

Singapore Strait Robberies Continue with MSC Boxship and Tanker Boarded



MSC's containership was one of two vessels that reported boarders as the robberies continue in the region around the Singapore Strait (MSC)

Published Apr 21, 2025 4:05 PM by [The Maritime Executive](#)

The surge in boardings and robberies is showing no signs of abating in the area around the straits of Singapore and Malacca. The monitoring operation ReCAAP has been raising the concern and now reports two additional vessels were boarded on Sunday and Monday after a two-week lull.

The latest incidents include a feeder containership that MSC recently placed on a new route to serve the Asian region. ReCAAP lists a report of a boarding in the early morning hours on Sunday, April 20, aboard the MSC Tara III (33,232 dwt / 3,300 TEU). The vessel was underway when three perpetrators were spotted at about 0500. The vessel was approximately 5.4 nautical miles off Pulau Cula, in the eastbound traffic separation lane of the Singapore Strait.

The master raised a general alarm and mustered the crew after the three individuals were seen on the upper deck of the vessel. They reported the individuals appeared to be carrying guns. The crew was safe and nothing was taken but it marked the first incident reported since April 7.

Less than 24 hours later a Panama-flagged tanker, Aquaris (106,500 dwt) also spotted boarders in the same general position. She was 2.5 nautical miles off Pulau Cula also in the eastbound lane. Again, three individuals were seen but this time with knives and entering the engine control room. The crew was not injured and nothing was stolen but it was the fifth incident in April.

Earlier in April, the product tanker Hafnia Hong Kong reported three perpetrators. In that instance, an air compressor and four padlocks were reported stolen. Also in recent incidents, the containership

SITC Yuncheng reported lashing gear stolen and the containership Kota Halus said a portable welding machine was missing.

Since the beginning of the year, ReCAAP has listed a total of 41 incidents on vessels in or near the straits of Singapore and Malacca. Across the broader Southeast Asia region, ReCAAP has only received 49 reports so far in 2025.

At the end of the first quarter, ReCAAP highlighted that it had received reports of 35 incidents that occurred to ships while underway in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore. By comparison, it reported that there were 11 reports in the first quarter of 2024.

ReCAAP ISC has continued to urge the littoral States to increase patrols/surveillance in their respective waters. It also calls for a prompt response to incidents reported by ships, and strengthening coordination, and promoting information sharing on incidents and criminal groups involved to arrest the perpetrators. For vessels, it is urging greater caution and lookouts as the robbery spree continues.

The International Maritime Bureau, which is a specialized department of the International Chamber of Commerce, in its first quarter report, warned that the Southeast Asia region had become the hot spot for piracy. It also called for more action to stop the current surge in incidents in the region.