(U) WORLDWIDE: Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) Report, 13 January – 10 February 2021

10 February 2021

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1. (U) Scope Note

(U) The Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) message provides information on threats to merchant vessels, the shipping industry, and other maritime stakeholders worldwide in the last 30 days. This report is produced primarily to inform merchant mariners and naval forces.

2. (U) Warnings and Advisories:

A. **(U) IMB/PRC/Alert – 013 – 2021. TO ALL SHIPS TRANSITING IN / OFF GABON WATERS**. **General information from Gabon authority.** Alert issued: 100520 UTC FEB 2021. Following the resurgence of pirate attacks in the area of the Gulf of Guinea in general, and in waters under Gabonese jurisdiction in particular, and by virtue of the provisions of section a/4 of the international code for the safety of ships and port facilities (ISPS code). The directorates of said code in the Gabonese Republic, inform the entire national maritime community that the ISPS safety level is raised to level 2 (MARSEC level 2) until further notice. The ship security officers (SSO), the company security officers (CSO), the port facility security officers (PFSO), as well as the heads of agencies representing foreign armaments in Gabon are responsible for the application and communication of this measure to all ships in Gabonese waters and to port facilities intended to provide services to them. The application of the operating level (level 2) measures will be maintained until a further notice and back to normal operating level (level 1) of ships and port facilities is advised by the Gabon authority. Pirate activity has increased in these waters and all ships are advised to remain vigilant and maintain strict anti-piracy watch and measures. Four vessels have been attacked within 3 days. A gang of pirates may be operating in these waters. Ships are advised to stay more than 250 NM from coast when drifting/passing and go for direct berthing if possible. Do not drift near the coast. Report all attacks and suspicious sightings to local authorities and to the IMB piracy reporting center as per IMO Cir 1334. IMB piracy reporting center 24 hours anti-piracy helpline +603 2031 0014 fax: +603 2078 5769. Whatsapp or Telegram at +601126593057. Photograph or video submission encouraged. Email: imbkl@icc-ccs.org / piracy@icc-ccs.org

3. (U) **Summary:**

A. (U) SINGAPORE: On 9 February, two robbers boarded a barge towed by China-flagged tug boat NING HAI TUO in the eastbound lane of the Traffic Separation Scheme.

B. (U) CONGO: On 9 February, robbers boarded a container vessel at Pointe Noire Anchorage Area.

C. (U) GULF OF GUINEA: On 9 February, pirates boarded the Panama-flagged tanker MARIA E approximately 113 NM northwest of Neves, Sao Tome and Principe.

D. (U) GABON: On 8 February, robbers attempted to board the drifting Bahamas-flagged tanker SEAKING approximately 56 NM southwest of Sao Tome.

E. (U) GABON: On 7 February, pirates hijacked the Gabon-flagged fishing vessel LIAN PENG YU 809 approximately 81 NM southeast of Ana Chaves, Sao Tome and Principe.

F. (U) SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE: On 6 February, pirates boarded the Marshall Islands-flagged tanker SEA PHANTOM about 91 NM west of Bata, Equatorial Guinea.

G. (U) NIGERIA: On 4 February, a container vessel was approached while underway approximately 63 NM southwest of Bonny, Nigeria.

H. (U) PERU: On 4 February, robbers boarded a vehicle carrier anchored at Callao Anchorage.

I. (U) SAINT MARTIN: On 4 February, one robber tried to steal a raised dinghy from the davits of a sailing yacht anchored near the Fort Louis Marina in Marigot Bay.

4. (U) **Details: Monthly Incidents by Region**

(U) This section lists reports of active violence against shipping, credible threats to shipping, or the potential for a situation to develop into a direct threat to shipping over the last 30 days. Every effort is made to ensure that incidents are not double-counted. In the event that double-counting is detected, or an incident is later found to be different than initially reported, an explanation of the cancellation of the inaccurate report will be made in at least one message prior to dropping the erroneous report.

