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Shipping Advisory 1/2010

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Information-Sharing Partners

**ADVISORY TO SHIPPING ON IMPROVING SECURITY MEASURES WHILE  
TRANSITING THE MALACCA STRAIT**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. The **RSN** has received indication that a terrorist group is planning attacks on oil tankers in the Malacca Strait. The terrorists' intent is probably to achieve widespread publicity and showcase that it remains a viable group. However, this information **does not preclude** possible attacks on other large vessels with dangerous cargo. The RSN has initiated information sharing to facilitate sense-making and operation coordination with our regional partners.
2. IFC recommends ships to strengthen their onboard security measures to prevent a successful terrorist attack and to adopt community reporting to increase awareness and strengthen the safety of all fellow seafarers.
3. In past cases of successful terrorist attacks on tankers, smaller vessels such as dinghies and speedboats were used. Analysis of past incidents of sea robberies and piracy in the Malacca Strait have also revealed small fishing vessels such as sampans were used to board victim ships. IFC has compiled a set of relevant background information on Malacca Strait pertaining to fishing locations and type of fishing vessels that are likely to be encountered in the Malacca Strait to aid shipping to strengthen awareness of the maritime domain they are operating in.

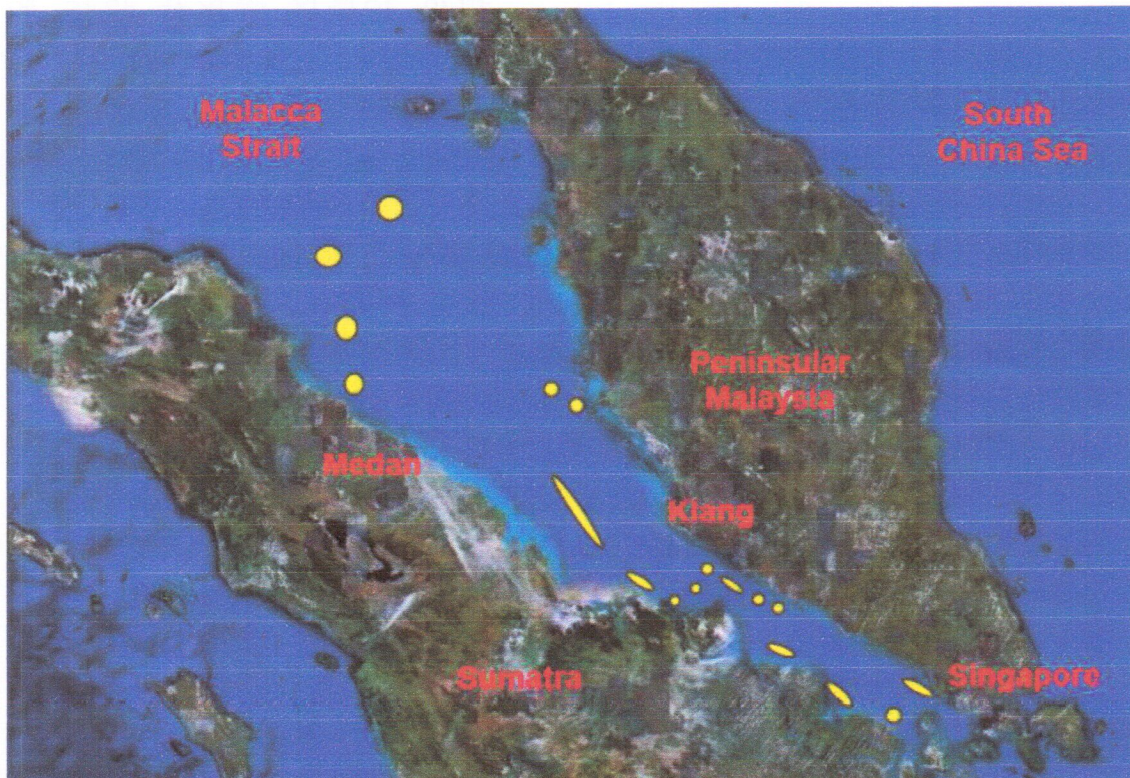
**FISHING CONCENTRATION AREAS/ CHARACTERISTICS OF A FISHING VESSEL**

4. Fishing vessels are common in the Malacca Strait. There are numerous fishing concentration areas and the higher density areas are:
  - a. In the vicinity of One Fathom Bank;
  - b. Coast of Melaka;
  - c. Off Pulau Rupert;



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- d. Off Pulau Bengkalis;
- e. Off Pulau Sembilan;
- f. Off Pulau Pangkor;
- g. Off Kepulauan Aruah;
- h. Off Pulau Sinaboi;
- i. Off Pulau Kukup; and
- j. Off Pulau Karimunbesar.



