

UNCLASSIFIED

(U) **WORLDWIDE: Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) Report** 25 December 2018 - 23 January 2019



24 January 2019



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1. (U) **Scope Note**

1. (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) No current incidents to report.

3. (U) **Summary:**

A. (U) UNITED STATES: On 20 January, authorities intercepted a boat carrying six people trying to enter Florida illegally by sea.

B. (U) EAST CHINA SEA: On 18 January, two ship were believed to have engaged in ship-to-ship (STS) transfers involving North Korean vessels in violation of existing UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions against North Korea.

C. (U) ECUADOR: On 18 January, authorities arrested three suspected pirates and seized weapons and communication equipment near Puna Island.

D. (U) VENEZUELA: On 17 January, robbers boarded a tanker anchored in Puerto Jose Anchorage.

E. (U) OMAN: On 15 January, the Omani Coast Guard arrested 15 foreign nationals from an unspecified country after seizing a boat containing 40,000 liters of smuggled fuel.

F. (U) PANAMA: On 13 January, a private yacht anchored in Portobello was boarded by 6 men armed with handguns.

G. (U) PANAMA: On 13 January, a panga with at least 4 men attempted to board a cruising yacht anchored in Portobello Bay at around 2300 LT.

H. (U) SOUTH AFRICA: On 8 January, police seized 706 kilograms of cocaine from a vessel at the Port of Ngqura, Coega Harbour at the Port Elizabeth docks.

4. (U) Counter-Piracy and Maritime Crime Announcements

A. (U) GULF OF ADEN: Government of Japan convoy schedule for January 2019. To apply for JMSDF escort, visit http://www.mlit.go.jp/en/maritime/maritime_fr2_000000.html, please contact directly the Anti-Piracy Contact and Coordination Office, Maritime Bureau, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT), Japan: Tel: +81-3-5253-8932; Fax: +81-3-5253-1643. Email: INFO-PIRACY@mlit.go.jp (MSCHOA)

B. (U) GULF OF ADEN: China Navy convoy schedule for January 2019. For further information, please email: planavy@navy.mil.cn, or call Tel: 441 221 061 or 00870 773 120 215. (MSCHOA)

C. (U) GULF OF ADEN: South Korea Navy convoy schedule for January 2019. All merchant vessels wishing to join the convoy group must submit their application forms directly to the ROK naval warship carrying out the mission. The ROK MTG can be reached directly at (001)-870-776-444-280 or (001)-870-773-110-438. Email: choiyoung981@navy.mil.kr or kes0539@hanmail.net (MSCHOA)

5. (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 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:

