



REPORT ON
ARMED ROBBERY AND PIRACY
IN SOUTHEAST ASIA 2006



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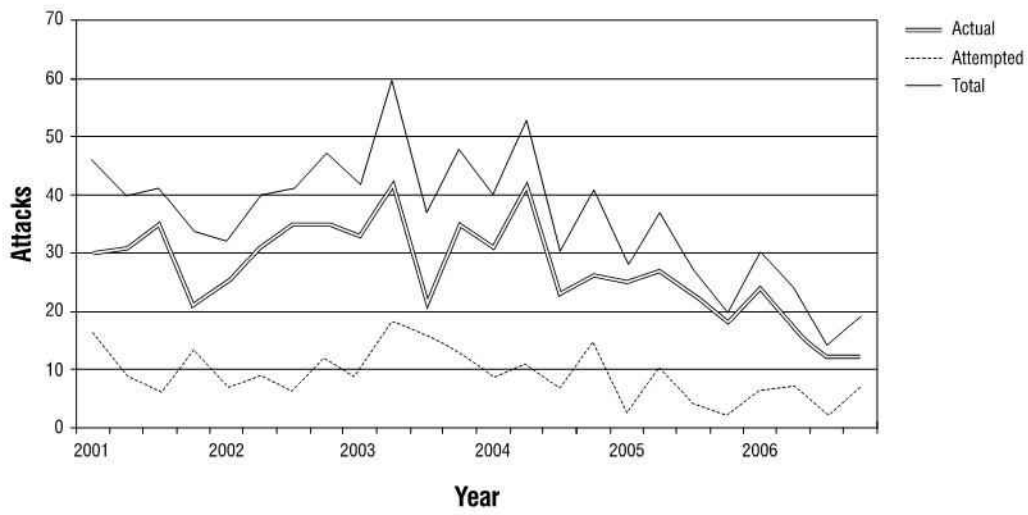
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REGIONAL TRENDS

There were a total of 87 recorded cases of piracy and armed robbery in Southeast Asia for the year 2006. Out of that total figure, 65 cases were actual attacks whilst the remaining 22 were attempted incidences. The 4th quarter of 2006 has maintained the lowest number of piracy and armed-robbery activities in Southeast Asia for the last five years. Similar to the previous quarter, there were 12 cases of actual attacks being reported during the 4th quarter 2006, 1/3 lesser compared to the 4th quarter of 2005. Although the number of attempted

attacks during the 4th quarter of 2006 has risen by more than 3 fold as compared to the 4th quarter of 2005, where 7 attempted incidents took place, this figure is still relatively low when compared to the 4th quarter data over the last five years. Even though the total number of attacks during the 4th quarter 2006 was slightly higher than that of the 3rd quarter, the overall number of attacks in the region appears to be trending downward. (Refer to Figure 1)

