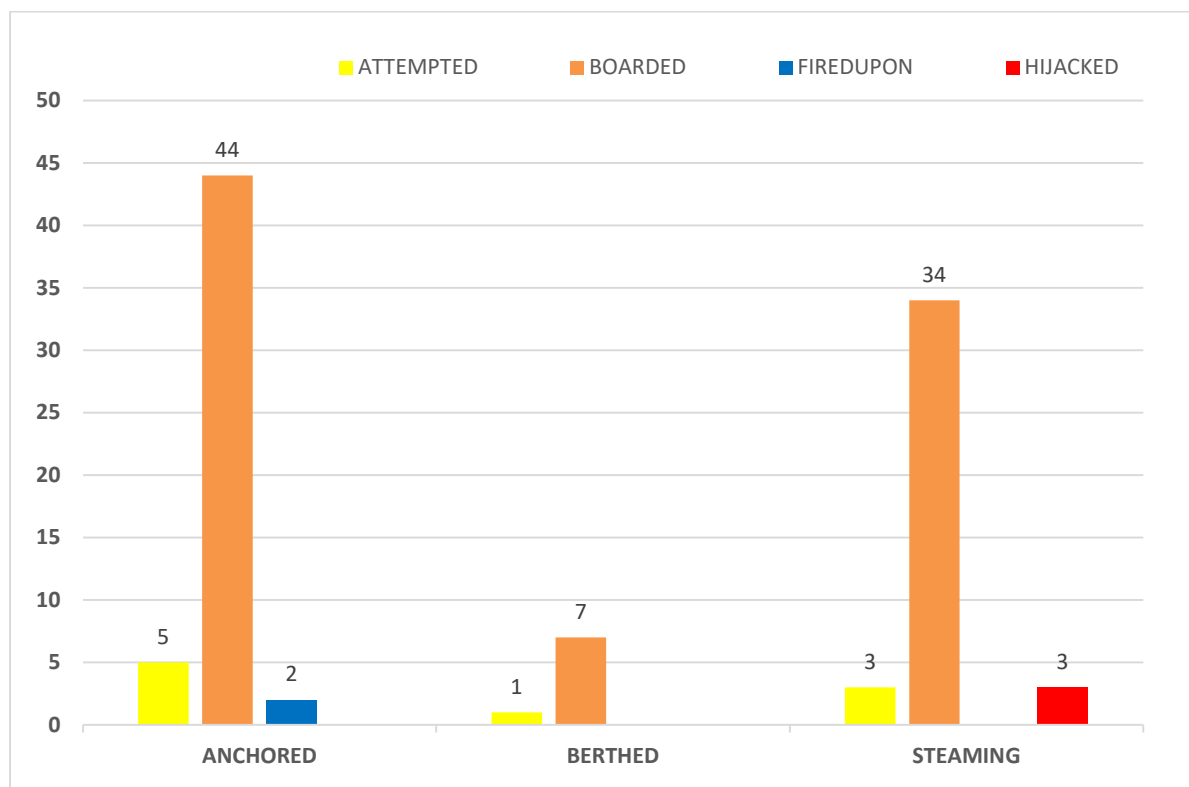
**CHART C: Total incidents as per regions of the world January – September 2023**



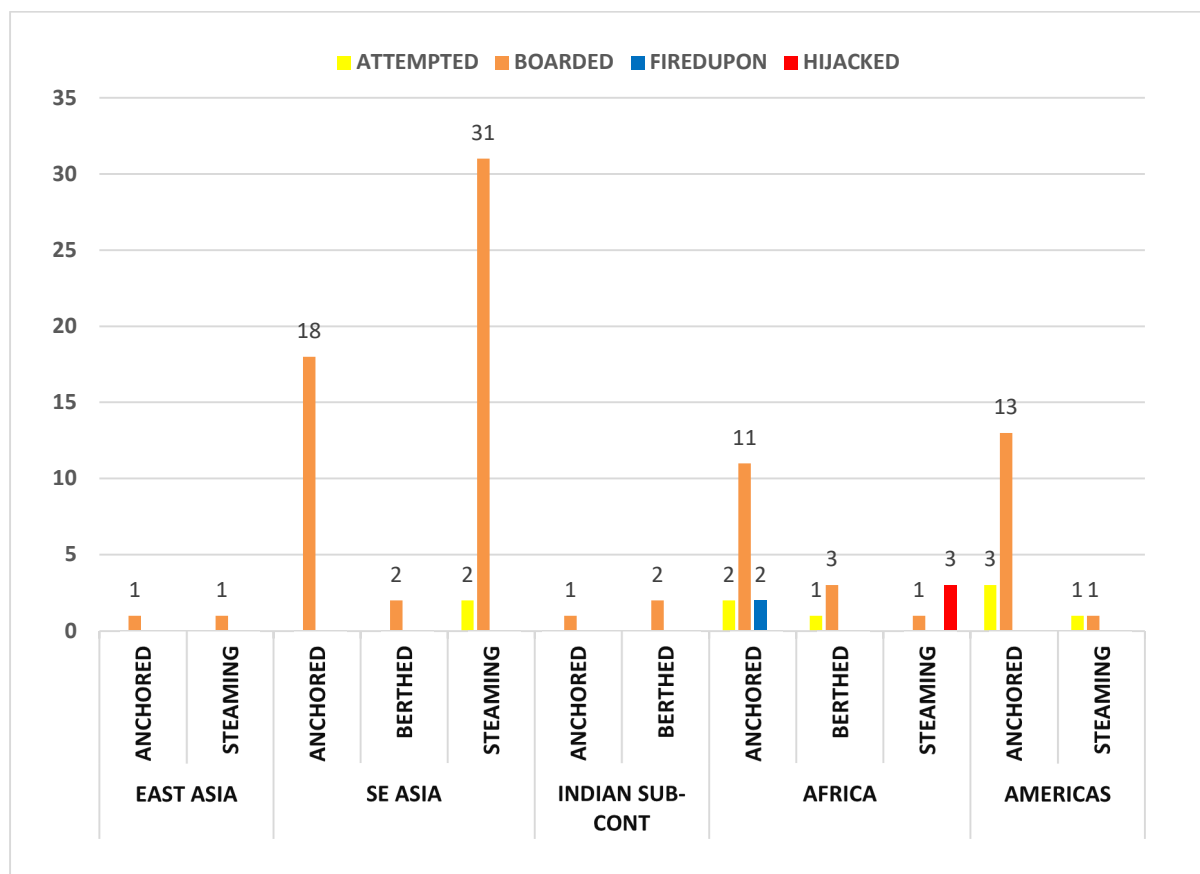
**CHART D: Perpetrators successful in 89% of reported incidents. January – September 2023**



