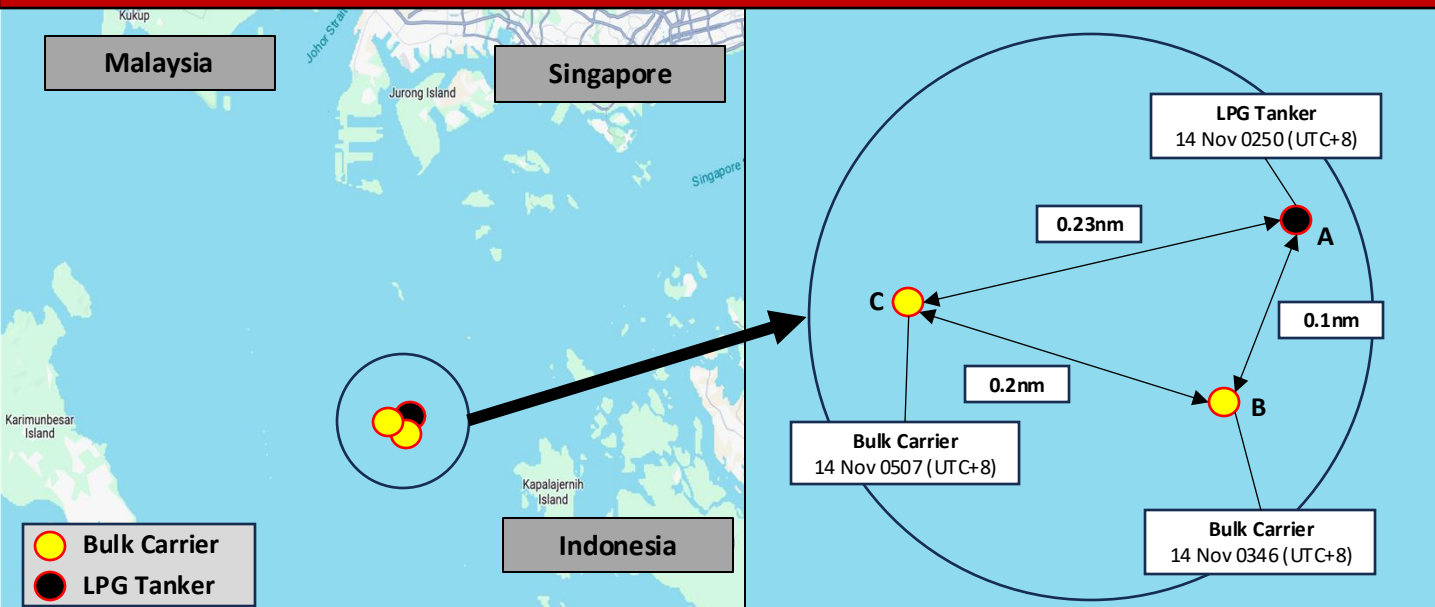


Spot Commentary 3/24: Phillip Channel – 3 TRAPS Incidents in One Night

Number and Location of Incidents (14 Nov 2024)



Key Observations & Assessments

Summary of Incidents on 14 Nov 2024: Three (3) incidents occurred in Phillip Channel (PC) between 0250 (UTC+8) and 0507 (UTC+8). *[Note: This is the third time in 2024 that IFC recorded three (3) incidents in one night in the Singapore Strait (SS); the first was on 14 Sep 2024, and the second was on 18 Oct 2024.]*

- Based on the proximity of incident locations, time intervals, and number of perpetrators observed (5 to 8 pax), it is likely that the **same group of perpetrators were involved in all the incidents**. IFC assesses that the same group of perpetrators made a third attempt to steal items after being unsuccessful in Incident A and B.
- In all incidents, perpetrators were armed (i.e. steel rods, “gun-like” object). **Only Incident C involved confrontation** (one crew was reportedly hit on the head and tied up by perpetrators), **and stolen items** (ship spares and tools).

Key Observations and Assessments: 38 out of 47 incidents reported in the SS this year occurred in the PC, higher than the same period last year. Of note, the spate of incidents (14 Nov 2024) occurred in IFC’s identified hotspot within the Phillip Channel (Northwest of Kapalajernih Island). *[Note: PC remained an area of concern in the SS since Q4 2022. Similar to last year, this area accounted for majority of the incidents (~55% and ~80% of all incidents recorded from Jan to Nov in 2023 and 2024 respectively).]*

- While perpetrators continued to **target vulnerable vessel types** such as Bulk Carriers and Tankers due to their slow transit speed (between 7 to 12 knots) and freeboard (up to 7m), this was the **first time that an LPG Tanker was being boarded**, and the vessel had a higher freeboard (9.4m; highest recorded in the SS in recent years).
- Based on incident reports, **perpetrators’ modus operandi remains largely consistent with petty crime**, and are opportunistic in nature. IFC assesses that the perpetrators have good knowledge of local waters and will continue to blend in with the traffic under the cover of darkness, and board when opportune.
- Consistent with past trends, perpetrators may **target multiple vessels in the same night or over subsequent nights** in the same area, especially if previous attempts were unsuccessful. IFC will continue to info-share, and work with regional authorities to step up enforcement efforts in the PC. Notwithstanding, all vessels should step up preventive measures when transiting the PC.

Recommended Actions for All Transiting Vessels

- Heighten vigilance, particularly when transiting in the PC during hours of darkness. Upon sighting of suspicious activities or perpetrators onboard, immediately report to local authorities and inform the IFC; do not confront perpetrators. Prompt reporting can help prevent subsequent boardings on other transiting vessels.**
- Adopt Ship Protection Measures recommended in the Regional Guide 2 to Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia, e.g., (1) *turn on weather deck lighting around the accommodation block and rear facing lighting on the poop deck*, (2) *maintain an all-round lookout at an elevated position with focus on suspicious small craft(s) approaching or in proximity to the ship’s aft*, and (3) *sound ship’s alarm when suspicious small craft(s) sighted*.
- To guard against successive boarding attempts by perpetrators, transiting vessels are encouraged to stay informed by participating in Voluntary Community Reporting as depicted in 4th Edition MARSEC Charts Q6112 and Q6113.