



Monthly Piracy Report

Latest Assessment

Total Number of Attacks in April: **33**
Total Number of Attacks this year: **148**
Ships Released in April: **2**
Crew Released in April: **33**

New Ships Taken in April: **2**
New Crew Taken in April: **30**
Ships Held at end of April: **16***
Crew Held at end of April: **276**

Summary

Global pirate activity remained level at 33 attacks over the course of April. Piracy decreased off the coast of Somalia, with fewer attempted attacks and just one successful hijack of a local fishing dhow. However, the boarding of a Chinese vessel in the northern Gulf of Oman served as a reminder of the ever-increasing operational range. Attacks remained level West African waters, but were focussed off Togo, with a tanker hijacked and held for five days. Attacks more than doubled in southeast Asia, although the increase is likely to be caused by under reporting last month, rather than an increase in attacks. One attack was officially recorded in Latin America.

At least 297 crewmembers are currently being held, with many facing detention periods of over 300 days, at a current average of 181 days. No vessels were released for ransom from Somalia in April. Average ransom amounts are approximately US\$4.8m.

Near-term Forecast

East Africa: Risk of piracy heightened in the southern Red Sea, Gulf of Aden and Arabian Sea following an increase in motherships hijacked in the area. Sea states forecasted to worsen north and northeast of Madagascar, where fewer attacks are likely.

West Africa: Vessels remain vulnerable up to 120NM off Nigeria, Benin and Togo. Stationary vessels in anchorages off major ports vulnerable to all forms of attack.

Asia: Mostly opportunistic attacks in anchorages and ports to continue.

Latin America: An increase in pirate activity may be seen in response to the pressure being placed on criminal activity on land.

**excludes various local dhows and fishing vessels*



Above: pirate incidents recorded in April (above)

Below: ongoing areas of piracy concern



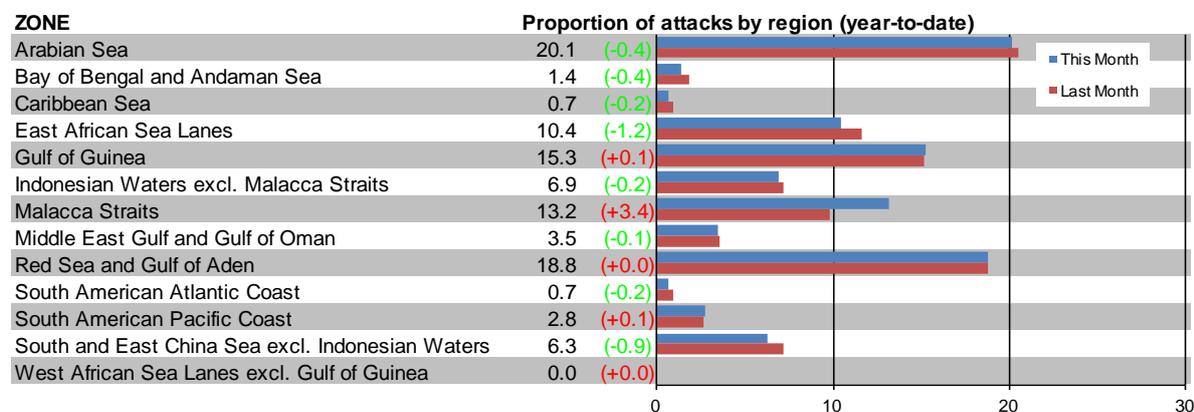
The GAC Protective Solutions team of experts has extensive experience and has dealt with many incidents of vessel hijacking and piracy from the South China Seas, to the Straits of Hormuz and East Africa. A subscription to this monthly security report including 'real time' security updates between each edition costs US\$800/6 months or US\$1,400/12 months. For further information or assistance please contact: ake@gac.com

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Changes in regional pirate activity last month