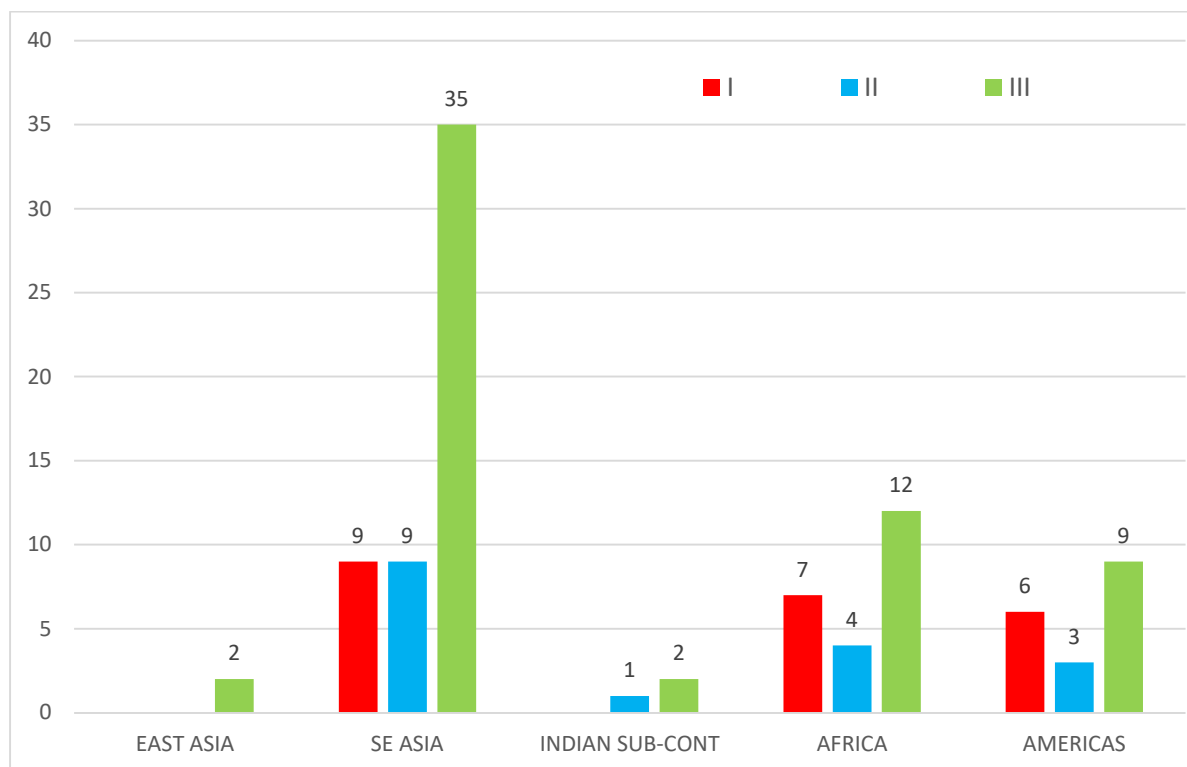
**CHART E: Type of incident in relation to the status of vessel movement January – September 2023**



**CHART F: Region specific type of incident in relation to the status of vessel movement January – September 2023**



**CHART G: Region specific severity of incident in relation January – September 2023**  
(Severity level I, II, III – see page 4 for clarification)



**TABLE 2: ACTUAL and ATTEMPTED incidents by location, January – September 2023**

		Actual		Attempted	
Location		Boarded	Hijacked	Fired upon	Attempted
SE ASIA	Indonesia	12			
	Malaysia	1			
	Philippines	7			
	Singapore Straits	31			2
EAST ASIA	Vietnam	2			
INDIAN	Bangladesh	1			
SUB CONT	India	2			
AMERICAS	Brazil	1			
	Colombia	1			1
	Ecuador				1
	Panama				1
	Peru	12			1
AFRICA	Angola	3			
	Cameroon	1		2	
	Egypt	1			
	Gabon	1			
	Ghana	4			1
	Guinea	1			1
	Ivory Coast		1		1
	Mozambique	1			
	Nigeria	2			

Sierra Leone	1	1		
The Congo		1		
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>			

**TABLE 3: Ports / anchorages, with three or more reported incidents, January – September 2023**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>01.01.2023 to 30.09.2023</b>
Angola	Luanda	3
Cameroon	Douala	3
Ghana	Takoradi	5
Indonesia	Belawan	3
	Dumai	3
Peru	Callao	13
Philippines	Manila	6

**TABLE 4: Status of vessels during ACTUAL incidents, January – September 2023**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Berthed</b>	<b>Anchored</b>	<b>Steaming</b>
<b>SE ASIA</b> Indonesia	2	10	
Malaysia			1
Philippines		7	
Singapore Straits		1	30
<b>EAST ASIA</b> Vietnam		1	1
<b>INDIAN</b> Bangladesh	1		
<b>SUB CONT</b> India	1	1	
<b>AMERICAS</b> Brazil		1	
Colombia			1
Peru		12	
<b>AFRICA</b> Angola		3	
Cameroon		1	
Egypt	1		
Gabon		1	
Ghana		4	
Guinea		1	
Ivory Coast			1
Mozambique		1	
Nigeria	2		
Sierra Leone			2
The Congo			1
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>88</b>		

**TABLE 5: Status of vessels during ATTEMPTED incidents, January – September 2023**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Berthed</b>	<b>Anchored</b>	<b>Steaming</b>
<b>SE ASIA</b> Singapore Straits			2
<b>AMERICAS</b> Colombia		1	

Ecuador			1
Panama		1	
Peru		1	
<b>AFRICA</b> Cameroon		2	
Ghana		1	
Guinea		1	
Ivory Coast	1		
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>		

TABLE 6: Types of arms used during incidents, January - September 2019 – 2023

Type of Arms	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Guns	35	37	24	11	12
Knives	23	35	29	32	33
Other weapons	5	3	4	1	2
Not stated	56	57	40	46	52
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>Total at year end</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>115</b>	

TABLE 7: Comparison of the type of incidents, January - September 2019 – 2023

Type of Attack	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Attempted	10	12	9	4	9
Boarded	95	112	85	85	85
Fired upon	10	6	2		2
Hijack	4	2	1	1	3
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>Total at year end</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>115</b>	

TABLE 8: Types of violence to crew, January – September 2019 – 2023

Type of Violence	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Hostage	49	31	8	27	69
Kidnapped	70	85	51		14
Threatened	4	6	5	5	8
Assaulted	3	5	2	6	1
Injured	6	7	3		3
Killed	1		1		
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>Total at year end</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>55</b>	

TABLE 9: Type of violence to crew by location, January – September 2023

Location	Kidnapped	Hostage	Threatened	Assaulted	Injured
<b>SE ASIA</b> Indonesia			5		
Philippines		1			1
Singapore Straits		5	2		
<b>AMERICAS</b> Peru		9	1	1	

<b>AFRICA</b>	Cameroon	5				
	Gabon	3				
	Guinea					1
	Ivory Coast		21			
	Sierra Leone		23			1
	The Congo	6	10			
<b>Sub total</b>		<b>14</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>95</b>				