FIGURE 1
Regional Trends by Quarters 2001-2006

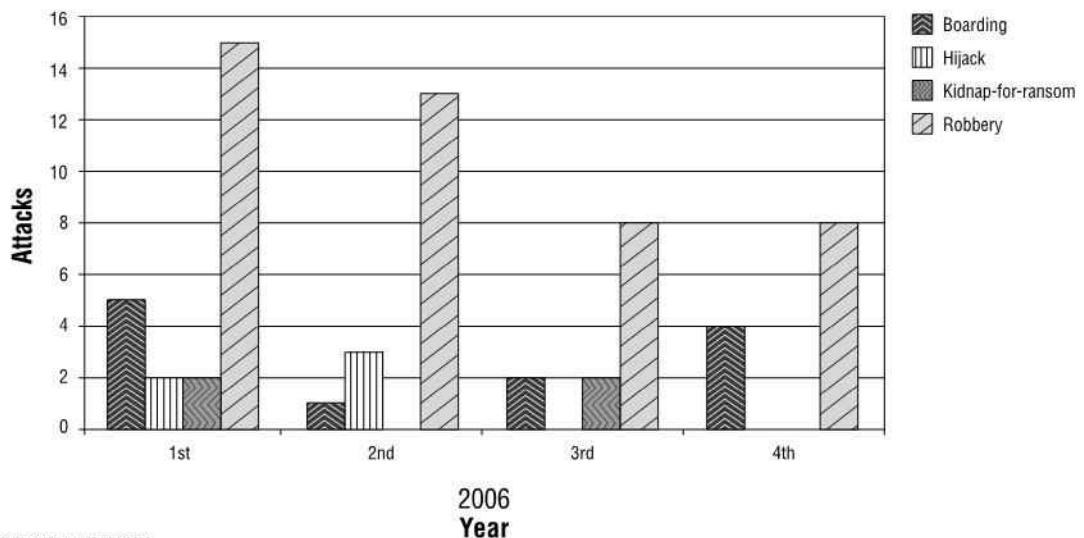


TYPES OF ATTACKS

The main type of attacks on ships transiting the sea lanes of Southeast Asia is shown in Figure 2. Theft and/or robbery remained the main type of attack being carried out, suggesting that small scale attacks remained as the main challenge in dealing with the problem of piracy within the region, and especially in Indonesia. Out of the 62 actual attacks perpetrated within Southeast Asia, 41 of such cases involved theft and/or robbery. Although the 4th quarter in 2006 recorded the lowest number of attacks when compared to the same quarter over

the last 5 years, and that these kind of attacks are trending downwards, one should not be too quick in making similar conclusion for the whole year as the average 3rd and 4th quarter figures over the last 5 years tend to be lower when compared to figures for the 1st half of each year. Small scale attacks are the common *modus operandi* adopted by perpetrators within the region. These attacks involve smaller boats with outboard motors that are easy to manoeuvre, and the perpetrators are usually armed with knives or small-arms.

FIGURE 2
Types of Actual Attacks 2006

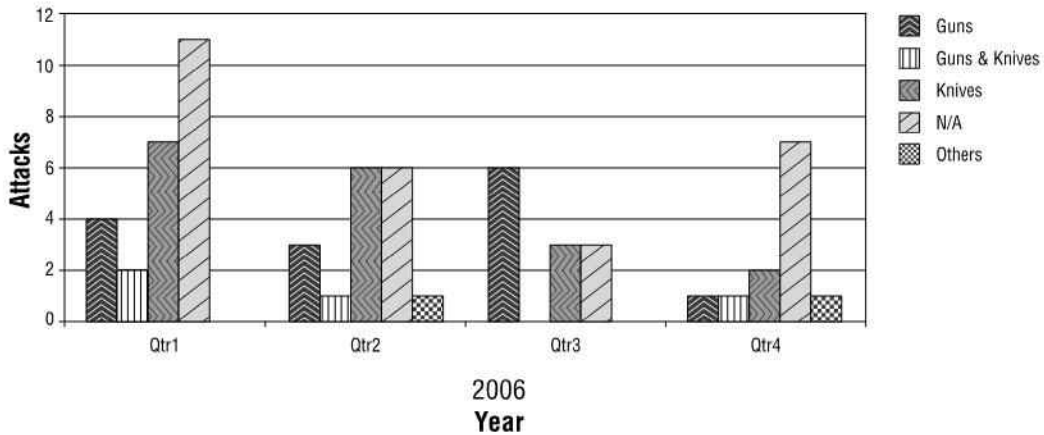


TYPES OF WEAPONS

Data collected on the types of weapons used during an attack is often not comprehensive as an average 1/3 of reported cases each year omit such information. However, observation of the available data as shown in Figure 3 suggests that more attention should be paid to the types of weapons that armed robbers use as the use of small arms, that is guns, is getting increasingly common. The yearly average since 2003 shows that more than

half of the actual attacks were carried out by pirates armed with guns. However this trend is not reflected in the comparison of 4th quarter data over the previous 5 years. Generally though, an analysis of 4th quarter weapon use trends over the last 5 years suggest that knives were the weapon of choice for conducting armed robbery and piracy attacks.