MARINE PIRACY THREAT ASSESSMENT

April 2012

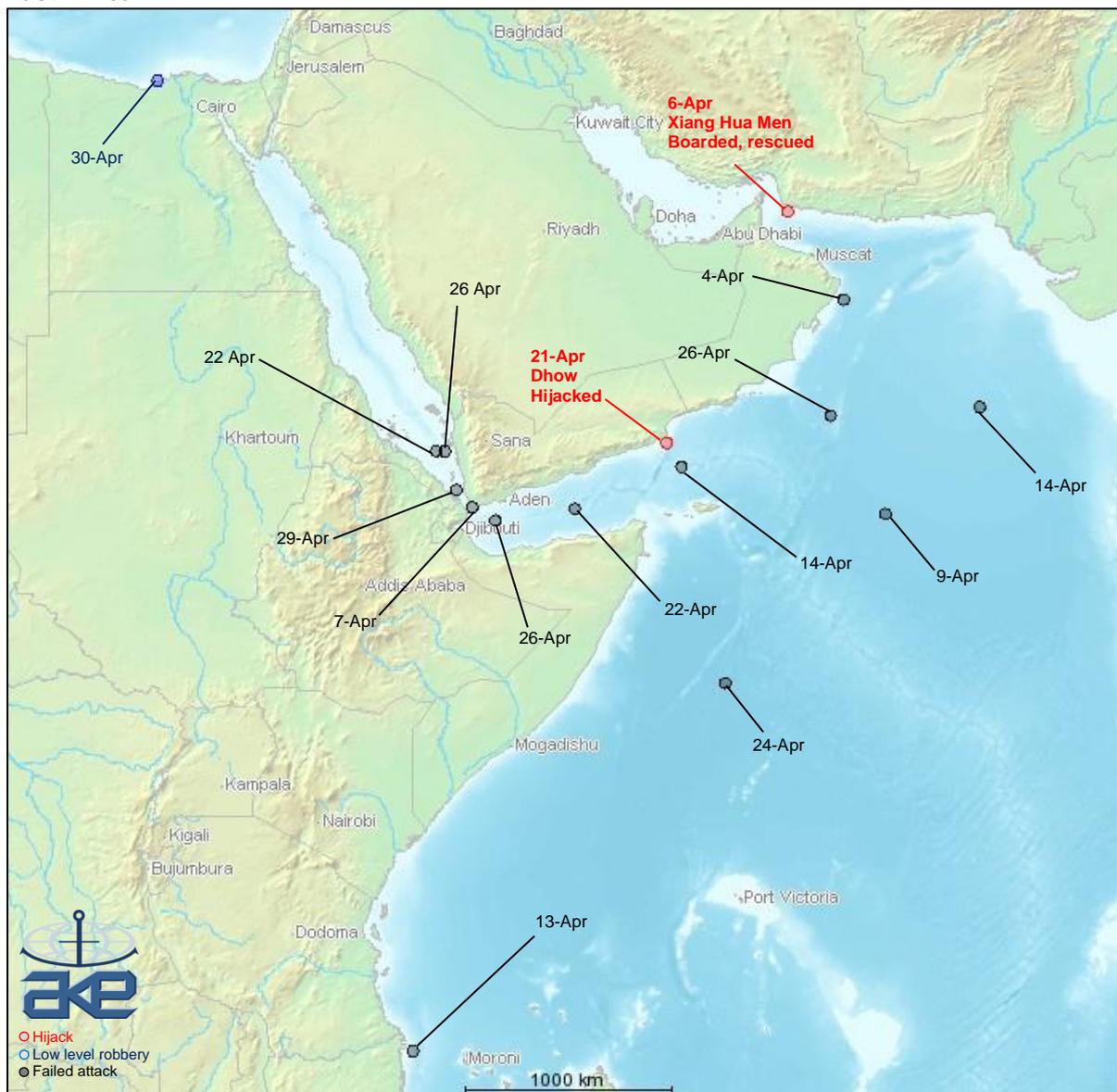


Regional piracy incidents over the past month

Zone	No. of Attacks	Change from previous month	Change from previous year
Arabian Sea	6	-5	+1
Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea	0	-1	-
Caribbean Sea	0	-1	-
East Africa Sea Lanes	2	-5	-7
Gulf of Guinea	5	-	+3
Indonesian Waters excl Malacca Straits	2	+1	+1
Malacca Straits	8	+7	+5
Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman	1	+1	+1
Red Sea and Gulf of Aden	6	+1	-2
South American Atlantic Coast	0	-	-
South American Pacific Coast	1	+1	+1
South and East China Sea	1	-	-1
West African Sea Lanes excl Gulf of Guinea	0	-	-