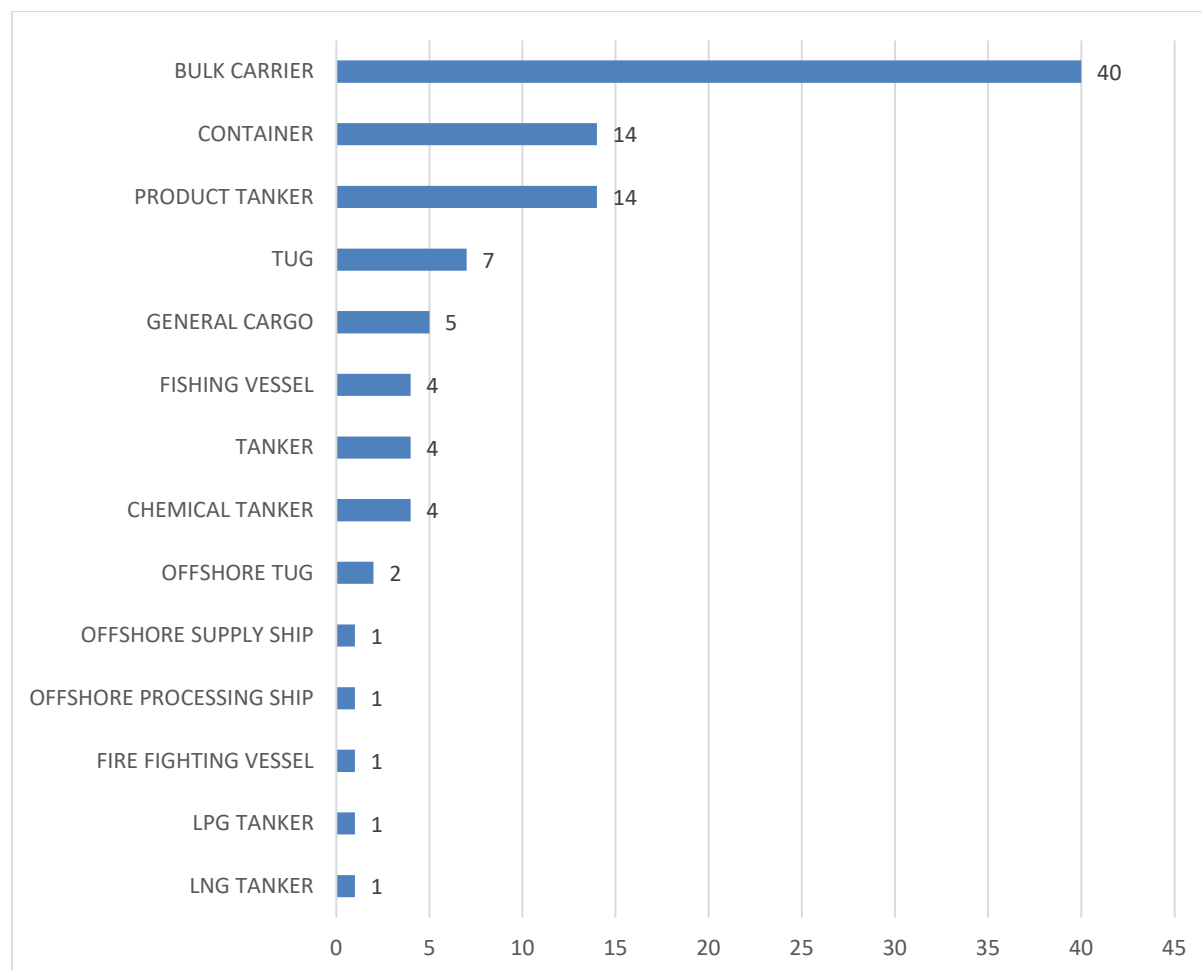
TABLE 10: Types of arms used by geographical location, January – September 2023

<b>Locations</b>	<b>Guns</b>	<b>Knives</b>	<b>Not Stated</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>S E ASIA</b>				
Indonesia		5	6	1
Malaysia			1	
Philippines	1	2	4	
Singapore Straits	2	12	18	1
<b>EAST ASIA</b>				
Vietnam		1	1	
<b>INDIAN</b>				
Bangladesh		1		
<b>SUB CONT</b>				
India			2	
<b>AMERICAS</b>				
Brazil		1		
Colombia			2	
Ecuador			1	
Panama			1	
Peru		8	5	
<b>AFRICA</b>				
Angola		1	2	
Cameroon	3			
Egypt			1	
Gabon	1			
Ghana			5	
Guinea	1		1	
Ivory Coast	1		1	
Mozambique		1		
Nigeria		1	1	
Sierra Leone	2			
The Congo	1			
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>			

TABLE 11: Incidents as per type of vessels, January – September 2019 – 2023

<b>Type</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Accommodation Barge		1			
Bulk Carrier	30	34	34	41	40
Container	12	20	24	10	14
Crew Boat				2	
Drilling Ship / Rig		1	1		
Fire Fighting Vessel					1
General Cargo	7	6	2	2	5

Heavy Load Carrier	1			1	
Landing Craft	1				
Maintenance Pontoon	1				
Offshore Processing Ship					1
Offshore Support Vessel	1	2	2		
Pipe Layer Ship / Barge		2			
Pleasure Craft	1				
Refrigerated Ship		3	1	1	
RO-RO					
Supply Vessel	2	8	4	1	1
Tanker Asphalt / Bitumen		1			
Tanker Chemical / Product	32	32	16	15	18
Tanker Crude Oil	15	7	2	6	4
Tanker FPSO / FSO		1			
Tanker LNG	2		2		1
Tanker LPG	4	3	2	2	1
Trawler / Fishing	3	6	3		4
Offshore Tug / Tug & Barge	5	5	3	5	9
Vehicle Carrier	1		1	3	
Yacht / Sailing Vessel	1			1	
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>Total at year end</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>115</b>	

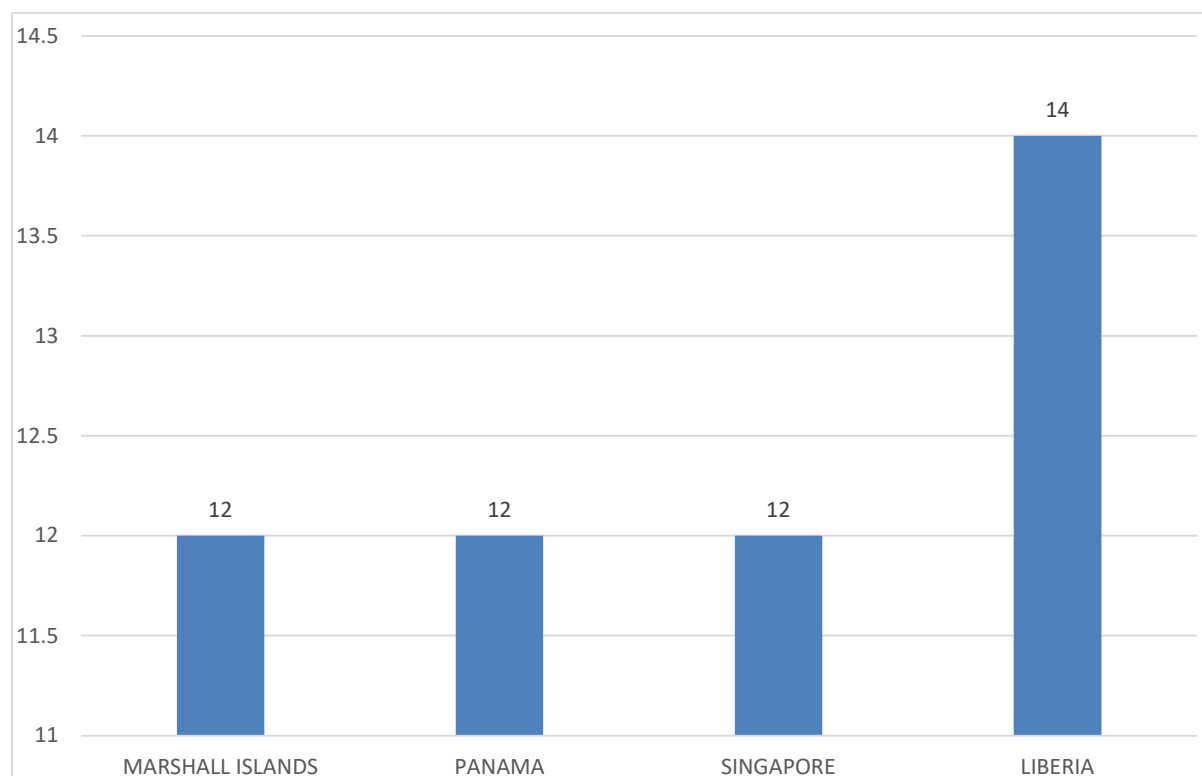
**CHART H: Incidents as per type of vessels, January – September 2023**