FIGURE 3
Types of Weapons 2006

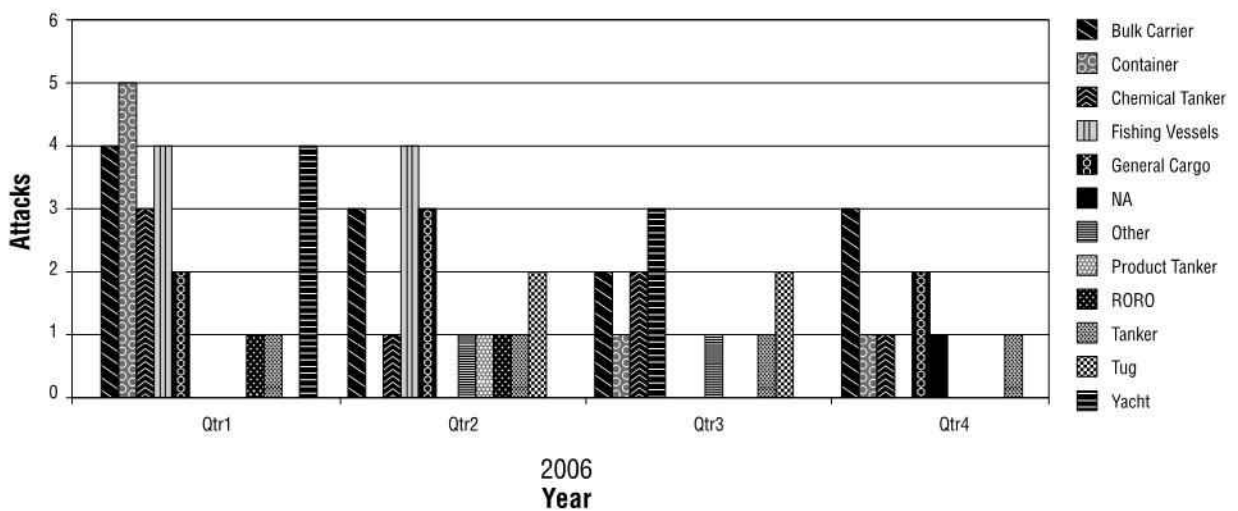


TYPE OF VESSELS

The actual attacks by type of vessels in 2006 are shown in Figure 4. An examination of the consolidated annual trend over the last 5 years shows that bulk carriers were the most common target in the region. This could be attributed to the slower transit speed of the bulk carriers, their low freeboard, and smaller crew. However, the trend of bulk carriers being the most common target is not obvious when examining the

quarterly data for the year 2006. Although more bulk carriers were attacked compared to other types of vessels during the 4th quarter of 2006, the same could not be said for the rest of the quarter in 2006. This could suggest that a greater diversity of vessels are now being targeted. Besides attacks on bulk carriers, there were also a high number of attacks on fishing vessels as well as the different types of tankers.