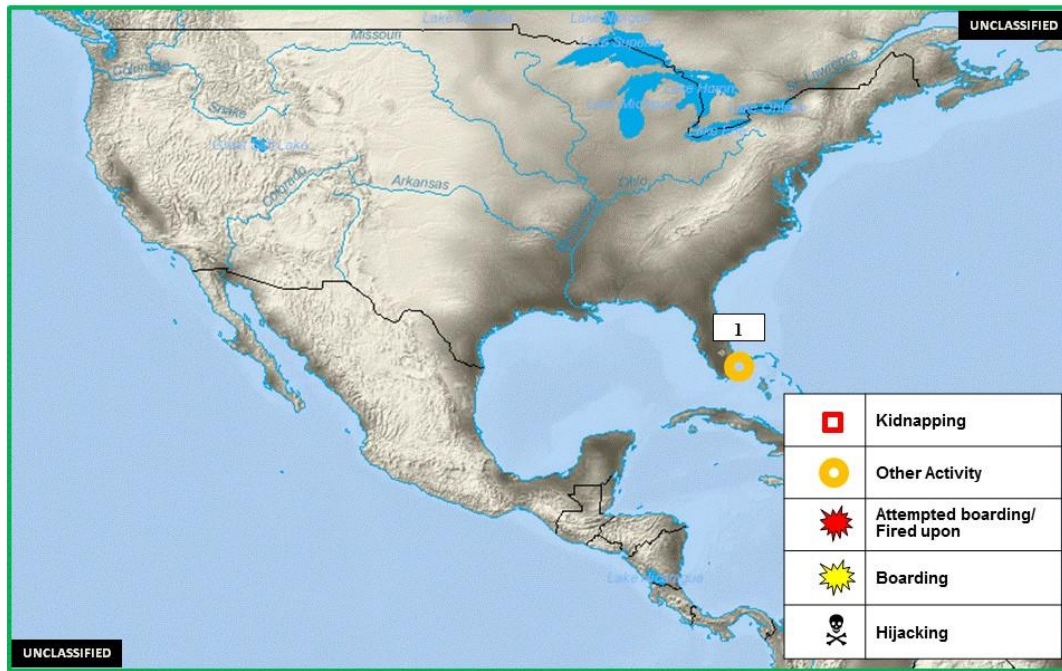


Figure 1. North America Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) UNITED STATES: On 20 January, authorities intercepted a boat carrying six people trying to enter Florida illegally by sea. The 20-foot boat was stopped about 30 miles east of Sunny Isles Beach. In a statement, authorities said two Jamaican men, a Dominican man and a Bahamian man were aboard the vessel, along with two U.S. citizens. (www.washingtontimes.com)

2. (U) MEXICO: On 9 January, a ship from an environmental NGO was conducting a patrol in the Vaquita Refuge in the Upper Gulf of California, and had recovered three illegal gillnets that morning. In the early afternoon, the crew noticed approximately 35 skiffs operating inside the refuge. At this point, one of the skiffs began circling the NGO vessel which was soon joined by the remainder of other skiffs. The NGO vessel was ambushed and overwhelmed by more than 35 skiffs, many containing gillnets. The poachers attacked by hurling lead weights, anchors, trash, dead fish and even Tabasco sauce at the vessel and its wheelhouse windows in addition to threatening ship's crew with Molotov cocktails, spraying gasoline at the ship and pouring gas in the sea around the vessel. Poachers then dropped an illegal gillnet in front of the bow of the moving vessel in an attempt to foul the ship's propellers. Five poachers then boarded the ship and looted items from the vessel's deck while it was temporarily immobilized. Mexican Navy sailors and Gendarmeria stationed onboard the vessel were under strict orders not to fire. The captain of the vessel managed to restart the engines after the propeller fouling and headed to the Port of San Felipe where the ship was met by the regional Navy Commander and reinforcements. (www.marketwatch.com)