**TABLE 12: Nationalities of vessels affected, January - September 2019 – 2023**

<b>Flag State</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Antigua & Barbuda	2	1	1	1	
Austria	1				
Bahamas	3	1	6	3	2
Barbados	1		1	1	
Belgium					1
Bermuda	1	1	1		
Cameroon	1				
Cayman Islands	1	2		2	2
China	2	1	1		3
Comoros		3			
Cyprus	1	2	6	1	4
Denmark		4	4		3
France	1		1	1	
Gabon		1			
Germany	1	2	1	1	1
Ghana		2	2		
Gibraltar		2	2		
Greece	1	2	2		1
Hong Kong (SAR)	6	7	3	1	8
India		2		1	2
Indonesia	1	2			1
Isle of Man	3	1	1	1	1
Italy		1			
Jamaica			1		
Japan				1	2
Korea South	1				
Liberia	18	21	14	10	14
Libya					1
Luxemburg			2		
Malaysia	3	1	1	2	4
Malta	8	4	5	6	7
Marshall Islands	22	22	14	15	12
Mongolia			1		
Netherlands	2	1			
Nigeria	4				
Niue	1	1			
Norway			2	1	
Palau	1	1			
Panama	10	19	2	21	12
Philippines		1			
Portugal	1	3	3	2	4
Saudi Arabia	1	3	1		
Senegal		1			
Singapore	17	16	17	16	12
Spain			1		
St Kitts & Nevis			1		
St Vincent & Grenadines		1			
Switzerland	1				
Togo	1				
Turkey	1				1
USA				1	1

Vanuatu	1				
Vietnam				1	
Not Stated				1	
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>Total at year end</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>115</b>	

**CHART I: Nationalities of vessels involved in nine or more incidents, January – September 2023**

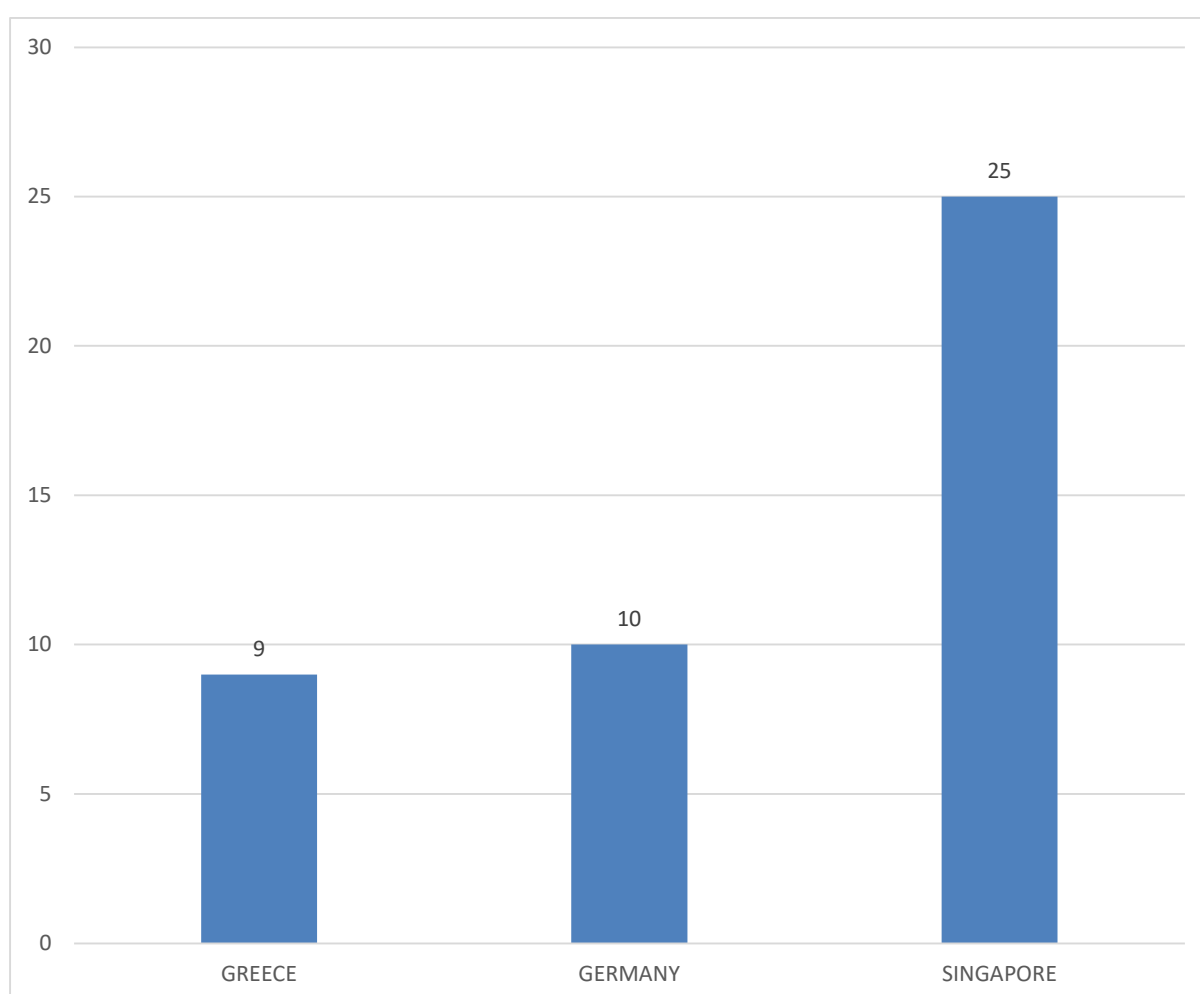


**TABLE 13: Vessels affected – managed or controlled from January – September 2023**

Country	No of Ships
Angola	1
Belgium	1
Canada	3
China	3
Cyprus	4
Denmark	4
Germany	10
Greece	9
Hong Kong	2
India	5
Japan	6
Malaysia	3
Mauritius	1
Netherlands	3
Norway	1
Philippines	2

Sierra Leone	1
Singapore	25
Switzerland	1
Taiwan	1
The Congo	1
UAE	3
United Kingdom	4
USA	2
NS	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>

**CHART J: Managing countries whose vessels involved in nine or more incidents between January – September 2023**



***OFF SOMALIA / GULF OF ADEN / RED SEA ATTACK FIGURES UPDATE***

**From 1 January to 30 September 2023, no incident reported to the IMB PRC for Gulf of Aden.**

**The international navies patrolling these waters continue to coordinate and liaise with merchant vessels and fishing fleets to identify and apprehend pirate action groups.**

