

Robbery at anchor – vessel security

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A members' vessel was robbed whilst at anchor.

What happened?

The incident occurred in Indonesian waters, in the hours of darkness, some three hours after anchoring. The duty officer, whilst on his rounds on the port side bridge wing, sighted a person on the poop deck. On being shouted at, the person tried to hide behind a ventilator.

The duty officer raised the alarm, alerting the Master and crew, and sent the duty AB down to check. While on the way down to the poop deck, the duty AB saw two more persons, armed with knives, who made threatening gestures to him. He immediately retreated back to the bridge.

On noticing that the crew were alerted and active, the intruders (5 in number) lowered some bags into boat, jumped overboard and escaped. A thorough search of the vessel was carried out for further unauthorised persons and for items lost. It was discovered that auxiliary engine spares to the value of around 12,000 USD, were missing. No crew were injured.

What were the causes?

Onboard investigation established that the intruders had boarded via the poop deck from a small boat, cut open the padlock securing the engine room entrance watertight door, and thus gained access to the engine room.

The incident was reported to concerned authorities. The Master and crew were aware of the risk of piracy in the waters through which the vessel was travelling and had implemented some counter-piracy measures. However, an effective deterrent – a deck piracy watch – had not been maintained.

What lessons were learned?

Our member recommended:

- Pre-arrival security briefing should include anticipated threats and planning.
- Vessel management should remain updated with world-wide maritime security concerns.
- A deck piracy watch in locations known for piracy.

This is the first such security-based report passed to IMCA by members; there are no similar IMCA incidents to which members' attention can be drawn.

Members are encouraged to submit incidents of this sort to IMCA in order to continue to raise awareness of vessel security.

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