Current Regional Analysis

East Africa



Current Analysis

The total number of pirate incidents decreased by seven from March's total of 23. Of the 16 attacks that took place, two vessels were boarded and one was hijacked. The monthly success rate therefore decreased to 13 per cent after four successive months of increasing success rates. The vessel that was hijacked was a local Yemeni fishing Dhow and is likely to be used as a mothership, rather than ransomed.

Notable incidents

Although activity fell in the northern Arabian Sea, the boarding and subsequent rescue of a Chinese cargo ship in the northern Gulf of Oman should remind operators that attacks have spread to the area; five incidents have been recorded there in the past six months. Panama-flagged Chinese-owned cargo ship Xiang Hua Man was boarded around 15NM off the Iranian coast on 6 April, but subsequently rescued by Iranian naval forces. No fatalities were reported, although one crew member

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was reportedly injured by a bullet ricochet. Reports suggest that Mohamed Abdi 'Garaad', one of the most well-known Haraardheere pirate leaders was part of the attack group consisting of 21 pirates who were all detained by Iranian forces.

On 13 April a bulk carrier was fired upon approximately 40NM east of Mocimboa da Praia in the Mozambique Channel. The attack was ultimately deterred due to the hardening measures taken by the ship and poor weather conditions, and was followed days later by the naval disruption of previously-hijacked Dhow Nimesha Duwa with 6 Sri Lankan crew near Tanzania's Songo Songo gas fields. The steady increase of energy exploration in the region, specifically off Tanzania and Mozambique, is likely to lead to a rise in the number of potential piracy targets arriving in the area, which will in turn lead to a rise in the number of pirate attacks in the medium term.

On 21 April a Yemeni-flagged fishing dhow was hijacked approximately 17NM off Saqr, Yemen. The vessel adds to the ever-growing list of hijacked dhows and local fishing craft used as motherships in the area, with six such vessels hijacked in March. The increase in hijackings of this nature suggests a change in tactics to avoid detection from naval forces and security teams on board merchant vessels in future. Crews are advised to maintain careful watch rotas, and be wary of suspect vessels camouflaged amongst the large numbers of innocent local dhows.

On 29 April 10 skiffs approached a Panama-flagged oil tanker in the Bab el Mandeb Strait in an apparent attempted 'swarm' attack. Four skiffs initially approached, followed by a group of two, then four further skiffs. They ran parallel to the vessel, but abandoned the attack after the onboard security team displayed vessel hardening measures and fired flares. The 'swarming' of merchant vessels by large groups of 10 or more skiffs has occurred in and around the Bab el Mandeb Strait before; two similar attacks were reported in February 2012. The risk of swarming is most pertinent in the areas of concentrated local traffic amongst which larger attack groups can hide, such as the Bab el Mandeb Straits, Gulf of Aden and Gulf of Oman. The tactic it is yet to be successful, but operators should remain cautious and be prepared to respond to attack groups consisting of numerous skiffs.

Negotiations

On 12 April MV Leila was released from pirate control after 56 days of captivity. A ransom of US\$250,000 was reportedly paid; the vessel's owners had local links with a Somaliland 'business man', which was reflected by the lower than average sum. Local media reports suggest the amount paid was sufficient only to cover the expenses incurred during the operation.