**All vessels are advised and encouraged to adhere to the BMP 5 recommendations while transiting these waters. Vessels employing Privately Contracted Armed Security Personnel (PCASP) should be cautious and not mistake fishermen for pirates in some heavy fishing areas.**

**As the IMB PRC continues to monitor the situation in the region, it cautions vessel owners and masters against complacency. Somali pirates still retain the capability and capacity to carry out attacks.**

**The IMB PRC supports and compliments the role of international navies by relaying all reports received to the response agencies, as well as by broadcasting alerts to vessels via the INMARSAT Safety Net Service.**

***CONTINUED COOPERATION***

**The positive information sharing, actions, and cooperation between the Indonesian Marine Police (IMP) and the IMB PRC has resulted in an overall decrease in the number of reported incidents in the 10 safe designated areas.**

**All vessels intending to anchor, waiting for berth or drift should do so at the designated areas where IMP patrol boats would be stationed to enable them to maximize their resources to provide greater protection for vessels.**

**Vessels are advised to cooperate by maintaining strict anti-piracy and robbery watches and report all attacks and suspicious sightings to the local Authorities / IMP, as well as the IMB PRC. The IMB PRC will also liaise with local and regional Authorities to render necessary assistance.**

**In line with the Road Map Program Police Reforms Wave III, the Indonesian Authorities will continue to allocate and position resources and assets in 10 key designated areas of concern, to prevent sea robbery and piracy in and around Indonesian waters.**

**In January 2021, the IMB was informed that the successful cooperation resulting in a year on year drop in incidents in almost all areas, will continue until further notice.**

**The IMB thanks the IMP for their support and contribution to the shipping industry.**

***ACKNOWLEDGEMENT***

**The IMB PRC appreciates the strong and vital cooperation from the Philippine and Malaysian Intel that have provided crucial information relating to the safety of vessels and seafarers, particularly in the Sulu Sea/eastern Sabah waters. The successful cooperation has directly and indirectly saved many lives and properties at sea. The IMB PRC looks forward to the continued cooperation, and thanks both intel agencies for their commitment.**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The IMB appreciates the assistance (past and present) and vital cooperation provided by the Coalition naval forces / EU naval force (EUNAVFOR ATALANTA) / MSCHOA / US Navy / French Alindien / NATO / UKMT0 / 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 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, resulted in a drop in the number of attacks.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The IMB PRC appreciates the strong cooperation from the West African authorities / navies and international navies, especially the Danish, Italian, Russian, Spanish and Portuguese Navies in the Gulf of Guinea. A special thanks to the Nigerian Authorities, particularly the Nigerian Navy and NIMASA, who have continued to provide prompt information, actions, and valuable cooperation between agencies. The IMB PRC looks forward to the continued cooperation from the West African authorities / navies and international navies in the area.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The IMB PRC thanks all the masters and vessel owners / operators who have reported incidents to the Centre in a timely manner. It encourages all incidents to be reported in a timely manner.

While the IMB PRC endeavours to always get a meaningful response from regional authorities, the reports also play a crucial role to increase awareness of this crime, which allows for additional resources to be allocated by authorities to tackle the crime of piracy and armed robbery. Transparent statistics from an independent, non-political, international organization such as the IMB PRC can act as a catalyst to achieve this goal.

The IMB PRC wishes all seafarers safe and secure voyages and remains available to assist in any manner.

## **PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY PRONE AREAS AND WARNINGS**

*All ships are advised to report all piracy and armed robbery incidents and suspicious sightings to local Authorities, their flag state and to the IMB Piracy Reporting Centre as per IMO Cir 1334.*

**The IMB Piracy Reporting Centre can be contacted at:**

**E-mail:** [piracy@icc-ccs.org](mailto:piracy@icc-ccs.org) / [imbkl@icc-ccs.org](mailto:imbkl@icc-ccs.org)

**Tel:** +60 3 2078 5763    **Fax:** +60 3 2078 5769

**WhatsApp / Telegram:** +60 11 2659 3057. (Photograph or video submission encouraged).

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

*Mariners are advised to be cautious, take precautionary measures and follow all recommended guidelines, when transiting the following areas:*

### **SOUTH EAST ASIA AND INDIAN SUB CONTINENT**

**Bangladesh:** Robbers normally target ships at anchor. Most incidents reported are at Chittagong anchorages and approaches. Incidents in Bangladesh have fallen significantly over the past few years because of the efforts by the Bangladesh authorities.

**Indonesia:** Belawan and Tanjung Priok / Jakarta anchorage and surrounding waters. Pirates / robbers are normally armed with guns / knives and / or machetes. Generally, be vigilant in other areas. Many incidents may have gone unreported. Pirates / robbers normally approach vessels during the night. When spotted and alarm is sounded, the pirates / robbers usually escape without confronting the crew. A strict anti-piracy watch is recommended.

Meetings and continued dialogue between the Indonesian Marine Police (IMP) and the IMB PRC resulted in positive actions by the Indonesian authorities, who have so far brought down the number of incidents significantly. With the assistance and actions of the IMP, the incidents appear to be decreasing each year with great success. Incidents in Indonesian waters have also dropped dramatically since the cooperation began.

The Indonesian Marine Police have advised all ships intending to anchor to do so at / near the following areas where Indonesian Marine Police will conduct patrols for greater protection:

(After IMP-IMB started the cooperation, since 2014, no incident has been reported in the Adang Bay region. With this in view, in March 2021, IMP has decided to replace Adang Bay with Tanjung Butan at 01:11.30N – 104:12.30E as Singapore Straits and surrounding waters are now classified as risky waters).

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 Berakit/Bintan: 01:23.30N-104:42.30E
5. Tanjung Priok: 06:00.30S-106:54.00E
6. Gresik: 07:09.00S-112:40.00E
7. Taboneo: 03:41.30S-114:28.00E
8. Tanjung Butan: 01:11.30N-104:12.30E (effective 12 March 2021)
9. Muara Berau: 00:17.00S-117:36.00E
10. Balikpapan: 01:22.00S-116:53.00E

The Indonesian authorities have advised IMB that in accordance with the Road Map Program Police Reforms Wave III, the above given ten locations prevention action of sea robbery / piracy in Indonesian waters will continue until further notice.

Vessels are advised to maintain strict anti-piracy watch and measures and report all incidents and suspicious sightings to the local authorities and the IMB Piracy Reporting Centre. The IMB PRC will also liaise with the local authorities to render necessary assistance.

**Malacca Straits:** Although the number of incidents has dropped substantially due to increased and aggressive patrols by the littoral states' authorities since July 2005, vessels 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 when they will be reduced. In some cases, incidents may have gone unreported. Situation currently remains stable.

**Malaysia:** Bandar Penawar, Johor – past incidents reported on anchored vessels. Off Tanjung Piai – past incidents reported on vessels underway. Though incidents have stopped, the IMB PRC is monitoring the situation and will liaise with the Malaysian Authorities / MMEA as needed.

In / off Eastern Sabah – Kidnapping of merchant ship's crew by ASG has stopped for several years due to actions by the Malaysian and Philippines Authorities. Last kidnapping incident was reported in January 2020. It was reported that several ASG militants had been captured / killed by the authorities. Although the incidents have stopped, the waters remain risky.