A. (U) **NORTH AMERICA:** No current incidents to report.

B. (U) **CENTRAL AMERICA – CARIBBEAN – SOUTH AMERICA:**

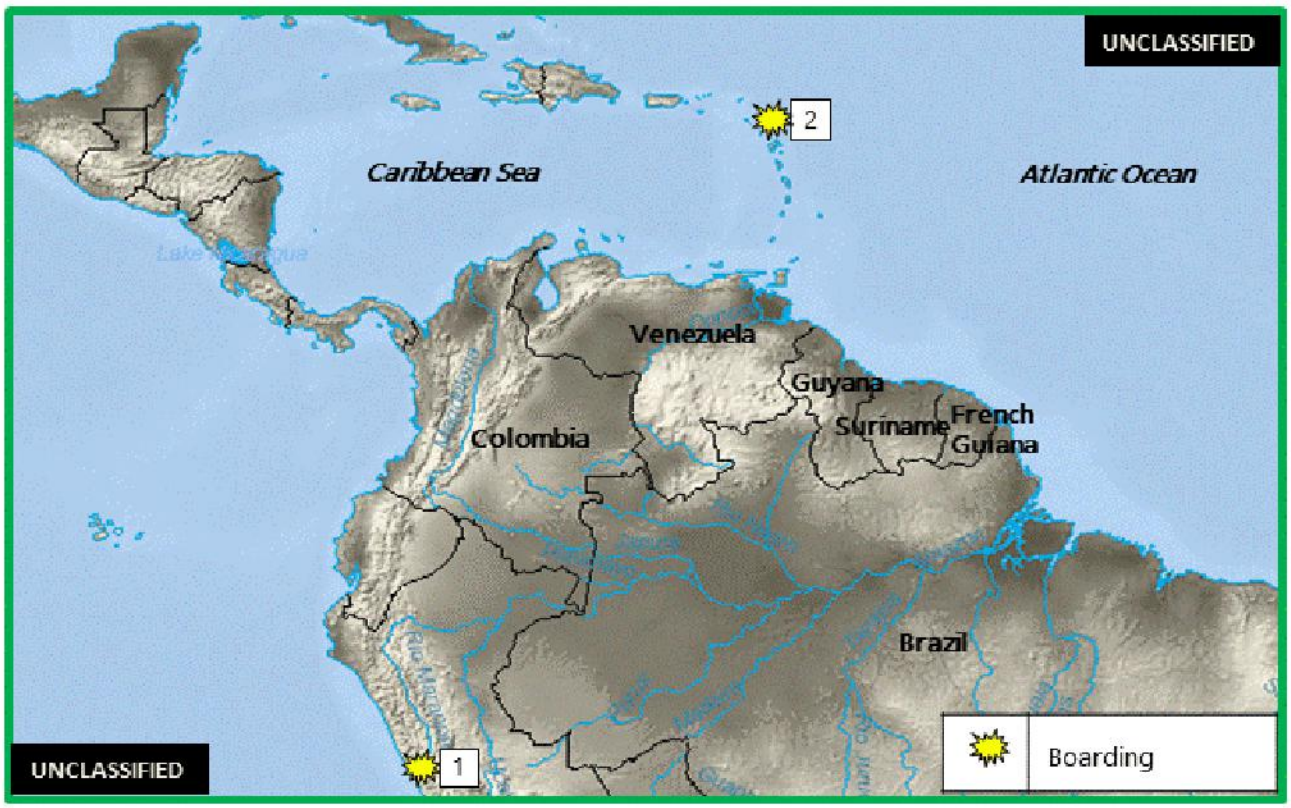


Figure 1. Central America – Caribbean – South America Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) PERU: On 4 February, robbers boarded a vehicle carrier anchored at Callao Anchorage, near position 12:01S – 077:13W. Robbers were able to board the vessel, steal two mooring ropes from the fore peak store and escape unnoticed. The incident was reported to the harbor master and local police. (Clearwater Dynamics)

