

Latest developments from The Information Fusion Centre

IFC Strives for Stronger Collaboration with the Shipping Industry

Maritime security (MARSEC) requires collaborative efforts between the shipping industry, navies and coastguards to ensure a proactive approach to combat crimes in a constantly evolving security environment. Thus, a large contribution to IFC's successes is the strong linkages established with the shipping industry which allowed IFC to gain insights on industry's practices and MARSEC concerns so that IFC is able to share knowledge from a naval perspective to address such concerns. These are built over many years by exchanging MARSEC information and perspectives through initiatives such as targeted visits to shipping companies and the Shared Awareness Meetings, and strengthening practical cooperation and mutual understanding through company security drills and exercises.

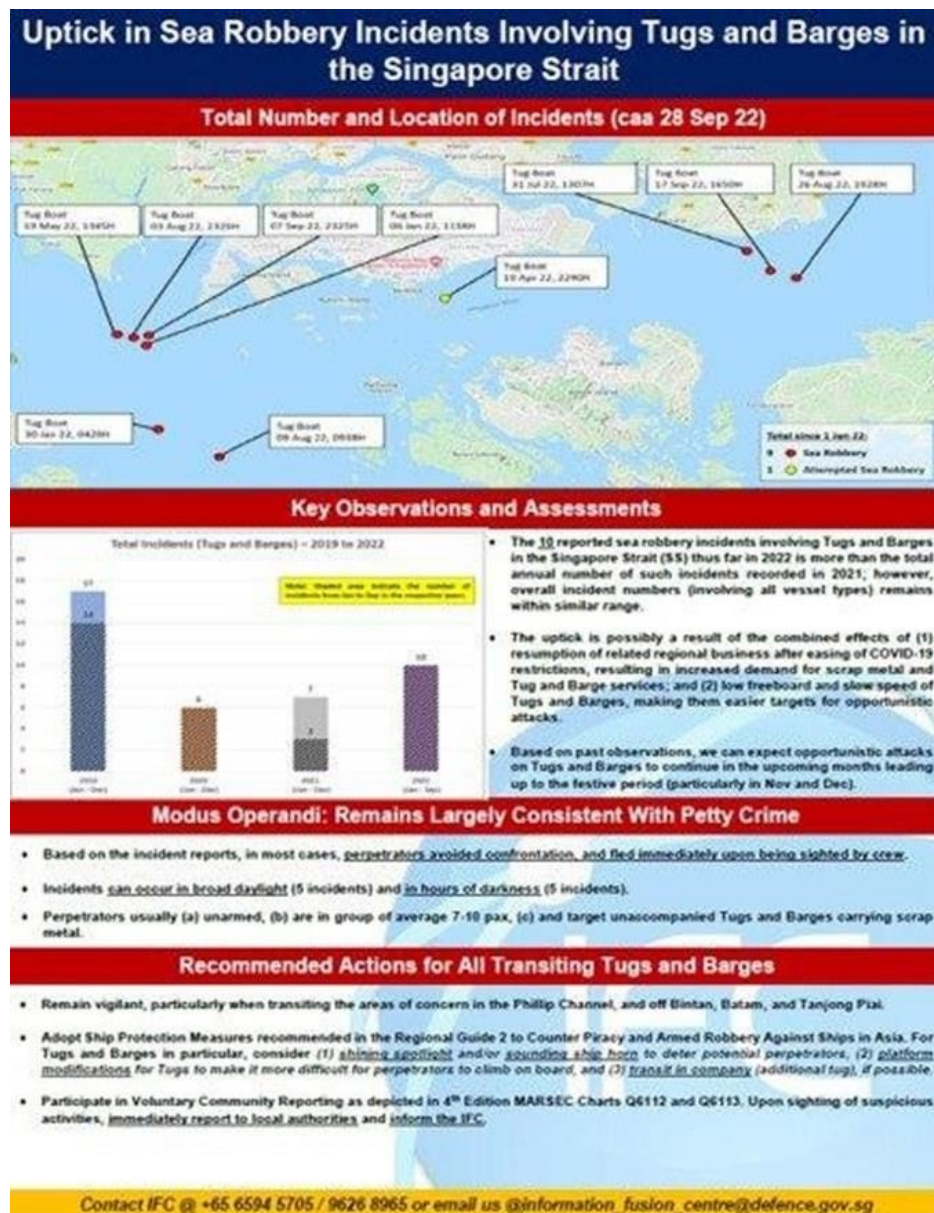
Bringing different stakeholders together to discuss MARSEC matters has many benefits. Not only does it clarify any misconceptions about how different parties respond to a MARSEC incident, it also sets expectations based on what the other party can offer. The IFC co-organised the 10th Regional MARSEC Practitioner Programme (RMPP) with the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) from 5 to 9 Sep 2022, which was physically attended by over 90 participants from 28 countries and for the first time, it involved participants from the shipping industry. The 10th RMPP was designed to promote interaction and build greater understanding between the shipping industry and the MARSEC agencies while enhancing professional knowledge for MARSEC practitioners. The participation of the shipping industry has certainly enriched the perspectives and broadened the scope of discussions.



2 - The 10th RMPP was attended by participants from the shipping industry, navies, coastguards and maritime agencies.

The IFC also actively promulgates advisories and guidance to the shipping industry to raise situational awareness. With the recent increase of incidents involving tugs and barges in the Singapore Strait, the

IFC came up with an infographic and spot commentary to highlight the trend, provide observations of the modus operandi of such crimes and share recommendations to ships transiting in the region.



3 - IFC infographics on increase in incidents involving tugs and barges in the Singapore Strait.

Another recent initiative is the IFC Bridge Card which serves to provide a quick reference guide for merchant ships during MARSEC incidents. The ISPS Code makes it mandatory for ships to implement specific measures to protect against MARSEC threats. More often than not, the Company Security Officer will establish a set of security measures for the ship master and crew to execute. The additional pressure on the ship master and crew to adhere to these measures while navigating through congested sea lanes may increase the chances of human error or lapse of judgment. Through feedback gathered from the industry, the IFC developed the bridge card to constantly remind the ship crew to remain vigilant when transiting areas of concern and to contact the IFC immediately during a MARSEC incident

or sightings of suspicious activities. The IFC will continue to work together with the shipping industry to understand their needs and concerns and develop products which meet the industry's requirements.



4 - The IFC Bridge Card was launched on 12 May 2022.

The IFC is a regional MARSEC info-sharing hub that was established in 2009 to collate and sense-make information concerning merchant shipping to provide awareness and pass on actionable information to its partners to cue operational responses. As of June 2022, the IFC had 19 ILOs from 18 countries deployed in the centre and had established worldwide linkages with 100 partners from 42 countries which include navies, coastguards, maritime agencies and influential shipping associations such as INTERPOL, UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime), Singapore Shipping Association (SSA). To find out more about IFC and access its products, pls access website <https://www.ifc.org.sg>