Vessels are advised to continue to take precautionary measures and maintain strict anti-piracy watch and measures. Vessels transiting these waters should refer to the Sabah Notice to Mariners NTM 14 of 2017 on the Ship Reporting System. Vessels are also urged to monitor the IMB PRC Warnings on potential incidents / targets / description of militant boats issued on behalf of the Philippines and Malaysian Intel Agencies.

**Philippines:** In / off Sibutu passage / off Sibutu island / Tawi Tawi / Sulu Sea / Celebes sea / off eastern Sabah – past incidents included crew kidnappings. These kidnapping incidents have stopped for several years due to the actions by the Malaysian and Philippines Authorities. Last kidnapping incident was reported in January 2020. It was reported that several ASG militants had been captured / killed by the authorities. Although the incidents have stopped, the waters remain risky.

Vessels are advised to continue to take precautionary measures and maintain strict anti-piracy watch and measures. Vessels transiting these waters should refer to the Sabah Notice to Mariners NTM 14 of 2017 on the Ship Reporting System. Vessels are also urged to monitor the IMB PRC Warnings on potential incidents / targets / description of militant boats issued on behalf of the Philippines and Malaysian Intel Agencies.

**Manila:** Be vigilant. Several past and recent incidents / robberies have been reported.

**Singapore Straits:** A General Warning issued in December 2019 indicating a sudden rise in incidents in Singapore Straits especially during the night is still valid. The incidents are still occurring and increasing. It appears one or more groups are targeting passing ships including tugs / barges to rob them. Authorities have been notified and are aware of the situation. Vessels are advised to remain vigilant and to continue maintaining adequate watches and measures. Robbers board ships while underway or while at anchor especially during the night. Robbers will abort and move away when the alarm is sounded, and authorities notified. Therefore, a strict watch is necessary.

**South China Sea:** Although incidents have stopped 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, especially during the night. In the past, several 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, but the hijackings stopped abruptly in late 2015. It has been reported that some criminals have been arrested by local authorities both in Malaysia and in Indonesia. There were three incidents reported in 2017 where two tankers were hijacked off Kuantan / Off Pulau Aur / East coast Malaysia. The IMB continues to monitor the situation.

**WEST AFRICA (Gulf of Guinea)** – As a general rule:

- (i) Follow recommendations and guidelines presented in the BMP WA.
- (ii) All crews to keep a vigilant lookout using all available means. Ships advised to adjust ETA for direct berthing or wait / drift / transit more than 300 nm from the coast, if appropriate and agreed by all in venture. Incidents reported up to 300 nm from the coast.

**Angola** (Luanda): Incidents of robberies reported.

**Benin** (Cotonou): No recent incidents reported. Past incidents reported in / off Benin. Vessels attacked and crews kidnapped. Incidents showed that the pirates / robbers in the area are well armed and violent. Pirates robbed vessels and kidnapped crews for ransom. In the past, tankers were hijacked, and part cargo stolen (gas oil).

**Cameroon** (Douala): Recent incidents including vessels fired upon at anchor and kidnapping of crew. Be vigilant.

**Equatorial Guinea**: Past incidents off Bioko Island and off Bata. One incident involved kidnapping and the other fired upon at 87nm off Bata.

**Gabon** (Port Gentil / Owendo anchorage): Incidents stopped. Past incidents / kidnapping of crews occurred more than 70nm offshore.

**Ghana** (Takoradi): Incidents reported at Takoradi anchorages.

**Guinea** (Conakry): Incidents dropped. Past incidents involving robberies reported at anchorages.

**Ivory Coast** (Abidjan): Incidents dropped but remains risky.

**Nigeria** (Lagos / Apapa, Off Bayelsa / Brass / Bonny Island / Port Harcourt): Pirates / robbers are often well armed, violent and have attacked and hijacked / robbed ships / kidnapped crews along or far from the coast, rivers, anchorages, ports, and surrounding waters. Incidents have also been reported up to about 300 nm from the coast. Generally, all waters in / off Nigeria remain highly risky. Vessels are advised to be vigilant as many incidents may also have gone unreported. Kidnapping for ransom remains the biggest risk for crews. Vessels are advised to take additional measures in these high-risk waters. In the past, tankers were also hijacked, and part cargo stolen (gas oil).

Incidents dropped drastically for Nigeria, but vessels are advised to be vigilant as waters remain risky.

**Togo** (Lome): Incidents appear to have stopped. Past attacks reported at anchorage / in / off Togo. Vessels robbed and crews kidnapped. In the past, tankers were also hijacked, and part cargo stolen (gas oil).

**The Congo**: Incidents reported off Pointe Noire.

**Sao Tome & Principe**: No recent reported incidents. Past incidents showed vessels hijacked / attacked, and crews kidnapped. Vessels advised to continue to maintain strict anti-piracy watch and measures. Waters are still considered high risk for fishing and merchant vessels although incidents have dropped.

**Sierra Leone**: (off Turtle Islands). One past hijacking incident reported.

## **EAST AFRICA / GOA / RED SEA**

**Red Sea / Gulf of Aden / Somalia / Arabian Sea / Indian Ocean:** No recent reported piracy attacks. There were several suspicious reports. Although the opportunity for incidents has reduced, the Somali pirates continue to possess the capability and capacity to carry out incidents. All merchant ships are advised to adhere to the recommendations in the latest BMP, while transiting in these waters. The IMB PRC will continue to alert and broadcast information to all ships in the region via Inmarsat EGC Safety Net.

Although no reported incidents, the threat still exists in the waters off the 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 also been targeted 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. Be vigilant.

Generally, Somali pirates tend to be well armed with automatic weapons, RPGs and sometimes use skiffs launched from mother vessels, which may be hijacked fishing vessels or dhows. Masters and ship owners are encouraged to register and report their vessels as per the latest BMP procedures and ensure that their 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. Keeping in mind the warnings and alerts for the area, an early sighting / detection of an approaching skiff will enable an accurate assessment, allowing the Master and PCASP to make informed decisions to keep clear of small boats, dhows, fishing vessels and, if necessary, take evasive actions 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.

**Vessels transiting in / off Yemen / Gulf of Aden:** Security risk due to civil war in Yemen. Vessels have been fired upon and approached. (not piracy related).

**Vessels transiting Straits of Hormuz / Gulf of Oman / Off Iran** – a number of past incidents reported involving explosions and unauthorised boarding. (not piracy related).

## **SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN WATERS**

**Brazil** (Macapa): Incidents have dropped. Waters remain risky. Stay vigilant.

**Colombia** (Cartagena): Incidents have dropped. Past incidents reported at anchorages, river passage and pilot boarding ground. Stay vigilant.

**Ecuador** (Guayaquil): Incidents have stopped. Past incidents reported at anchorage / river passage with pilot. Robbers well-armed. Fired upon.

**Haiti** (Port Au Prince / Lafiteau): Incidents dropped. Advised to continue maintaining watch and to stay vigilant.

**Mexico** (Puerto Dos Bocas): Incidents dropped. Past reported incidents - pirates / robbers in this area armed with guns.

**Peru** (Callao): Incidents are continuing. Maintain vigilant watch and employ anti-piracy measures.

**Venezuela** (Puerto La Cruz / Puerto Jose / Guanta): Although incidents have stopped, vessels are still reminded to maintain strict anti-piracy watch and measures especially at anchor.

