

**FACTSHEET ON THE REGIONAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT ON
COMBATING PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY AGAINST SHIPS IN ASIA
(RECAAP)**

What is ReCAAP?

1. The Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) is the first regional government-to-government agreement to promote and enhance cooperation against piracy and armed robbery in Asia.

2. Proposed by the then Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi in October 2001, the ReCAAP initiative aims to enhance multilateral cooperation amongst 16 regional countries, namely the ASEAN 10 plus Japan, China, Republic of Korea, India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh to combat sea piracy and armed robbery against ships in the region. After three years of negotiations, the ReCAAP Agreement was finalised in November 2004 in Tokyo. Singapore is the depositary of the ReCAAP Agreement, which was open for signature on 28 February 2005.

3. The ReCAAP Agreement entered into force on 4 September 2006. To date, fourteen (14) countries have signed and ratified the ReCAAP Agreement, namely, Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, Laos, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam. Malaysia and Indonesia have also indicated their preparedness to cooperate with the ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ISC). This commitment was first made in August 2005 at the 4th Tripartite Ministerial Meeting of the Littoral States of the Straits of Malacca and Singapore held in Batam, and was most recently reiterated at the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Meeting on the Straits of Malacca and Singapore held in Kuala Lumpur in September 2006. Singapore looks forward to the signature and ratification by the remaining ReCAAP countries in due course.

4. The significance of the ReCAAP Agreement has been recognised by regional and international organisations. For example, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Inter-sessional Support Group Meeting on Confidence Building and Preventive Diplomacy held on 18 – 19 October 2005 noted the importance of agreements such as ReCAAP in enhancing maritime security in the region. The September 2005 IMO Meeting on the Straits of Malacca and Singapore held in Jakarta noted the importance of ReCAAP in addressing piracy and armed robbery against ships, and the entry into force of ReCAAP on 4 September 2006. The launch of the ISC in Singapore in November was subsequently welcomed at the September 2006 IMO Meeting on the Straits of Malacca and Singapore held in Kuala Lumpur. The Plenary of the 60th session of the United Nations General Assembly also adopted Resolution 60/30 of 29 November 2005 on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, which welcomed "the progress in regional cooperation" through the ReCAAP Agreement and urged States to "give urgent attention to adopting, concluding and implementing cooperation agreements at

the regional level in high risk areas".

What does ReCAAP consist of?

5. The ReCAAP Agreement sets out obligations undertaken by member countries to effect measures to prevent and suppress piracy and armed robbery against ships. It also lays out a framework for cooperation among member countries, based on three main pillars of information sharing, capacity building and operational cooperation, with information sharing as the main pillar. Sharing of piracy and armed robbery information can help improve operational cooperation when responding to incidents as well as enable the development of more effective prevention measures.

6. As a platform for cooperation, the ReCAAP countries will establish an *Information Sharing Centre (ISC)*. The ISC was officially launched on 29 Nov 2006 in Singapore by Mr Raymond Lim, Minister for Transport and Second Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Headquarters Agreement, which establishes the ReCAAP ISC as an independent, international body, was signed by Minister Lim (representing the Government of Singapore), and Mr Yoshiaki Ito, the Executive Director of the ReCAAP ISC.

7. The ISC is an international organisation and includes representatives from ReCAAP member countries. This is the first time that regional governments have institutionalised their cooperation in combating piracy and armed robbery against ships in the form of a permanent body with full-time staff. Singapore will be the host of the ISC.

8. The ISC will undertake the following activities:

- facilitate communications, information exchange and operational co-operation between the participating governments to improve incident response by member countries;
- collate and prepare statistics and analysis of the piracy and sea robbery situation in the Asia region, and:
- support capacity building efforts.

9. Through the above activities, the ReCAAP ISC will help to improve the national response and capability of member countries to prevent and suppress piracy and sea robbery in the region. Through its periodic reports made available to the public, the ISC will contribute to the pool of information which shipowners and shipmasters access to help them take preventive measures against piracy and armed robbery attacks in regional waters.

Singapore - Host of the Information Sharing Centre (ISC)

10. As an independent international organisation, the ISC will have its own premises situated in the NOL Building along Alexandra Road. ST Electronics has also been appointed to develop the Information Network (IFN) System to support the communication flow and exchange between ISC and the ReCAAP member countries. Details of the IFN system can be found in Annex A.