FIGURE 4
Actual Attacks by Types of Vessels

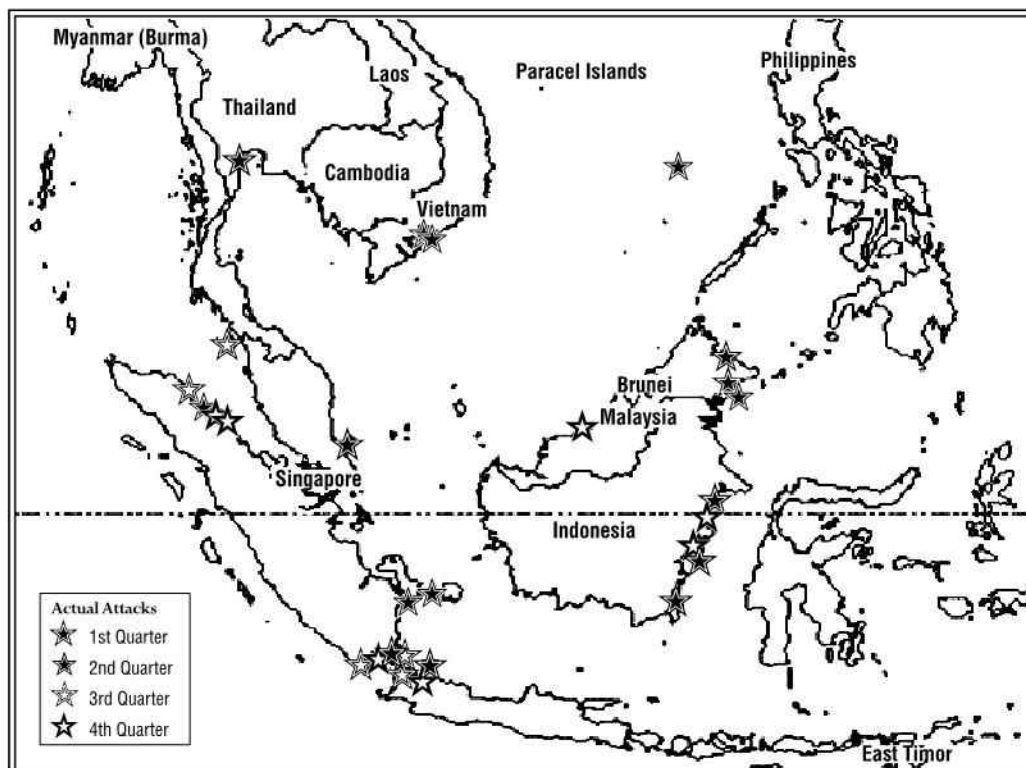


LOCATION OF ATTACKS

The fair weather during the 2nd quarter of each year could have contributed to the higher incidence rate as compared to the 4th quarter of each year, as the calmer sea conditions may have made it more conducive for small scale armed robbery activities. This argument is best illustrated in the case of the Malacca Strait. During the 2nd quarter, more incidents occurred further out at sea as compared to the 4th quarter of the 2006. As shown in Figure 4, the 4th quarter incident rates are relatively lower and occur closer to the shore. As the monsoon period generally occurs within the 4th quarter of any year, the sea robbers may thus have limited their activities closer to shore to avoid the

higher sea states and thus lower the risk to their operations. Although the number of incidents may be relatively lower during the 4th quarter of the year, ships and vessels remained vulnerable at ports or anchorage throughout the year. The majority of the attacks that take place annually are those that take place at locations closer to shore, and within the vicinity of the ports or anchorages (Refer to Figure 5). This might suggest that ships on local voyages are attacked more often than those on international voyages. This is because ships on international voyages tend to transit on the sea lanes, whilst those on regional voyages tend to transit closer to shore.

FIGURE 5
Location of Attacks during 2006



MALACCA STRAIT

Generally, the number of attacks recorded during the 4th quarter of 2006 was amongst the lowest in the last 5 years. A total of 16 cases were reported each year for both 2005 and 2006. 12 actual attacks were reported for each of these years, and this figure constitute to only half of the average number of actual attacks in the Southeast Asia region for the last 5 years. Although there were only 3 reported cases of actual attacks during the 4th quarter of 2006, it could still be considered as an increase since there were no reported cases during the same period in 2005. Distinct from the general trend where figures in the last five years have shown that more than half of the annual actual attacks would take place during the 1st and 2nd quarter of the year; majority of the actual attacks in 2006 took place during the 2nd half of the year. This observation must however be considered with the fact that the total number of attacks during the 2nd half of 2006 is comparable to the last 5 years. The main distinction drawn is the fact that there was far less incidences that were perpetrated during the first half of the year. Similar to the same period in 2005, the 4th quarter of 2006 had a lower incident rate as compared to the 3rd quarter 2006. What would have seemed to be an upward trend during