**EASTERN EUROPE/UKRAINE**

Not piracy related: Ukraine and Russia conflict: stay clear of Ukrainian coast. Mines reported in the Black Sea.

***IMB Maritime Security Hotline***

The International Maritime Bureau (IMB) has 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 any maritime crime including terrorism, piracy and other illegal activities. All information reported 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:

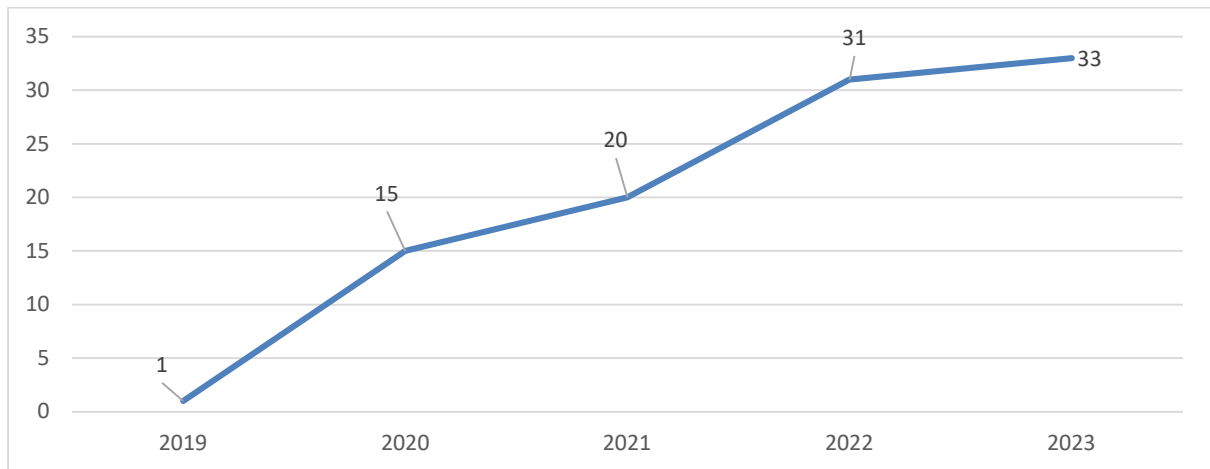
Tel: +60 3 2031 0014 Fax: +60 3 2078 5769 E-mail: [imbsecurity@icc-ccs.org](mailto:imbsecurity@icc-ccs.org)

WhatsApp or Telegram at +601126593057. Photograph or video submission encouraged.

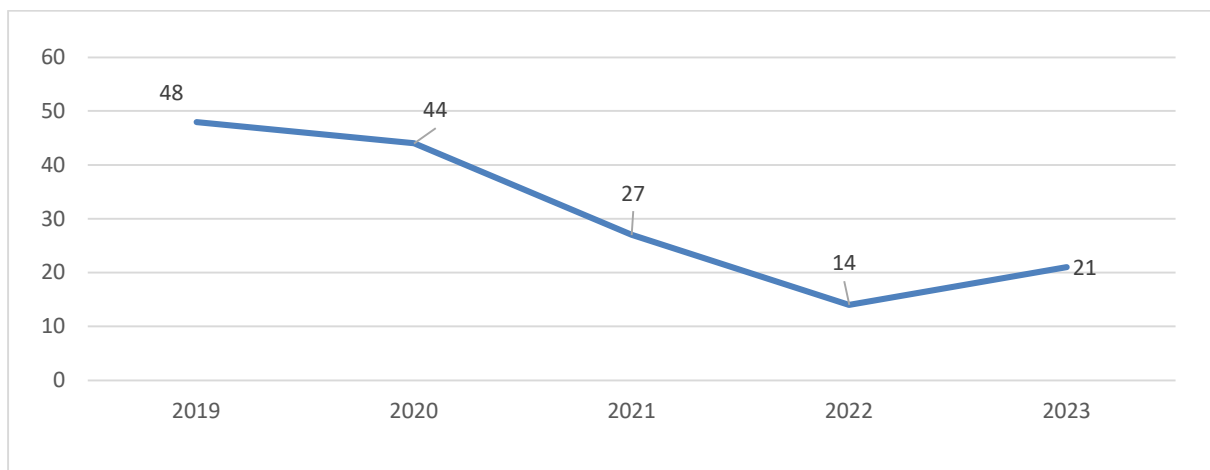
**REMEMBER: Your information may save lives. All information will be treated in strict confidence.**

***Trends within areas of continued concern***

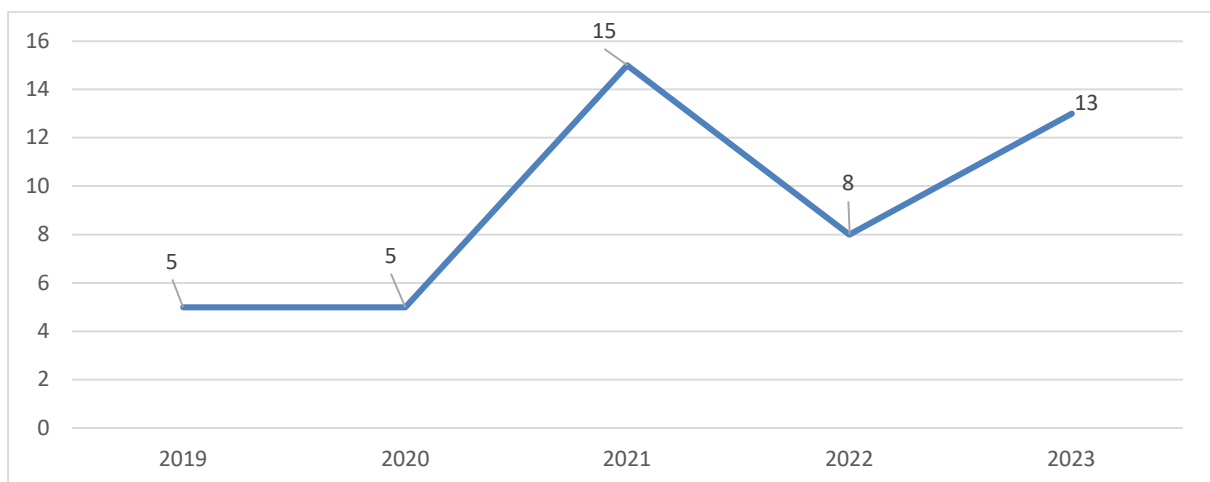
***CHART K: SE Asia – Singapore Straits – Total number of reported incidents***



***CHART L: West Africa – Gulf of Guinea – Total number of reported incidents***



***CHART M: Americas – Callao, Peru – Total number of reported incidents***



## **TRENDS**

Ninety-nine incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships were reported to the IMB Piracy Reporting Centre (PRC) in the first nine months of 2023. This compares to 90 incidents in the same period last year.

Perpetrators were successful in gaining access to vessels in 89% of overall incidents, broken down as 85 vessels boarded, nine attempted attacks, three hijacked and two fired upon. In many cases, vessels were either at anchor or steaming when boarded, with most incidents occurring during the hours of darkness.