2. (U) SAINT MARTIN: On 4 February, one robber tried to steal a raised dinghy from the davits of a sailing yacht anchored near the Fort Louis Marina in Marigot Bay. The yacht owner heard noises on deck and confronted the robber, who then jumped overboard and swam to shore. (www.safetyandsecuritynet.org)

3. (U) ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA: On 31 January, robbers boarded a catamaran anchored in Falmouth Harbour. The captain found the salon door of the catamaran half open. Upon walking into the aft cockpit a man was found boarding a kayak just under the hoisted tender. The captain confronted the man to ask his business. No reply was heard, when asked again the man said he was fishing as he paddled away. Wet footprints were found in the salon and at the top of the stairs leading to each hull where persons were sleeping. A review of the yachts contents was conducted and nothing was found missing. (www.safetyandsecuritynet.org)

4. (U) ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA: On 31 January, a second event occurred where robbers boarded a sailing yacht also anchored in Falmouth Harbour. The crew found the salon floor soaked in sea water and cash missing from the top of the chart table. No other items were taken. A police report was made. (www.safetyandsecuritynet.org)

5. (U) SAINT MARTIN: On 26 January, robbers boarded a sailing yacht anchored in Simpson Bay Lagoon. The handle from the bilge pump was used to force the padlock from the companionway hatch. The boat was methodically searched and laptops and other electronics, fishing gear, flare gun/shells, and large bolt/cable cutters were stolen. (www.safetyandsecuritynet.org)

6. (U) GRENADA: On 17 January, robbers stole a locked 20-HP outboard motor from its dinghy at the sand spit near the head of Chemin Bay. Local police and the coast guard were notified. (www.safetyandsecuritynet.org)

7. (U) SAINT MARTIN: On 14 January, robbers boarded a sailing yacht moored near Explorer Island, Simpson Bay lagoon. Laptops and electronics were stolen. (www.safetyandsecuritynet.org)

D. (U) **NORTHERN EUROPE – BALTIC:**

1. (U) THE NETHERLANDS: On 16 January, customs officers in Rotterdam discovered two separate shipments of cocaine, totaling approximately 1,069 kilograms. The first shipment of 839 kilograms was found in a shipping container from Brazil with two old Volkswagen vans. The second shipment of 230 kilograms of cocaine was found in a shipping container full of beer. (www.nltimes.nl)