B. (U) CENTRAL AMERICA - CARIBBEAN - SOUTH AMERICA:

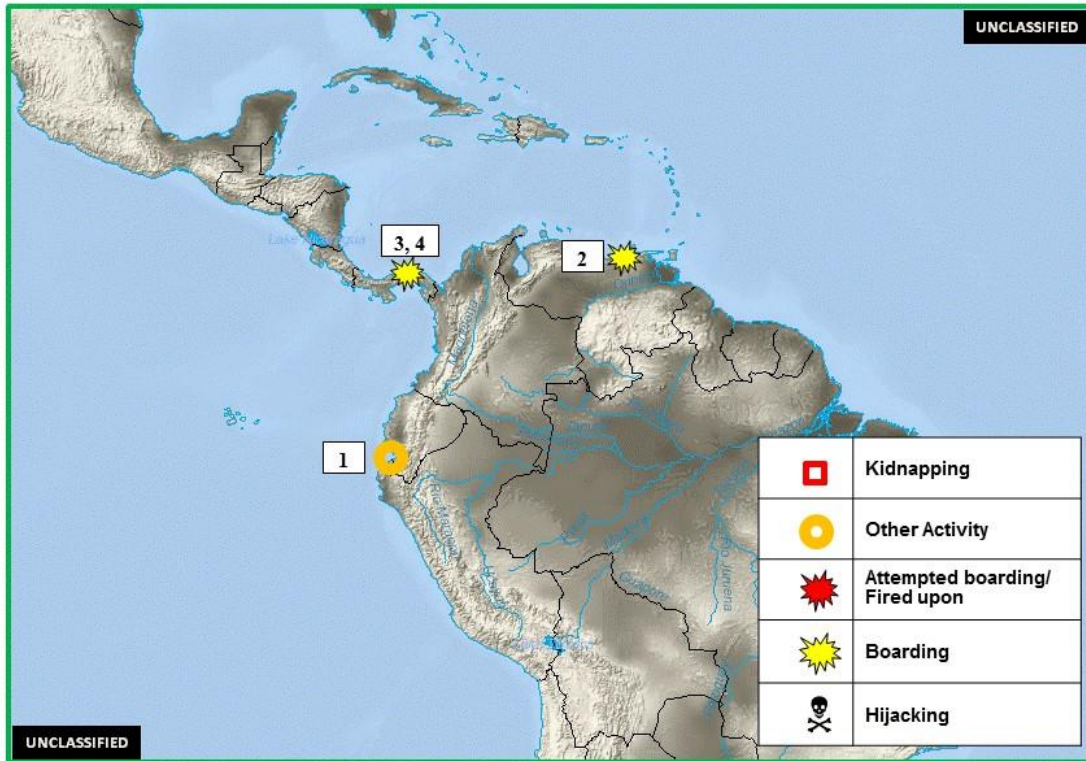


Figure 2. Central America – Caribbean – South America Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) ECUADOR: On 18 January, authorities arrested three suspected pirates and seized weapons and communication equipment near Puna Island. Authorities arrested the suspects after they were alerted by local fishermen about a suspicious boat navigating in the area. (www.pvilt.com)

2. (U) VENEZUELA: On 17 January, robbers boarded a tanker anchored near position 10:11N - 064:47W, Puerto Jose Anchorage. They stole ship's stores and escaped unseen. The theft was noticed by the duty crew during routine rounds. Port control informed. (IMB)

3. (U) PANAMA: On 13 January, at 2130 LT, a private yacht anchored in Portobello was approached by 6 men armed with handguns, using the ruse of selling water. They boarded the vessel and hit one crew member in the head with a gun and then spent a considerable time ransacking the boat, terrorizing the crew that was made to lay on the floor all the while the armed boarders repeatedly yelled "cocaine, cocaine." Cash, phones, computers and electronics were taken. Jewelry was left behind; no drugs were found onboard. (www.safetyandsecuritynet.org)

4. (U) PANAMA: On 13 January, a panga with at least 4 men attempted to board a cruising yacht anchored in Portobello Bay at around 2300 LT. Surprised, the owner came on deck and responded aggressively verbally, and was only able to dissuade the hostile boarders when his large, 60 lb. dog came out on deck. Holstered pistols were visible to the captain. (www.safetyandsecuritynet.org)

5. (U) SURINAME: On 9 January, authorities in Paramaribo made their largest ever seizure of cocaine, found hidden in containers filled with rice waiting to be exported, the small South American country's top law enforcement official said. Local media reported that at least 2,300 kilograms of cocaine had been found. (www.uk.reuters.com)

6. (U) CHILE: On 7 January, the Peru-flagged fishing vessel ESTHER was seized by the Chilean Navy when it was illegally fishing in Chilean waters and transferred to the Port of Arica for further investigation, (www.fis.com)
7. (U) PANAMA: On 3 January, authorities seized 1.3 tons of unspecified narcotics from a speedboat along the Pacific coast southwest of Montuosa Island. Authorities seized the narcotics during a routine operation in nearby waters. Three foreign nationals were arrested at the scene. (www.pvilttd.com)
8. (U) COLOMBIA: On 3 January, a deck watch man onboard a container vessel anchored near position 10:19N - 075:32W, Cartagena Anchorage, saw three robbers near the forecabin and informed the duty officer. Alarm was raised, crew mustered inside the accommodation area and all doors were locked from the inside. Master reported the incident to the coast guard and requested assistance. A Coast Guard boat arrived and searched the waters around the vessel. Ship's properties were reported missing. (IMB)
9. (U) VENEZUELA: On 3 January, a duty crewman onboard a tanker anchored near position 10:16N - 064:42W, Puerto la Cruz Anchorage, saw robbers attempting to board using a grappling hook attached to the guardrails of the poop deck. Alarm was raised and ship's horn sounded. Hearing the alerted crew, the robbers aborted the boarding attempt and escaped in their boat. Incident reported to port control. (IMB)