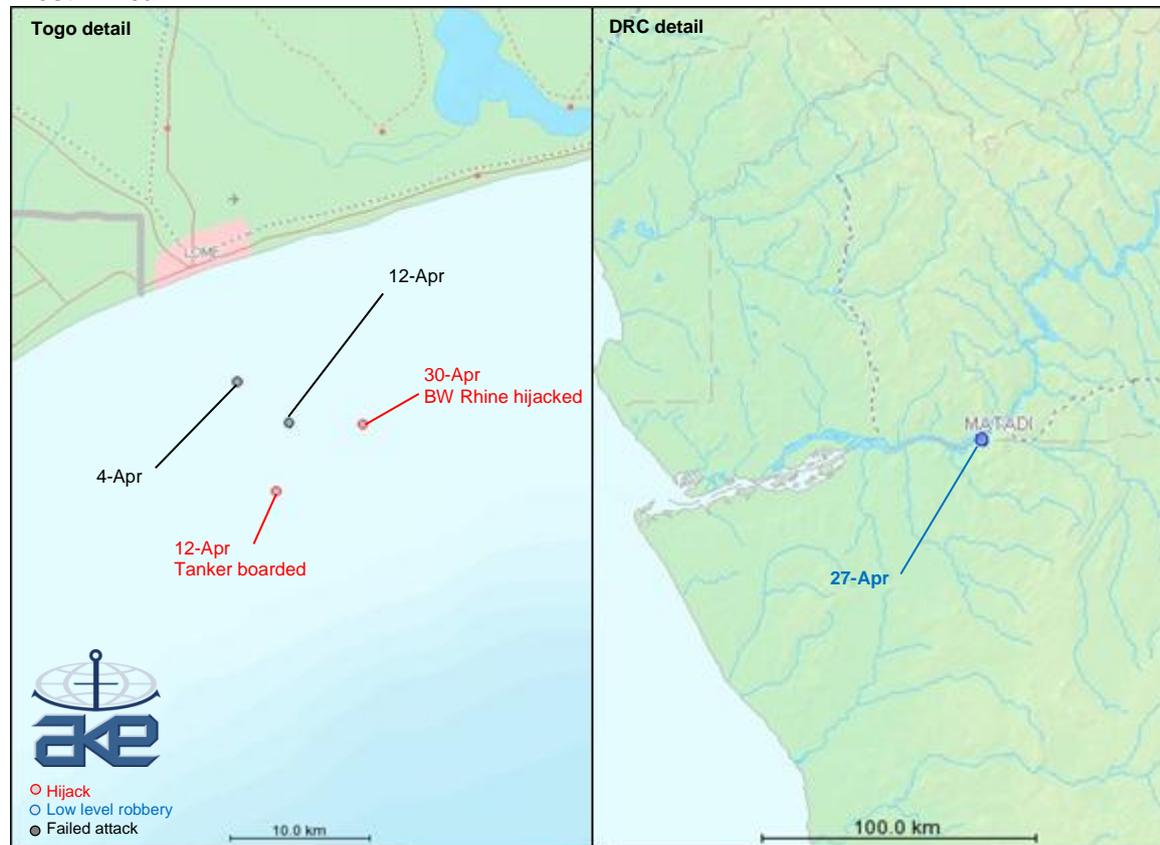
On 23 April Italian-flagged tanker Enrico levoli was released from pirate control after 118 days in captivity. A ransom amount of US\$9 million has been reported in open sources, far higher than the current average of US\$4.7 million. All 18 crew members were released with no significant injuries.

Political/regulatory developments

Two high-profile prosecution efforts occurred in April; on 6 April Mohamed Abdi 'Garaad', a prominent pirate commander, was arrested by Iranian naval forces during the attack on Xiang Hua Men off Iran. He will face trial in Iran, along with the eight others arrested with him. On 30 April, Mohamed Saaili 'Shibin' was found guilty of involvement in the hijack and subsequent negotiation of the US yacht Quest in 2009. He was arrested in Somalia and deported to Virginia where he faced prosecution for his role as negotiator.

Whilst high profile incarcerations are a positive development, they have had little impact in the past due to the decentralised and fluid nature of pirate groups, and the rewards available to would-be commanders and financiers waiting to fill the boots of those before them. Indeed Abdulkadir Mohamed 'Afweyne', another famed pirate leader, has reportedly handed over much of his pirate operations to his son, telling of the dynamic, clan based nature in which pirate syndicates generally operate. The positions held by Garaad and Shibin are therefore likely to be filled quickly, with little impact on future operations.