E. (U) **MEDITERRANEAN – BLACK SEA:** No current incidents to report.

F. (U) **WEST AFRICA:**

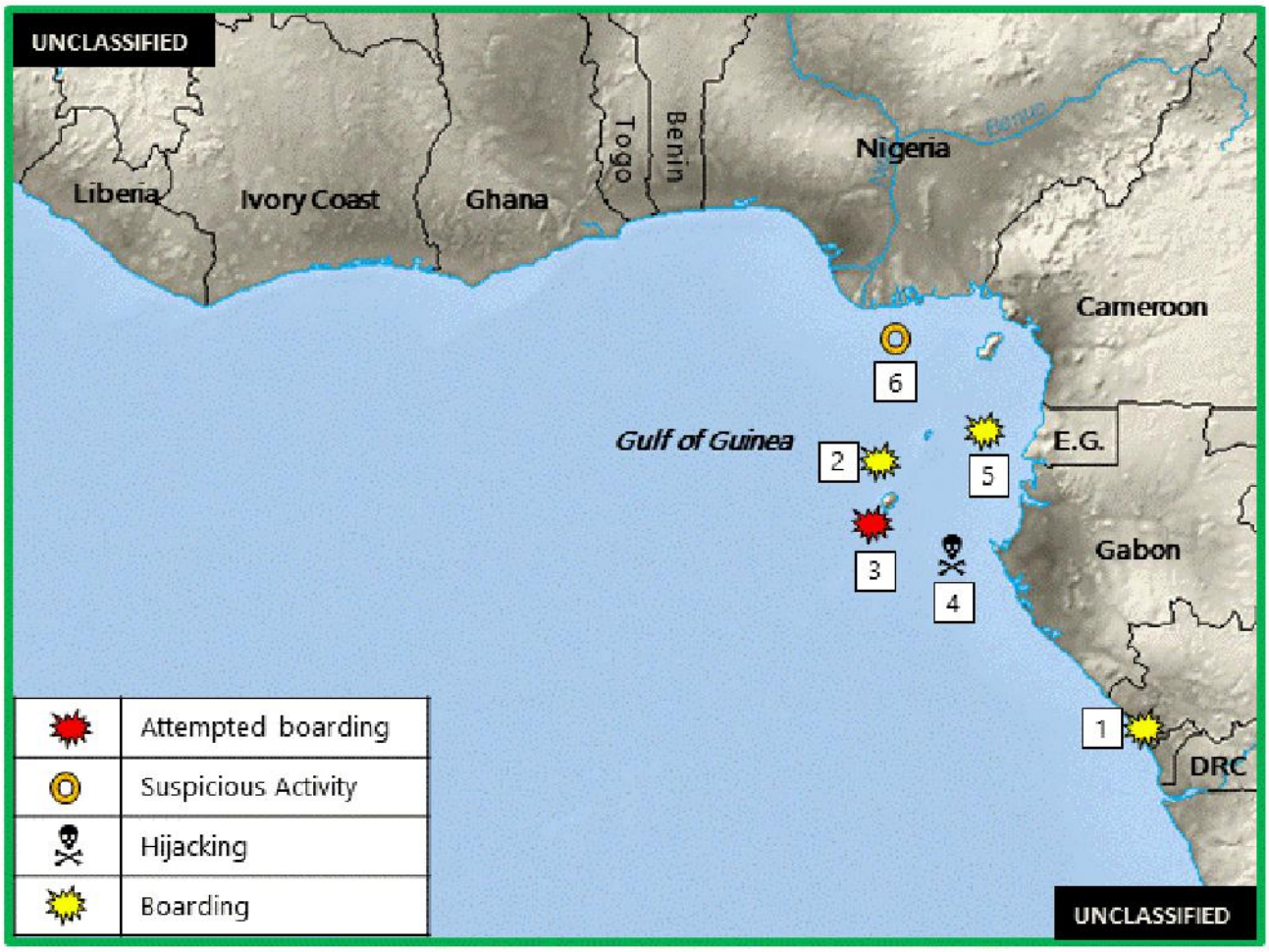


Figure 2. West Africa Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) CONGO: On 9 February, robbers boarded a container vessel at Pointe Noire Anchorage Area, near position 04:43S – 011:45E. During routine rounds, a duty crewman spotted three robbers, one armed with a knife. The alarm was then raised and the robbers escaped. Upon a search of the vessel, it was found that one blue polypropylene line was missing from a mooring station. (Clearwater Dynamics)

2. (U) GULF OF GUINEA: On 9 February, pirates boarded the Panama-flagged tanker MARIA E approximately 113 NM northwest of Neves, Sao Tome and Principe, near position 01:35N – 005:07E in the Joint Development Zone along the maritime Nigeria – Sao Tome and Principe border. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics; Dryad Global)

3. (U) GULF OF GUINEA: On 8 February, crew onboard the drifting Bahamas-flagged tanker SEAKING saw a mother vessel launching a skiff with four persons, which approached the tanker at a high speed approximately 56 NM southwest of Sao Tome island. The master raised the alarm, increased speed, took evasive maneuvers, and non-essential crew mustered in the citadel. The skiff managed to come alongside, but the pirates were unable to board due to hardening measures taken by the master. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics; Dryad Global; www.defenceweb.co.za)