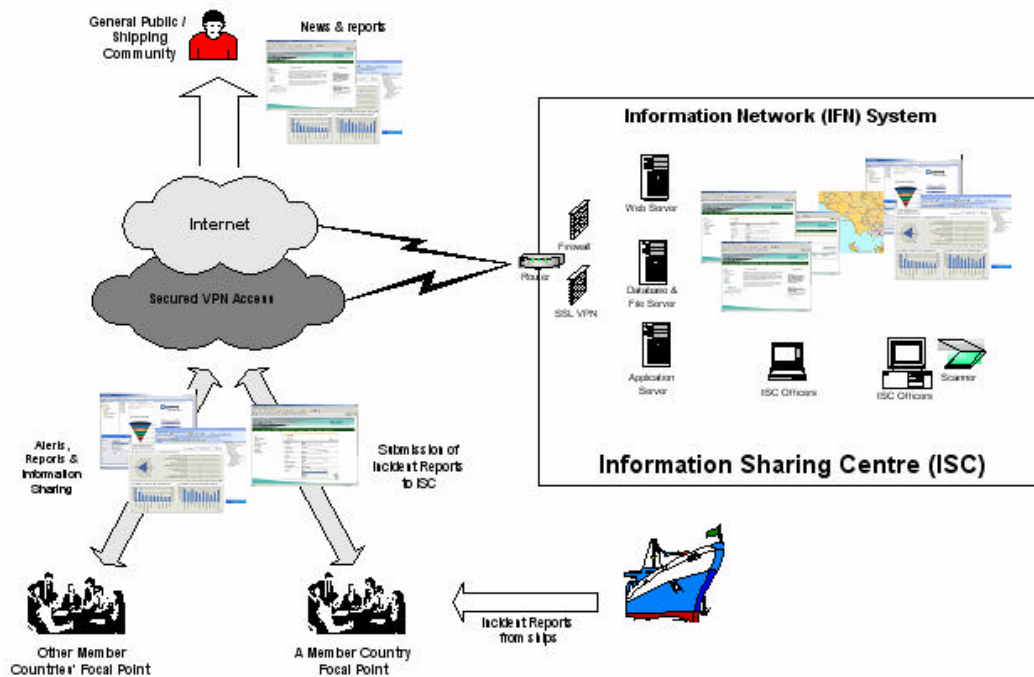
11. A training workshop was recently held from 2 – 4 October 2006, to conduct training on the IFN for the Focal Points (e.g. national coast guard, maritime authority) which were designated by each individual ReCAAP member country as the points of contact for the ISC. This was followed by the Pre-Governing Council Preparatory Meeting from 5 – 6 October 2006, which was held to finalise preparations for the first Governing Council Meeting from 28 – 30 November 2006. The Governing Council comprises one representative from each ReCAAP Contracting Party, and oversees policies guiding the work of the ReCAAP ISC. The Governing Council representative for the Republic of Singapore is the Chief Executive of the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore, BG (NS) Tay Lim Heng.

Singapore's contributions

12. The expenses of the ISC will be funded largely by voluntary contributions from the ReCAAP member countries. As the host, Singapore has generously contributed towards the operations of the ISC. For example, Singapore has borne the entire start-up costs of the ISC, including the development of the IFN and provision of suitable premises to house the ISC. The start-up costs of the ISC are estimated to be about S\$2.2 million.

13. In addition, Singapore will be contributing towards the annual running costs of the ISC, such as the rental, maintenance and utility charges. Singapore will also be bearing the salaries of the staff of the ISC who are Singapore citizens or permanent residents. Singapore's annual contribution to the ISC is estimated to be about S\$1.5 million.

OVERVIEW OF THE IFN SYSTEM



The IFN System is a 24-hour, secure, web-based information system that supports the ISC in the collection, organization, analysis and sharing of piracy and armed robbery information among ReCAAP member countries. It links up the ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ISC) in Singapore with the designated Focal Points of ReCAAP member countries to enable the dissemination and exchange of information. These Focal Points (e.g. national coast guard, maritime authority) are designated by each individual ReCAAP member country as the points of contact for the ISC.

When a piracy or sea robbery incident occurs, the victim reports to the closest Focal Point which would respond to the incident as well as submit an incident report to the ISC through the IFN. The ISC would be able to communicate with this Focal Point and other Focal Points via the IFN, as well as disseminate alerts to other Focal Points. The shipping community can gain access to information on incidents through the ISC website.