C. (U) ATLANTIC OCEAN AREA:

1. (U) MOROCCO: On 7 January, officials announced the seizure of 13.7 tons of cannabis at the Tangier-Med port facility. (www.northafricapost.com)

D. (U) NORTHERN EUROPE - BALTIC:

1. (U) FRANCE: On 1 January, French police intercepted 14 Iraqi migrants at Boulogne who were allegedly intending to cross the English Channel on a stolen fishing trawler. The interdiction occurred in port after the suspects were spotted in the act of boarding the vessel. (www.maritime-executive.com)
2. (U) GERMANY: On 1 January, the Dutch Coast Guard issued a navigational warning after the Panama-flagged ultra large containership MSC ZOE lost scores of containers while underway in heavy seas between Vlieland, Netherlands, and the German Bight in the southeastern North Sea. The Coast Guard initially reported about 30 containers lost. However, an update stated that 270 containers went overboard. The contents of the lost containers have not been confirmed, but at least three are reported to contain hazardous materials. The Coast Guard is warning the public not to handle or approach any of the containers. (www.gcaptain.com)
3. (U) ENGLAND: On 31 December, a group of 12 people, including a 10-year-old child, were being interviewed by immigration officials after they came ashore near Lydd-on-Sea, Kent. The people are believed to be from Iran. They were given a medical assessment before their transfer to immigration authorities. (www.theguardian.com)

E. (U) MEDITERRANEAN - BLACK SEA:

1. (U) LIBYA: On 7 January, customs officials at Misrata port seized a container with 20,000 pistols from a ship that had arrived from Turkey. The arms were reportedly hidden behind boxes containing household items and toys. (www.pvilttd.com)
2. (U) LIBYA: On 5 January, customs authorities at Misrata Port seized 8,156 kilograms of cannabis from two containers shipped from Malta. (www.pvilttd.com)

3. (U) MALTA: On 1 January, customs authorities intercepted a shipping container at the Port of Freeport. During an initial scan of the container, officials found discrepancies, which led to a physical search of the container. Five thousand and twenty kilograms of hashish were found among the cargo of agricultural plastic sheets. (www.timesofmalta.com)
4. (U) TUNISIA: On 30 December, customs officers seized 14 hunting rifles at Tunis's La Goulette Port. The weapons were seized aboard a vehicle belonging to a Tunisian national. (www.pvilttd.com)