the 3rd quarter reminds us that there is no place for complacency in terms of security in the Malacca Straits even though figures do show a downward trend since 2005. Although the figure is not excessive when compared to previous records, it should still be a reason for concern. This is because the majority of the attacks involved the use of small arms; and that 2 out of the 5 of such attacks were in fact cases of kidnap-for-ransom. The main concern for the Malacca Straits would perhaps be that the pirate and armed robber might be evolving towards more violent and sophisticated operations. This is because the majority of the kidnap-for-ransom cases recorded within the region were perpetrated in the Malacca Straits. Out of the 33 cases reported during 2001-2006, 28 cases took place in the Malacca Straits. Although not reflected in the 4th quarter data of 2006, fishing vessels remained as one of the most vulnerable type of vessels operating in the Malacca Strait. Different types of tankers were also common targets, constituting more than 1/3 of the total number of attacks in 2006. Figure 6 shows that vessels around the vicinity of the Belawan and Dumai ports and anchorages were most prone to being attacked.

FIGURE 6
Location of Actual Attacks in the Malacca Strait 2006

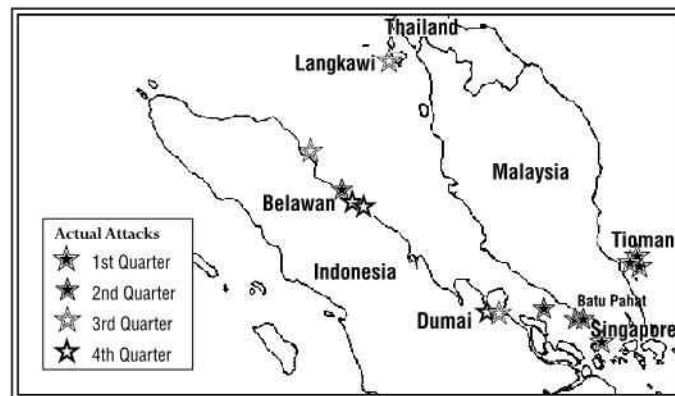
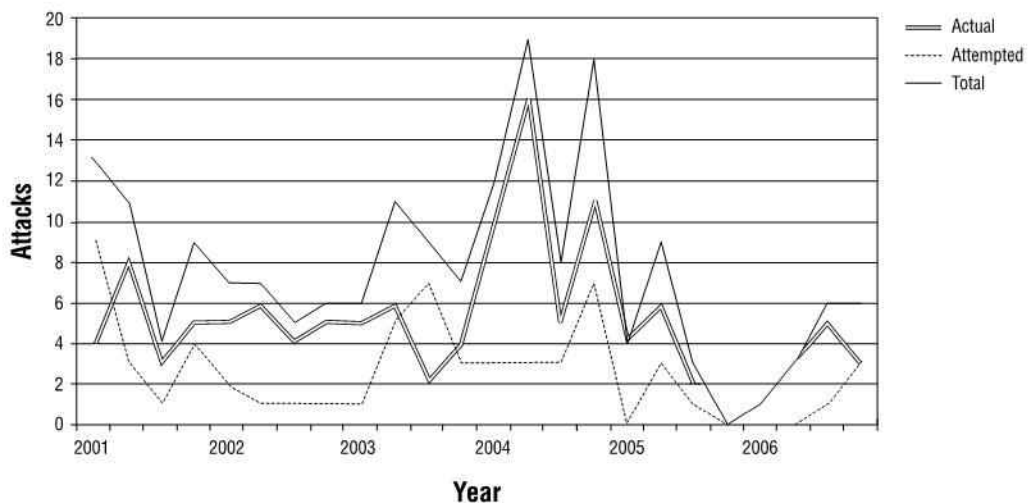