4. (U) EQUATORIAL GUINEA: On 7 February, pirates hijacked the Gabon-flagged fishing vessel LIAN PENG YU 809 approximately 45 NM northeast of Pagalu Island. The ship was carrying a crew of 14 Chinese nationals. The Maritime Domain Awareness for Trade – Gulf of Guinea (MDAT-GoG) have confirmed that the hijacked fishing vessel is now being used as a mothership in the area of other incidents reported on 8 February and remains a threat to merchant shipping in the area. The vessel is a tuna fishing vessel with a blue hull and white superstructure. Any sightings of the vessel should be reported to the MDAT-GoG. (MDAT-GOG; Clearwater Dynamics; Dryad Global)

5. (U) SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE: On 6 February, pirates boarded the Marshall Islands-flagged tanker SEA PHANTOM about 50 NM north-northeast from Principe Island, near position 02:00N – 008:15E. Alert crew noticed the pirates and retreated into the citadel. The pirates damaged communication and navigation equipment. Upon hearing of the incident the IMB PRC immediately alerted and liaised with regional authorities including a Portuguese Navy warship. The crew attempted to navigate the tanker to rendezvous with dispatched Cameroonian and Equatorial Guinean patrol boats. The ship reached the port of Malabo, in Equatorial Guinea, on the afternoon of 7 February. All crew reported safe. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics; Dryad Global; ThemaNews; www.maritime-executive.com; www.defenceweb.co.za)

6. (U) NIGERIA: On 4 February, a container ship was approached while underway approximately 63 NM southwest of Bonny, Nigeria, near position 03:31N – 006:31E. One speedboat with up to seven persons onboard came to within 1 NM of the container ship before aborting the approach. No ladders or weapons were sighted. The vessel and crew are reported as safe. (Clearwater Dynamics)

7. (U) GHANA: On 1 February, robbers boarded a bulk carrier anchored at Tema Anchorage. A duty crewman on routine rounds found that eight sounding pipe plugs had been stolen. The robbers boarded the vessel unnoticed. (Clearwater Dynamics)

8. (U) GHANA: On 30 January, pirates boarded the Marshall Islands-flagged bulk carrier ROWAYTON EAGLE approximately 200 NM southeast of Accra. The crew mustered in the citadel. After failing to breach the citadel, the pirates left. The vessel subsequently was joined by a Nigerian Security Escort Vessel and escorted into Nigerian waters. (Clearwater Dynamics; www.gcaptain.com; Dryad Global)

9. (U) NIGERIA: On 30 January, kidnappers released six Ukrainian sailors, kidnapped from Cameroon-flagged bulk carrier STEVIA on 16 December 2020, after 50 days in captivity. (www.yenisafak.com/en; Clearwater Dynamics)

10. (U) NIGERIA: On 29 January, kidnappers released five sailors, abducted from Cameroon-flagged general cargo ship CAP SAINT GEORGES on 10 December 2020, after 45 days in captivity. (Clearwater Dynamics; Dryad Global)
5. (U) GULF OF GUINEA: On 26 January, a skiff approached the Hong Kong-flagged tanker SEAFRONTIER approximately 163 NM southwest of Agbami oil field near position 01:50N – 003:25E. The vessel was reportedly under a security escort when the approach occurred. (Dryad Global)

11. (U) SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE: On 23 January, pirates boarded the Liberia-flagged container ship MOZART approximately 98 NM northwest of Sao Tome near position 01:04N – 005:04E while transiting from Lagos, Nigeria, to Cape Town, South Africa. Pirates managed to breach the citadel and kidnap 15 Turkish crewmen. One Azerbaijani crew member was killed during the incident. Pirates left three crew members onboard the vessel when they departed. The vessel is now safely docked in Port Gentil, Gabon. (IMB; Dryad Global, Clearwater Dynamics; Xinhua; Dhaka Tribune Online; www.fleetmon.com; www.gcaptain.com; www.maritime-executive.com)

12. (U) NIGERIA: On 21 January, a small craft approached an underway container vessel approximately 64 NM southwest of Bonny near position 03:31N – 005:29E. A small craft came to within 0.3 NM of the container vessel before aborting the approach. (Clearwater Dynamics)