F. (U) WEST AFRICA:

1. (U) NIGERIA: On 8 January, police arrested three persons for illegally attempting to board a ship at Tin Can Island Port in Lagos. The three stowaways attempted to board the M/V GLOVIS CENTURY bound for European ports. Arrests of stowaways are common in Nigeria, but remain largely under-reported. (www.pvilttd.com)
2. (U) REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO: On 7 January, 12 seafarers, who were kidnapped from the Panama-flagged tanker ANUKET AMBER and the Singapore-flagged anchor handling and supply vessel ARK TZE in October 2018 off the country's coast, have been released and are all safe. The managers of the vessels confirmed their releases in an official statement. (www.safety4sea.com)
3. (U) NIGERIA: On 7 January, five robbers in a small skiff came alongside an anchored product tanker and threw two ropes attached with hooks onto the tanker's railing. The ship was anchored near position 06:15N - 003:12E, Lagos Secure Anchorage Area. A duty crewman on routine rounds heard voices near the bow and noticed the hooks and the skiff. Alarm was raised. Non-essential crew members mustered in the citadel. Master requested assistance from the Nigerian Navy patrol boat in the area which immediately responded. Hearing the alarm, the robbers moved away. The patrol boat searched the waters around the tanker. (IMB)
4. (U) NIGERIA: On 7 January, two robbers with plastic hoses boarded an anchored tanker during Ship-To-Ship transfer operations near position 06:16N - 003:20E, Lagos STS Anchorage. They connected the hoses to the forward cargo tanks and attempted to steal cargo. Duty crewman saw the robbers and raised the alarm resulting in the robbers escaping. The incident was immediately reported to a Nigerian Navy patrol boat that came to the location and carried out a check on the surrounding waters. Nothing reported stolen. (IMB)
5. (U) BENIN: On 2 January, pirates attacked a small container ship MSC MANDY, near position 05:28N - 002:21E, 55 nm south of Cotonou. Six crewmen were kidnapped. The ship is owned by the Mediterranean Shipping Company. (MDAT-GoG; www.pvilttd.com; www.fleetmon.com)

G. (U) ARABIAN GULF:

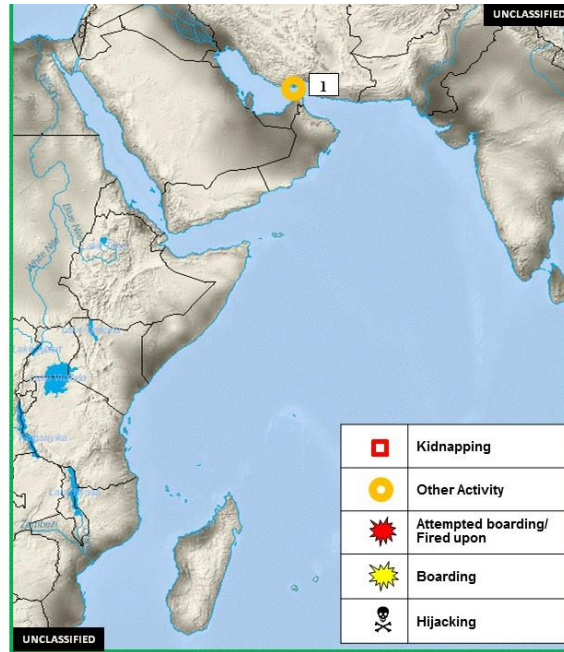


Figure 3. Arabian Gulf Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) OMAN: On 15 January, the Omani Coast Guard arrested 15 foreign nationals from an unspecified country after seizing a boat containing 40,000 liters of smuggled fuel. The 15 people were detained after the boat was stopped in Omani waters off the coast from the city of Khasab. (www.pvikt.com)

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



Figure 4. Indian Ocean – East Africa – Red Sea Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) SOUTH AFRICA: On 8 January, police seized 706 kilograms of cocaine from a vessel at the Port of Ngqura, Coega Harbour at the Port Elizabeth docks. The vessel had originated from Brazil and was due to dock in Singapore before reaching its final destination of India. The drugs were concealed on the bottom floor of the ship under more than 3,000 containers. (www.pvilttd.com)

2. (U) ARABIAN SEA: On 9 January, Royal Australian Navy ship HMAS BALLARAT conducted a boarding of a dhow and found 3.1 tons of hashish. (www.9news.com.au)

3. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 27 December, a US Navy destroyer conducted a flag verification boarding of a dhow in the Gulf of Aden. The vessel was determined to be stateless. During the search, over 11,000 pounds of hashish were discovered. (www.marinelink.com; U.S. Naval Forces Central Command)

I. (U) EAST ASIA - SOUTHEAST ASIA - INDIAN SUBCONTINENT:

1. (U) INDONESIA: On 11 January, a duty crewman onboard a cargo vessel anchored near position 06:02S - 105:57E, Ciwandan Anchorage, saw the lock to the engine store room broken and ship's spares missing. Incident reported to local agents. (IMB)

2. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 15 January, an Indonesian fisherman kidnapped on 11 September 2018, while in the waters of Gaya island, Semporna, Sabah, was released to local authorities in Jolo, southern Philippines. It was stressed that the release was carried out without ransom, even though the kidnapping group repeatedly demanded a large ransom. (www.bbc.com)

3. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 7 January, customs authorities in the Port of Cebu seized four luxury automobiles in a 40-foot shipping container. The container was manifested as carrying car parts and accessories. A spokesman said they discovered a Range Rover Evoque, an Alfa Romeo, a vintage Porsche 911, and a vintage Mercedes-Benz in the container which had arrived from Japan. (www.msn.com)

4. (U) INDONESIA: On 7 January, officials declared tanker NAMSE BANGDZOD as missing. On 28 December 2018, the ship loaded palm oil and left Sampit, southern Kalimantan, bound for Jakarta. A large-scale search across the Java Sea has not yielded results, according to officials. Reportedly, there was brief AIS activity on 6 January but no conclusive evidence of the ship's location has been found. (www.fleetmon.com; www.thejakartapost.com)

5. (U) TAIWAN: On 26 December, Pingtung District prosecutor's office announced that law enforcement officials seized 470 kilograms of heroin. Prosecutors said the shipment came from southeast Asia on fishing vessels, transferred to smaller dinghies and then brought in by smugglers with wetsuits and flippers. Ten people, including two minors, were arrested in the operation. (www.channelnewsasia.com)

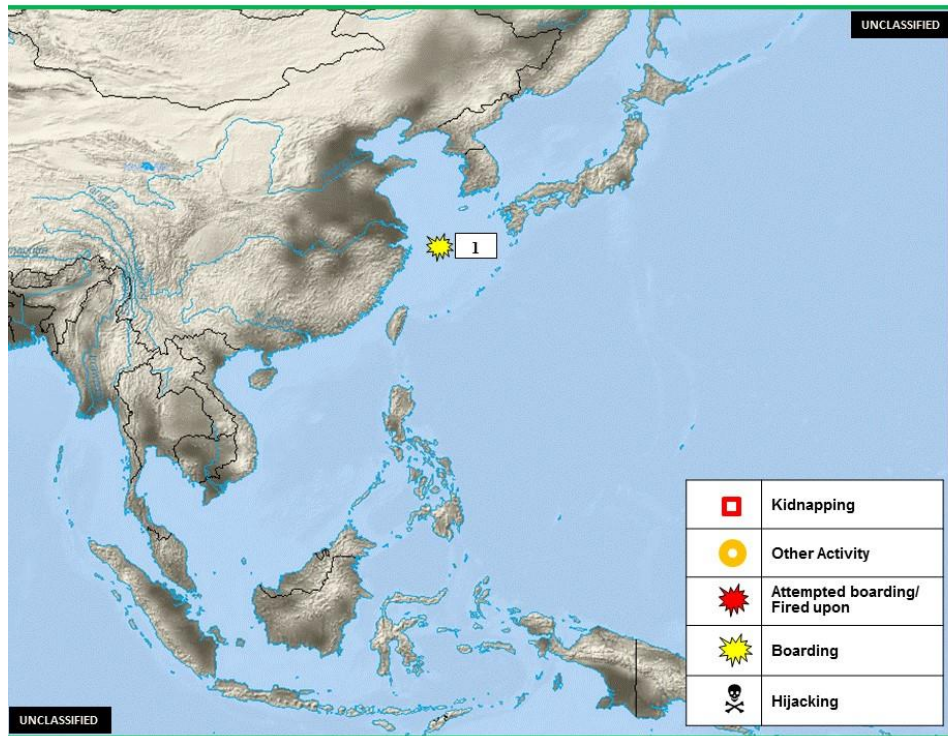
J. (U) NORTHEAST ASIA:

Figure 5. Northeast Asia Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) EAST CHINA SEA: On 18 January, two ships were believed to have engaged in ship-to-ship (STS) transfers involving North Korean vessels in violation of existing UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions against North Korea. The transfer appears to have taken place in the East China Sea around 410 kilometers off the coast of Shanghai, Tokyo said. While the Japanese Ministry of Defense could not identify the name or nationality of one of the ships involved, it asserted that the North Korean vessel was the AN SAN 1. The AN SAN 1 was designated by the UNSC in March 2018 and is already subject to an asset freeze and port entry ban. (www.nknews.org; www3.nhk.or.jp)

2. (U) CHINA: On 12 January, two robbers, armed with a steel bar, boarded an anchored bulk carrier near position 38:53N - 118:36E, Cao Fei Dian Large Oil Tank Anchorage. A duty crewman noticed the robbers and raised the alarm. Hearing the alerted crew, the robbers escaped without stealing anything. Incident reported to port authorities. (IMB)

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

6. (U) Appendix A: Further Contact Information and Resources

(U) This appendix provides contact information for the author of the WTS as well as other entities that can be contacted with maritime crime reports. It also lists other resources where the WTS is posted and where piracy and maritime crime incident information can be found.

(U) Contact

(U) Originator of this WTS report requests consumer feedback. Originator will incorporate all anti-shipping events and violence against the maritime industry into this weekly message where appropriate. To aid in our reporting, please add the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) to your normal corporate and organizational reporting requirements. The 24-hour watch can be reached at +1 (301) 669-4053.

(U) Other Resources

(U) This Worldwide Threat to Shipping Report is posted at the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency's Maritime Safety site: <http://msi.nga.mil/NGAPortal/MSI.portal>. The International Maritime Bureau (IMB) also publishes a live piracy report based on reporting from the IMB Piracy Reporting Centre in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, listing all piracy and armed robbery incidents in the last ten days: <http://www.icc-ccs.org/>. The PAWW and WTS reports are posted weekly on the ONI Intel Portal: http://www.oni.navy.mil/Intelligence_Community/piracy.htm

7. (U) Appendix B: Terminology and References

(U) This appendix is provided to promote consistent use of accurate terms of reference in reporting and also identifies those references that were used to gather the information contained in this report. ONI welcomes comment and suggestions for addition or amendment.

(U) Terminology

(U) In order to promote consistent use of accurate terms of reference, the following have been adopted to describe the range of criminal anti-shiping activity and impediments to safe navigation in our worldwide reporting and analysis. Please note that these terms relate to observable activity and are independent of target vessel status and exclude actions by governmental powers in lawful pursuit of their authorities:

(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) 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.

(U) Sourcing

(U) ONI derives information in this report from direct reporting and analysis of reports from the following agencies and commercial sources.

- Agence France Presse (AFP)
- Associated Press (AP)
- BBC News
- DNK Intelligence & Operations Centre (DNK IOC)
- EU Naval Forces (EU)
- International Maritime Bureau (IMB), London and Kuala Lumpur

- International Maritime Organization (IMO), London
- Lloyd's
- Maritime Administration (MARAD), U.S.
- Maritime Security Centre - Horn of Africa (MSCHOA)
- Marine Domain Awareness for Trade - Gulf of Guinea (MDAT-GoG)
- National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), Navigation Safety System
- Noonsite.com (Noonsite), website
- Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC)
- Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia, Information Sharing Center (ReCAAP ISC)
- Reuters
- Royal Australian Navy (RAN)
- Royal New Zealand Navy (RNZN)
- The Maritime Executive (website)
- United Kingdom Maritime Trade Organization (UKMTO)
- United Press International (UPI)
- U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)

(U) ICOD: 23 January 2019

(U) The PAWW and WTS reports are posted each week on the ONI Intel Portal and can be found at:
<http://www.oni.navy.mil/Intelligence-Community/Piracy>