West Africa



Current Analysis

Attacks stayed level from March to April, with a total of five incidents being reported. Four of the incidents occurred in Lome anchorage, Togo, reflecting the general insecurity associated with regional anchorages where the majority of pirate attacks occur. One vessel was hijacked for a period of five days. One additional low level attack occurred off Matadi, in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Notable incidents

Whilst most attacks in West African anchorages are instances of low level armed robbery, two of the incidents off Lome in April highlighted the risk of more serious attacks.

On 12 April two men armed with automatic weapons boarded an anchored tanker until Togolese naval assistance appeared; the crew mustered in a citadel which ultimately deterred the attack.

On 30 April Panama-flagged product tanker, BW Rhine, was hijacked from Lome anchorage. Contact was lost with the vessel after the owners received a phone call from the master believed to have been acting under duress. The vessel was released after being held offshore for five days whilst an unknown amount of its refined petroleum cargo was stolen. The circumstances surrounding the hijacking highlight the vulnerability that is now faced by crews operating in the region. A total of 11 tankers were hijacked in 2011 from Nigeria, Benin and Togo, four of which were snatched from anchorages off Lagos, Cotonou and Lome. Hijacked vessels are usually held for around 10 days, and crew members are likely to experience far higher levels of violence as they are not seen as a ransomable commodity.

Much attention has focused on the expanding operational range of pirates as attacks have occurred up to 110NM offshore. Anchorages in the region, however, represent a high-risk area for vessels as

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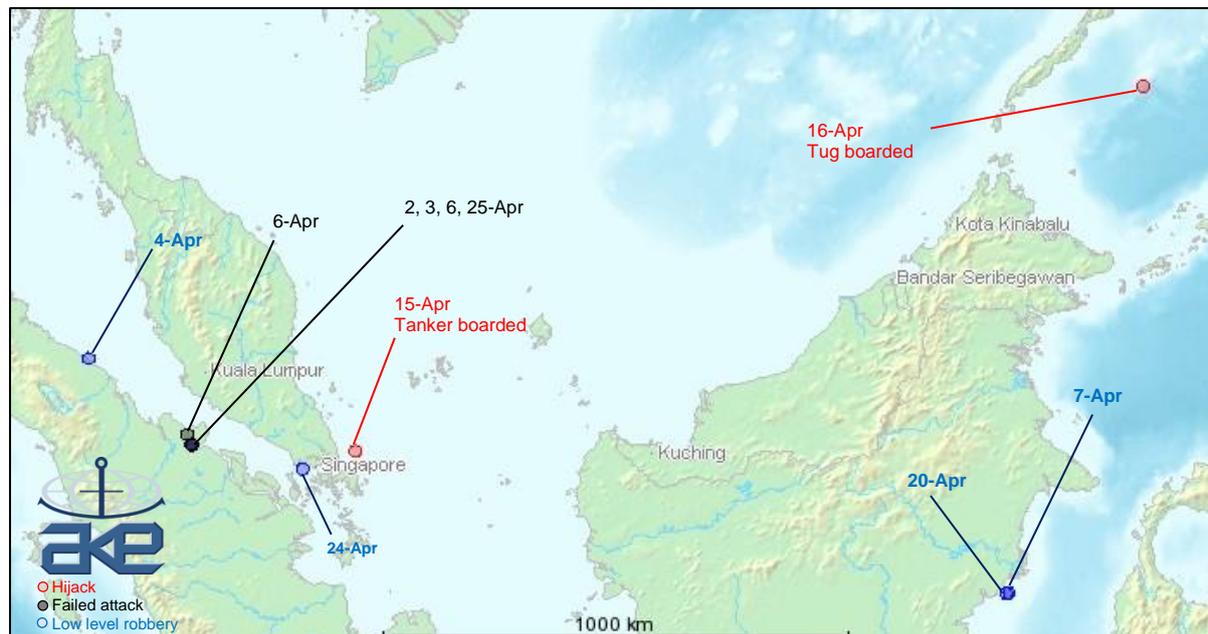


they are poorly patrolled and easily accessed by both opportunistic criminals and more organised pirates alike. Crews are advised to employ basic security measures including 24-hour watch rotas, emergency alarms and deck lighting to detect and deter attacks as early as possible.