FIGURE 7
Number of Attacks in Malacca Strait 2001-2006



SOUTH CHINA SEA

There was no reported piracy and armed-robbery attacks in the South China Sea during the 4th Quarter of 2006. There were only 2 actual attacks in the year 2006; both of which took place during the 2nd Quarter of the year. Since 2004, there was no reported case of attacks during the 4th Quarter of the year, further supporting the view that weather does play a large part in affecting the modus operandi of piracy and armed-robbery

activities. To date, there were far more attacks along the coast line, port and anchorages, compared to open sea activity. Similar to regional trend, theft and robbery were the main types of attacks, where guns were commonly used. Bulk carriers and tankers were often the victims of such illegal activity but because of the small number of reported cases, it is difficult to discern a particular trend.

FIGURE 8
Location of Actual Attacks in South China Sea 2006

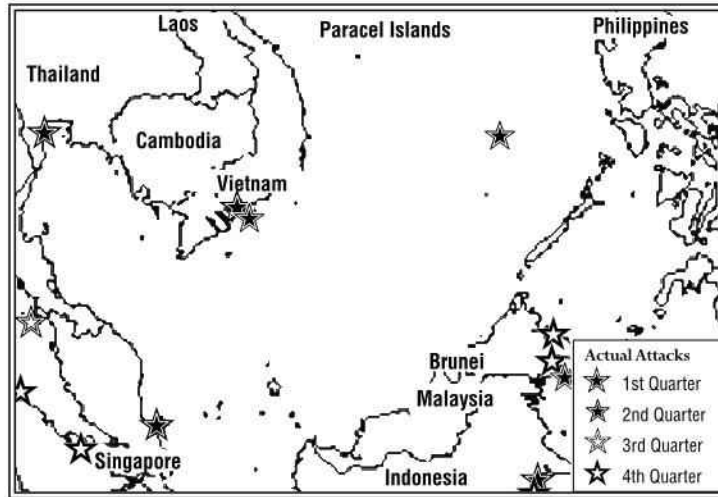
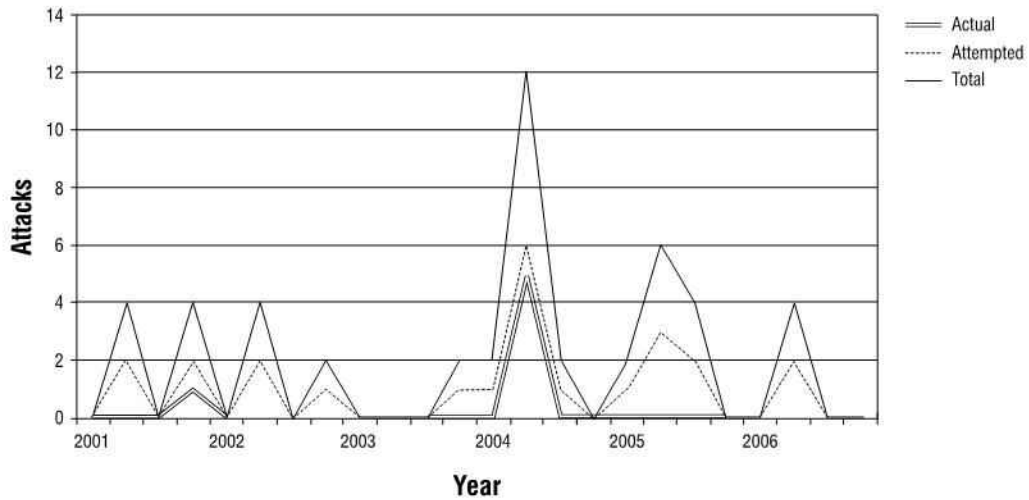


FIGURE 9
Number of Attacks at South China Sea 2001-2006



STRAITS IN INDONESIA

Generally Indonesia has been experiencing a lower incident rate of piracy since the 3rd quarter of 2005. Even so, most attacks in the region still occur in Indonesian waters. Apart from those situated along the Malacca Straits, ports and anchorages along the Sunda and Makassar Straits recorded

some of the highest incidences of piracy and armed robbery. The majority of attacks in Indonesia comprised of theft or robbery, and perpetrated within the vicinity of a port or anchorage.