13. (U) CONGO: On 18 January, three robbers boarded a refrigerated cargo vessel anchored at Banana Anchorage, near position 06:02S – 012:21E. A duty crew member spotted the robbers in the forecastle store room and informed the officer of the watch. When the crew raised the alarm, the robbers fled. A subsequent search of the vessel by the crew identified broken locks on both the paint store room and CO_2 room. The robbers stole four cans of paint and twenty lead seals from CO2 cylinders, including the pilot cylinder. (Clearwater Dynamics)

G. (U) **ARABIAN GULF:**

1. (U) SAUDI ARABIA: On 29 January, customs authorities announced they had seized 14.4 million Captagon pills hidden in a shipment of wood panels in King Abdul Aziz Port. (www.arabnews.com)

H. (U) INDIAN OCEAN – EAST AFRICA – RED SEA:

1. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 14 January, a bulk carrier was approached by a skiff approximately 58 NM southwest of Aden, Yemen, near position 12:06N – 044:25E. During the incident, the crew sounded the alarm and mustered. At a distance of 0.2 NM, the onboard security team identified weapons and a ladder in the skiff and fired warning shots. The skiff subsequently ceased its approach and moved away. (IMB)

I. (U) **EAST ASIA – SOUTHEAST ASIA:**

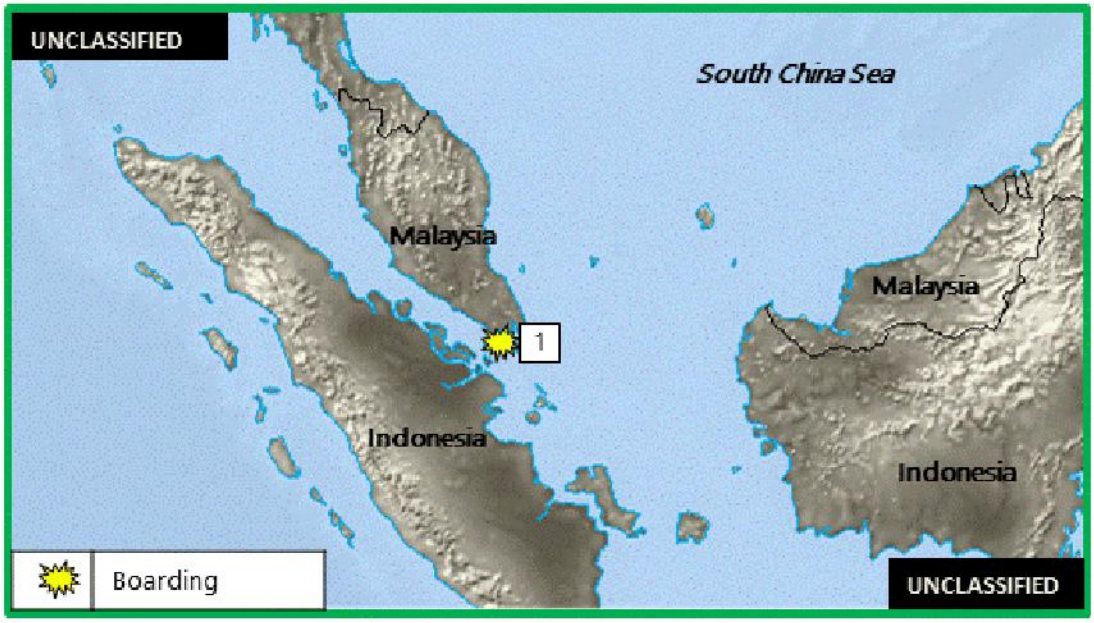


Figure 3. East Asia – Southeast Asia Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) INDONESIA: On 9 February, two robbers boarded a China-flagged barge DAQIA HAIYU being towed by China-flagged tug boat NING HAI TUO in the eastbound lane of the Traffic Separation Scheme, near position 01:05N – 103:34E. When the robbers realized they had been spotted by the crew of the tug, they made their escape with some shackles stolen from the barge. The incident was reported to both the Singapore Coast Guard and the Republic of Singapore Navy's Maritime Security Force as well as the Indonesian authorities. (Clearwater Dynamics)