Political/regulatory developments

No significant political or regulatory developments occurred in the region, although the IMB's latest quarterly report highlighted the growing threat of piracy off West Africa which may attract further international attention to regional maritime security issues.

Asia



Current Analysis

Total pirate activity in the region nearly tripled from last month's total of four attacks. However, the jump in attacks does not necessarily reflect an increase in risk; last month's low total was likely caused by incidents going unreported. Of the 11 attacks recorded, two of them were serious instances of vessels being boarded underway. The remaining eight attacks were instances of attempted or successful robbery, most of which occurred in Dumai and Samarinda anchorages in Indonesia.

Notable incidents

On 15 April seven armed men boarded a Panama-flagged tanker 20NM from Horsburgh lighthouse off Singapore. The crew were threatened and robbed before the attackers escaped. On 16 April a Malaysia-flagged tug named Wantas 6 and its barge was reported missing after communication was lost off Batam, Indonesia. The barge was discovered floating off Palawan with its containers forced open. On 30 April, a Vietnamese fishing vessel rescued the crew from their life raft in the South China sea.

Political/regulatory developments

On 16 April, fresh accusations of illegal incursions in a disputed area of the South China Sea surfaced. The Philippines have lodged a new diplomatic protest, accusing Chinese vessels of harassing a Filipino-flagged archaeological research ship at Scarborough Shoal on 11 April. This was the latest in a series of Filipino complaints of Chinese vessels interfering with activities within Manila's exclusive economic zone, which extends for 370km from its coastline under international law. China has repeatedly insisted it was acting legally within its own waters.

China has gradually asserted its claims to the disputed areas over the past three years. Its actions are partly being shaped by the active US interest in the region. Regarding the current situation, tensions have been exacerbated by the joint Philippines-US naval exercises from 16 to 27 April near the disputed area. In March 2011, Philippine president Benigno Aquino said the country is open to US troops stopping here more often. Though the Philippine military is relatively weak compared, China's behaviour is pushing at the Aquino administration toward appealing for a greater American presence. Yet the lack of a US statement has been noticeable by its absence.

Nevertheless, Beijing does possess the means and resources to act more boldly in defence of its

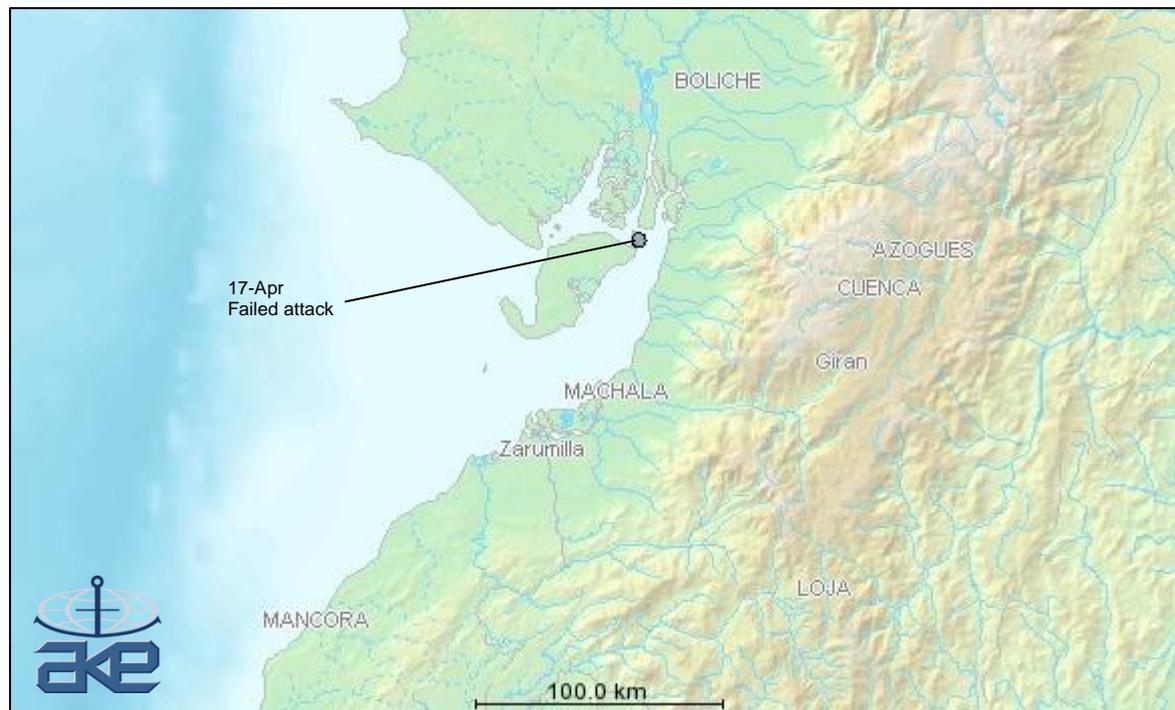
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perceived territorial integrity. Both the Philippines and Vietnam have been more aggressive at offering new areas for exploration and investment to foreign companies. This has drawn the attention and ire of Beijing, who will continue to send warnings to foreign enterprises engaging in activity.