Weapons, guns, and knives were wielded by criminals in 47 incidents. Though these are amongst the lowest reports since in three decades, violence to crew continues with 69 crew taken hostage, 14 kidnapped, eight threatened, three injured and one assaulted.

The risk to crew, however petty or opportunistic the incident, remains real.

In the first nine months of 2023, 21 incidents have been reported in the Gulf of Guinea region compared to 14 for the same period in 2022. Seventeen incidents fall under the definition of Armed Robbery and four as Piracy. The IMB PRC is concerned about this increasing trend with 54 crew taken hostage, 14 crew kidnapped and two crew reported injured in this region. On 22 July 2023 a fishing vessel with 23 crew onboard was hijacked by 13 armed pirates around 18nm off Freetown, Sierra Leone. The IMB commends the efforts of the Liberian coast guard, which located the hijacked fishing vessel off Monrovia. After an exchange of fire, the coast guard secured the vessel. All crew were reported safe. Two pirates were apprehended. The 14 crew kidnapped, three vessels hijacked and two vessels fired upon in 2023 all occurred in this region. The IMB calls on the Regional Co-operations and Coastal Authorities to increase their efforts to safeguard seafarers and regional and international shipping and trade.

The number of reports from Callao anchorage in Peru has increased in the first nine months of 2023 to 13 compared to eight in the same period of 2022. Nine crew were taken hostage and an additional one each threatened and assaulted.

Incidents in the Singapore Straits continue to increase with 33 incidents reported to the IMB PRC, in the first nine months of 2023 compared to 31 in the same period last year. 25% of the 2023 incidents occurred in July and overall 31 vessels were successfully boarded. In most cases ship stores or properties were reported stolen. Five crew were taken hostage and a further two threatened. The IMB PRC believes there is a high degree of under reporting as well as late reporting from these waters. The Centre encourages Masters to report all incidents as early as possible so that local authorities are able to identify, investigate and apprehend the perpetrators. It also allows the IMB to provide a more accurate assessment of the risk in these waters. Fourteen vessels over 80,000dwt were boarded. Considering the navigational challenges of the Singapore Straits, even low-level opportunistic incidents, could potentially increase the risk to safe navigation. The IMB urges the littoral states to increase patrols as a means of deterring the criminals.

The IMB recorded an increase in the number of incidents from the Indonesian Archipelago, with 12 incidents reported in 2023 compared to 10 for the same period in 2022 and seven in 2021. Knives were sighted in five of the 12 reported incidents.

Since 1991 the IMB Piracy Reporting Centre's 24-hour manned center remains a single point of contact to report the crimes of piracy and armed robbery. The Centre has not only assisted ships in a timely manner, it provides the maritime industry, response agencies and governments with transparent data – received directly from the Master of the vessel under attack - or its owners.

The IMB PRC's prompt forwarding of reports and liaison with response agencies, its broadcasts to shipping via GMDSS Safety Net Services and email alerts to CSOs, all provided free of cost, has helped the response against piracy and armed robbery and the security of seafarers globally.

## **OBSERVATIONS**

Narrations of the 99 attacks for 01 January to 30 September 2023 are listed on pages 30 to 47. The following serious incidents, in chronological sequence are described in more detail.

### **Cameroon:**

On 30 June 2023, a Panama flagged General Cargo ship, MV Oya 1, was boarded by armed persons while at anchor at position Latitude 04:00.05 North and Longitude 009:38.00 East at Douala Anchorage, Cameroon.

The armed persons boarded the anchored general cargo vessel, kidnapped five crew members and escaped. Alarm raised and a patrol boat came to assist. Remaining crew reported safe.

### **Gabon:**

On 02 May 2023, a Marshall Islands flagged Bulk Carrier, MV Grebe Bulker, was boarded by unknown persons while anchored at position Latitude 00:18.4 North and Longitude 009:24.3 at Owendo Inner Anchorage, Gabon, at approximately 0030 UTC.

The Chief Officer onboard the anchored ship noticed that the door to the Master's cabin was damaged, opened and the Master missing. The ship's safe was also opened with contents missing. On searching the ship, it was discovered that the Second Officer and Third Officer were also missing, and their cabin doors also damaged and opened. The incident was immediately reported to the local Authorities who boarded the ship for investigations. Later, the CSO confirmed that all three crew were kidnapped and safely released on 21 May 2023.

### **Ivory Coast:**

On 10 April 2023, a Singapore flagged Product Tanker, MT Success 9, was approached, boarded and hijacked by pirates while underway at position Latitude 00:06.9 North and Longitude 004:34.0 West, around 307nm SSW of Abidjan, Ivory Coast, at approximately 1350 UTC.

Around twelve pirates wearing ski masks and gloves and armed with guns attacked and hijacked the tanker. All communications with the tanker were thereafter lost. The pirates managed to self-navigate the tanker. On being notified of the incident, the IMB Piracy Reporting Centre immediately informed the regional and French Authorities in the Gulf of Guinea. A missing tanker message was also broadcasted to all ships to lookout for the tanker. Position updates and all information received from all sources were communicated with the relevant Authorities and Agencies for their coordination. On 15 April 2023, a French Naval Asset located the tanker which was subsequently escorted to a safe port by an Ivory Coast Guard patrol boat. It was discovered that the pirates had destroyed the tanker navigational equipment. The crew were tied with cable ties and kept hostage and part of the oil cargo was stolen.

### **Sierra Leone:**

On 05 July 2023, a Turkish flagged Fishing Vessel, Hacı Erdogan, was approached and boarded by pirates while underway at position Latitude 08:53 North and Longitude 013:31 West, around 14.20nm WSW of Yelibuya Island, Sierra Leone, at approximately 0355 UTC.

Eight armed pirates attacked and boarded the fishing vessel engaged in fishing activities. The pirates destroyed the cameras onboard the vessel and other communication equipment. Before escaping, they stole valuables and shot the Captain. Authorities was informed and a naval patrol team was dispatched to the location to assist. The Fishing Vessel managed to sail into Freetown Port and the Captain was hospitalized and underwent surgical treatment.

On 22 July 2023, a Chinese Fishing Vessel, Shenghai2, was approached, boarded and hijacked by pirates while underway at position Latitude 08:22 North and Longitude 013:32 West, around 18nm SW of Freetown, Sierra Leone, at approximately 0500 UTC.

The IMB Piracy Reporting Centre received information from Regional Authorities that 13 masked pirates armed with guns attacked and hijacked the Fishing Vessel and took hostage all 23 crews. The Liberian Coast Guard located the fishing vessel off Monrovia, Liberia. After an exchange of gunfire between the pirates and the Coast Guard, the fishing vessel and crews were rescued. Two pirates were detained while others managed to escape.

**The Congo:**

On 25 March 2023, a Liberian flagged Product Tanker, MT Monjasa Reformer, was approached, boarded and hijacked by pirates while underway at position Latitude 05:29.3 South and Longitude 009:34.0 East, around 144nm WSW of pointe Noire, The Congo, at approximately 2239 UTC.

On being notified of the incident, the IMB Piracy Reporting Centre immediately informed the regional authorities in the Gulf of Guinea and the French authorities to assist the tanker and its crew members. The Owners had lost communication with their vessel and a missing tanker message was broadcast to ships at sea. On 30 March 2023, a French navy warship intercepted the tanker Off Bonny, Nigeria. Six crew were reported kidnapped. The tanker was escorted to a safe port.