2. (U) INDONESIA: On 31 January, two robbers boarded the Bahamas-flagged LNG tanker SURAYA AKI while anchored in Belawan Anchorage, near position 03:56N – 098:45E. Both the shipping company and the Belawan Vessel Traffic Information System were informed and all crew retreated to the citadel. Indonesian marine police were dispatched to the tanker and conducted a full search, which confirmed the robbers had escaped with items of ship's stores. (ReCAAP; Clearwater Dynamics)

3. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 30 January, two robbers boarded the Singapore-flagged container ship KOTA NEBULA while anchored at General Santos City, near position 06:56N – 125:09E. The perpetrators were sighted on the starboard lifeboat deck. The general alarm was raised. All crew was notified of the perpetrators and their location via the PA system. The crew proceeded to the starboard lifeboat deck. The perpetrators jumped into the water and fled in a small motor boat. The crew was not injured. A search was conducted, and two nozzles and two fire hydrant caps were reported missing. (ReCAAP)

4. (U) INDONESIA: On 29 January, three robbers armed with knives, boarded the Liberia-flagged general cargo ship VANTAGE WAVE approximately 5.8 NM northwest of Tanjung Pergam, Bintan Island, in the eastbound lane of the Singapore Strait, near position 01:16N – 104:18E. A search of the ship was conducted. Nothing was stolen and the crew was safe. Singapore, Malaysian, and Indonesian authorities were notified. (IMB; ReCAAP; Clearwater Dynamics)

5. (U) INDONESIA: On 28 January, ten robbers armed with knives, boarded the Liberia-flagged bulk carrier ELVIA approximately 6 NM northwest of Tanjung Pergam, Bintan Island, in the eastbound lane of the Singapore Strait, near position 01:16N – 104:16E. A search of the ship was conducted. Nothing was stolen and the crew was safe. Singapore, Malaysian, and Indonesian authorities were notified. (IMB; ReCAAP; Clearwater Dynamics)
6. (U) MALAYSIA: On 25 January, five robbers boarded the Barbados-flagged bulk carrier ARK ROYAL underway in the Singapore Strait near position 01:16N – 104:15E. A subsequent search of the vessel by the crew determined the robbers had fled empty-handed (Clearwater Dynamics)

7. (U) INDONESIA: On 24 January, the Indonesian Maritime Security Agency announced that they had detained two vessels, Iran-flagged tanker HORSE and Panama-flagged tanker FREA in Pontianak waters, West Kalimantan. The ships were held on suspicion of illegally transferring oil in Indonesian waters. In a statement, a spokesperson stated: "The tankers, first detected at 5:30 a.m. local time on 23 January, concealed their identity by not showing their national flags, turning off the automatic identification systems, and did not respond to a radio call." Indonesian authorities escorted the vessels to Batam Island in Riau Island Province for further investigation. (www.mehrnews.com; www.fleetmon.com; Reuters)

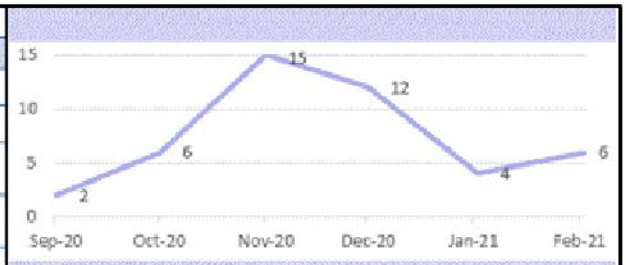
J. (U) **INDIAN SUBCONTINENT:**

1. (U) INDIA: On 29 January, robbers boarded a tanker anchored off Kandla Anchorage, near position 22:55N – 070:10E. A duty crewman spotted three robbers boarding the vessel. The alarm was raised, which resulted in the perpetrators escaping empty-handed. (Clearwater Dynamics)