Yet incidents in the South China Sea involving fishing boats or energy survey vessels are becoming more frequent, demonstrating the lack of any common rules or understanding to resolve competing territorial claims. The Philippines has asked China to bring the dispute to the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea for arbitration. However China prefers to deal bilaterally with claimants, and will deter attempts to internationalise the issue.

Americas



Current Analysis

Just one attack was officially recorded in the region last month. On 17 April seven robbers in a small fast craft alongside a container ship underway during a river passage. Alert crew noticed the robbers with a ladder attempting to board and raised the alarm. Seeing the alert crew the robbers aborted the attempt and moved away. Opportunistic attacks on vessels approaching and leaving Guayaquil inner anchorage occur with relative frequency; early detection of attacks through crew alertness is sufficient to deter would-be attackers.

It is highly unlikely that only one attack was made throughout the region during April; under reporting of incidents is common and operators should be advised that instances of opportunistic criminality, petty theft and armed robbery are likely to occur more frequently than is officially reported. In addition, attacks on local fishing vessels, particularly off the northern coast of Guyana, Venezuela and occasionally Suriname, occur with relative frequency but are unlikely to be officially reported. Such incidents are evidence of criminal activity spreading to water, which, in the longer term, could affect foreign vessels if left unchecked.



Currently Held Vessels

Name	Date Taken	Flag	Type	Crew
Naham 3	26 Mar 12	Oman	Fishing Vessel	15
Royal Grace	2 Mar 12	Panama	Cargo	23
Free Goddess	8 Feb 12	Liberia	Cargo	21
Liquid Velvet	31 Oct 11	Marshall Island	Tanker	22
Aride*	30 Oct 11	Seychelles	Fishing Vessel	2
Fardous	13 Feb 11	Yemen	Fishing Vessel	8
Shiuh Fu No. 1	25 Dec 10	Taiwan	Fishing Vessel	26
Orna	20 Dec 10	Panama	Cargo Vessel	19
Albedo	26 Nov 10	Malaysia	Cargo Vessel	23
Choizil*	2 Nov 10	South Africa	Yacht	2
Prantalay 11, 12	20 Apr 10	Thai	Fishing Boats	57
Jih-Chun Tsai 68*	30 Mar 10	Taiwan	Fishing Vessel	11
Iceberg	29 Mar 10	Panama	Roll-On Roll-Off	24
Socotra 1	25 Dec 09	Yemen	Cargo Vessel	6

*Vessel abandoned or destroyed, crew still held

Released Vessels

Name	Vessel Type	Flag	Crew	Date Taken	Date Released	Days in Captivity	Ransom (US\$M)
Enrico levoli	Tanker	Italy	18	27 Dec 11	23 Apr 12	118	9
Leila	Roll-On Roll-Off	Panama	15	16 Feb 12	12 Apr 12	56	0.25

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