SUNDA STRAIT

The location of actual attacks in the Sunda Strait for 2006 is shown in Figure 10. The Sunda Strait is one of the hot spots in Indonesia that has recorded the most cases of piracy and armed-robbery attacks. 17 out of the 25 cases recorded in Indonesia since the beginning of the 2006 had taken place within the vicinity of the Sunda Strait. Home to the Tanjung Priok Anchorage, Merak Anchorage and Jakarta Anchorage, theft and robbery were the more common types of attacks, contributing to $\frac{2}{3}$ of the numbers of actual attacks, many of which were armed with knives. Bulk carriers and containers were the common targets of such attacks over the last 5 years.

In contrast to the downward trend observed in the region, the number of attacks in 2006 for the Sunda Strait was somewhat comparable to the last 5 years. More importantly, one should also note the rather low figures on reported attempted attacks. Two separate conclusions may be drawn from those figures. The first is that there has always been under-reporting on piracy and armed robbery cases in the Sunda Strait, thus affecting the actual figures collected, especially when it involved attempted incidences. Another interpretation of the low figures of attempted attacks could be because of the high success rate of such attacks.

FIGURE 10
Location of Actual Attacks in Sunda Strait 2006

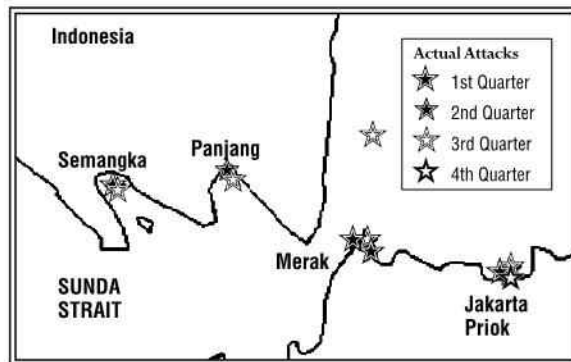
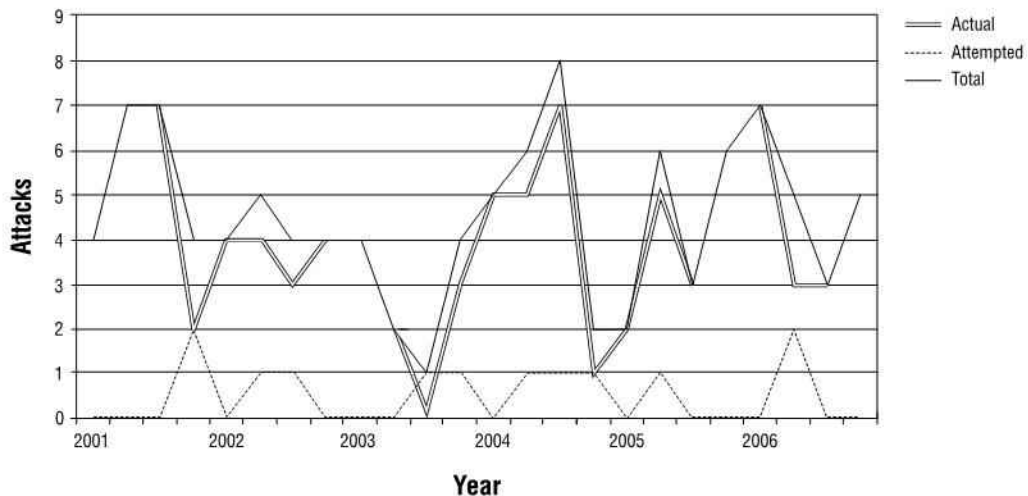


