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10 December 2019

To: All Masters, Ship Security Officers, Company Security Officers of Hong Kong registered ships, Hong Kong Shipowners, Hong Kong Ship Managers and Hong Kong Ship Operators

Security and Quality Advisory No.56

Piracy and Armed Robbery Incidents Report by Hong Kong ships in 2019

Up to December 2019, there had been seven incidents of piracy and armed robbery reported by Hong Kong registered ships.

A very serious incident was recently reported that armed pirates attacked and boarded an oil tanker underway in international waters, west of Bioko island (03.05.5N; 007.06.8E) in Gulf of Guinea Region, nineteen crew, including the master were kidnapped away from ship and seven crew left onboard.

Two incidents were reported that robbers boarded the ships and robbed the ships' stores and engine spares in Malacca Straits; One incident was reported that attackers tried to board the ships at anchorage near Caofeidian, China; One incident was reported that the robbers boarded the ships in port of Casablanca, and equipments in the ship's liferafts were stolen; Two incidents were reported that the robbers boarded the ships in port of Lagos and Diosso with ships' stores being stolen and duty AB was injured.

This advisory is to remind the ship masters, shipowners, ship managers, ship operators to pay particular attention and keep vigilant watch when ships are in these high risk areas (including Gulf of Guinea Region, Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Indian Ocean, Arabian Sea, Southeast Asia, and South America, etc.), take all necessary measures specified in the updated "Best Management Practices to Deter Piracy and Enhance Maritime Security in the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea", the "Guidelines for Owners, Operators and Masters for Protection against Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea Region", the "Regional Guide to Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia", and the "Global Counter Piracy Guidance for Companies, Masters and Seafarers".

Hong Kong Marine Department has issued Security and Quality Advisory No.14 and No.27 regarding carriage of security consultants, firearms and ammunition onboard Hong Kong registered ships. The Marine Department encourages the carriage of experienced security consultants to assist the master and crew in following BMP requirements onboard in case of pirate attacks.

Hong Kong registered ships when transiting the Gulf of Aden should join the Chinese Navy Vessels Escort Arrangement if protection is sought. It is strongly recommended that Hong Kong registered ships shall participate in Voluntary Report Areas, such as, MSCHOA and UKMTO voluntary registration and reporting scheme, Maritime Domain Awareness for Trade - Gulf of Guinea (MDAT-GOG) voluntary reporting scheme.

It should be emphasized that prompt reporting is extremely important for remedial measures to be taken locally and for the formulation and institution of more effective preventive measures at regional and international level in the fight of piracy. In addition to reporting all incidents of piracy and armed robbery on board to the nearest Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) or port Authorities, Hong Kong registered ships are requested to report the incidents to Hong Kong Marine Department (Email: hkmrcc@mardep.gov.hk).

Yours faithfully,

No signature on website copy

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Senior Surveyor /Security & Quality Assurance Section
for Director of Marine