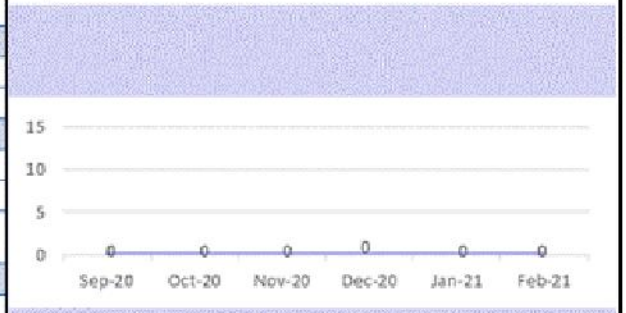
K. (U) **AUSTRALIA** – **NEW ZEALAND** – **PACIFIC OCEAN AREA:** No current incidents to report.

5. (U) **Appendix A: Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea Statistics and Trends**

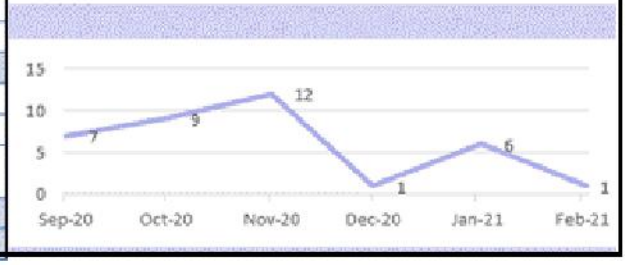
(U) Gulf of Guinea					
Event	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Hijackings	2	6	4	1	1
Kidnappings	30	28	32	27	1
Hijacking/Kidnapping Combination	0	4	2	3	0
Attacks/Attempted Boardings	35	44	39	25	3
Boardings	53	64	55	42	5
Total	**120**	**146**	**132**	**98**	**10**



(U) Horn of Africa					
Event	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Hijackings	2	0	0	0	0
Kidnappings	1	0	0	0	0
Attacks, Boardings and Attempts	3	2	2	2	0
Total	**6**	**2**	**2**	**2**	**0**



(U) Southeast Asia					
Event	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Hijackings	3	1	0	0	0
Kidnappings	4	3	4	1	0
Attacks, Boardings and Attempts	95	80	92	95	7
Total	**102**	**84**	**96**	**96**	**7**



6. (U) **Appendix B: Definitions and Sourcing**

A. (U) **Definitions:** In order to promote consistent use of accurate terms of reference, we use the following definitions to describe a range of criminal antishipping activity and impediments to safe navigation in our worldwide reporting and analysis.

- (U) **Attempted Boarding** – Close approach or hull-to-hull contact with report that boarding paraphernalia were employed or visible in the approaching boat.
- (U) **Blocking** – Hampering safe navigation, docking, or undocking of a vessel as a means of protest.
- (U) **Boarding** – Unauthorized embarkation of a vessel by persons not part of its complement without successfully taking control of the vessel.
- (U) **Fired Upon** – Weapons discharged at or toward a vessel.
- (U) **Hijacking** – Unauthorized seizure and retention of a vessel by persons not part of its complement.
- (U) **Kidnapping** – Unauthorized forcible removal of persons belonging to the vessel from it.
- (U) **Hijacking/Kidnapping Combination** – Unauthorized seizure and retention of a vessel by persons not part of its complement who forcefully remove crew members from vessel when disembarking.
- (U) **Robbery** – Theft from a vessel or from persons aboard the vessel.
- (U) **Suspicious Approach** – All other unexplained activity in close proximity of an unknown vessel.

B. (U) **Sourcing:** ONI derives information in this report primarily from government agencies, piracy reporting centers, maritime security companies, and open press.

(U) **ICOD:** 10 February 2021

(U) The Weekly Piracy Update (WPU) and Worldwide Threat to Shipping reports are posted weekly on the ONI Intelligence Portal: https://www.oni.navy.mil/News/Shipping-Threat-Reports/