Graph 1 Estimated location of known fishing concentration zones

5. These fishing vessels are not a threat but may be exploited by perpetrators with ill intents for acts of terrorism. It is therefore necessary to know how to differentiate between a fishing vessel and a fishing vessel that behaves abnormally.

6. The fishing vessels that operate in Malacca Strait are wooden sampans typically about 3m long and with no more than two fishermen onboard. It is possible that these sampans may be unlit even at night. Ship masters are advised to steer clear of these sampans for navigational safety and security purposes.



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### RECOMMENDED SECURITY TREATMENT AND PREVENTIVE MEASURES

7. Ship masters are also recommended to adopt a Ship Security Plan (SSP)<sup>1</sup> measures similar to that of a transit through the Gulf of Aden. These measures include but shall not be limited to:

a. Watchkeeping and Enhanced Vigilance. Ship masters should ensure additional lookouts and ensure that the watch team is provided with adequate visual aids to improve the effectiveness of the lookouts. Past violations of sea robbery have occurred during hours of darkness. Ship masters are encouraged to practice enhanced vigilance during these hours.

b. Sounding of Alarms. Sounding the alarms informs the crew that there might be a threat and demonstrates to the aggressor that the ship is aware of the potential danger.

c. Adequate Lighting. It is recommended that adequate lighting be provided onboard the ship with additional rear facing lighting on the poop deck. It is NOT recommended to switch off the navigation lights.

d. AIS Transponder. Regional military forces are keeping a keen eye for potential threats and it is recommended that ships keep their AIS transponder switched on to enable the maritime forces to monitor and ensure the safety of transiting ships.

e. Transit at Good Speed. It is recommended that ships transit at a good speed subjected to prevailing circumstances while adhering to navigational safety.

f. Securing of Potholes and Hatches. Ship masters are advised to ensure that the potholes and hatches are secured while transiting.

g. Avoid Fishing Concentrations. Ship masters are advised to avoid shipping concentrations whilst ensuring navigational safety.

h. Rigging of Water Hoses and Foam Monitors. The uses of waterspray and foam monitors have been found to be effective in deterring a potential aggressor. It is recommended that the water hoses be rigged and fixed in position and activated before the transiting. Manual operation is NOT recommended.

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<sup>1</sup> The UK Royal Navy's Maritime Trade Organisation (UK MTO) and the European Union Naval Force (EUNAVFOR) recommends the implementation of a SSP to be taken by ships to prevent a successful attack by pirates or terrorists employing similar modus operandi.

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### SHIPPING COMMUNITY REPORTING

8. While transiting Malacca Strait and Singapore Strait, ships are encouraged to furnish regular update of positional information to IFC at 4 to 8 hourly intervals. This will facilitate IFC to provide timely warning to ships should an impending threat is developing in the vicinity of the ship

9. Initial Report. It is recommended that the initial report adopt and consist of the following fields of information:

- a. Vessels name;
- b. International Radio Call Sign (IRCS);
- c. Flag;
- d. Number of crew and nationalities;
- e. Nationality of ship master;
- f. IMO number;
- g. Draft;
- h. MMSI;
- i. Inmarsat telephone number;
- j. Telex and fax number;
- k. Email address;
- l. Current position (at GMT), course and planned passage speed;
- m. Waypoints of planned track through Malacca Strait;
- n. Next port of call and ETA (at GMT);
- o. Last port of call;
- p. Name and address of ship owner/operator/charter; and
- q. Agent Name and email address at next port of call.

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10. Positional Updates. While transiting Malacca Strait and Singapore Strait, ships are encouraged to furnish regular update of positional information to IFC at 4 to 8 hourly intervals. This will facilitate IFC to provide timely warning to ships should an impending threat is developing in the vicinity of the ship. The positional update should consist of the following fields during the transit:

- a. Vessels name;
- b. IMO number;
- c. Current position (at GMT), course, speed;
- d. Any change to itinerary.

11. Reporting of Suspicious Activity. It is recommended that ships report in to IFC of any suspicious activity. The following fields are recommended:

- a. Ship's name, callsign and IMO number;
- b. Type of suspicious activity;
- c. Position of incident;
- d. Details of incident;
- e. Inmarsat number;
- f. Email address to be contacted by; and
- g. Date and Time of report (at GMT).

## IFC CONTACT INFORMATION

12. IFC can be contacted through the following means:

- a. Telephone: +65 9626 8965
- b. Email: [Information\\_fusion\\_centre@starnet.gov.sg](mailto:Information_fusion_centre@starnet.gov.sg)
- c. Fax: +65 6594 5734

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