FIGURE 11
Number of Attacks at Sunda Strait 2001-2006



MAKASSAR STRAITS

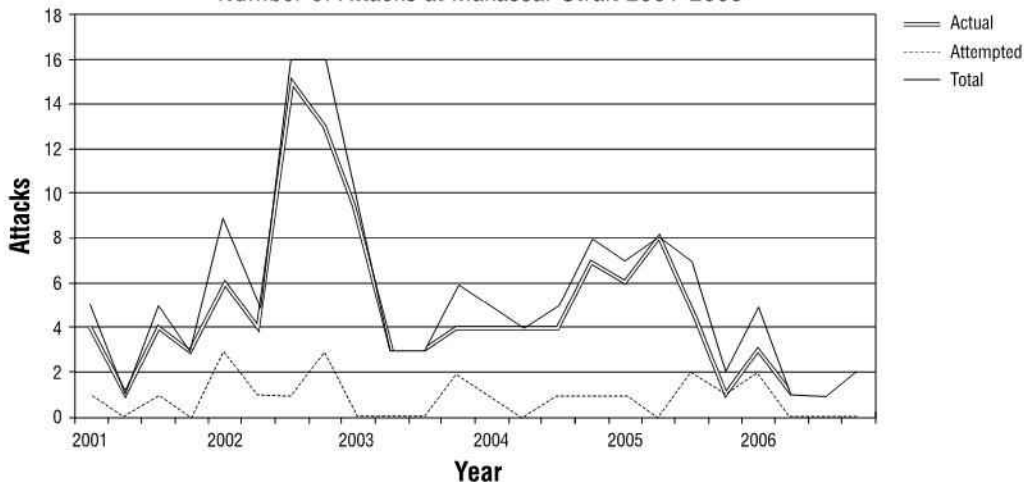
Balikipapan Anchorage, Samarinda Anchorage and Pulau Laut Anchorage located along Makassar Strait have also been consistently recording high numbers of attacks over the years. Although numbers had dropped dramatically in 2006, as shown in Figure 13, it should still be a point of focus should the trend starts shifting upwards. Reflecting a similar trend within

Indonesia, the most common type of attacks at the Makassar Strait were theft and robbery. Different types of vessels were attacked in 2006; but observation of previous year's records clearly show that bulk carriers were the favorite targets of all attacks along the Makassar Strait.

FIGURE 12
Location of Actual Attacks in Makassar Strait 2006



FIGURE 13
Number of Attacks at Makassar Strait 2001-2006



CONCLUSION

In 2006, the number of piracy and armed-robbery attacks within Southeast Asia has been the lowest in the last 5 years. However, it is too early to tell if this figure will remain low in the years to come. Neither would it be prudent to start attributing success to any of the efforts implemented thus far for the purposes of dealing with this regional problem.

One should also start paying more attention to the Sunda Strait as it has been recording relatively high number of attacks with the region for the past 3 years. Comparative figures show that the piracy and armed robbery incidents in the Malacca Straits is trending downward. As commercial vessels are more able to enhance their security capabilities, small scale fishing vessels operating in the region remained the most vulnerable. Coupled with the fact that recent attacks are getting more violent in

nature, more ought to be done to ensure the safety and security of all users of the regional waterways.

One other concern that contributes towards the need to maintain high vigilance in Southeast Asia would be the risk of terrorist attacks. On the 9th November 2006, Indonesian authorities boarded one MV Rose at the Cita Tubindo port in Batam, only to find one container filled with explosive materials. Although there was no evidence to date suggesting that such materials were transported for terrorist purposes within the region, one cannot negate the possibility of such cargo being robbed or hijacked, thus being used for unknown ends. As conditions in the Indonesia and the Malacca Strait continues to be a cause for concern, continued efforts are necessary to maintain if not improve on the current conditions of safety and security.

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