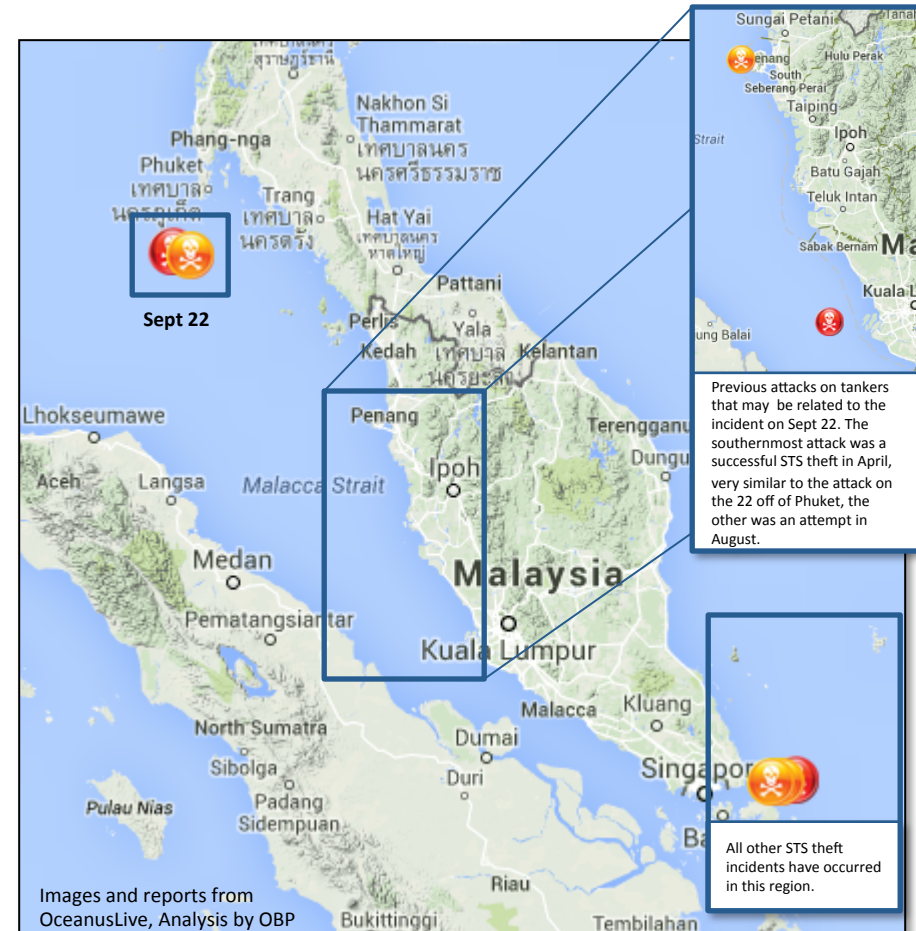


Spread of Oil Theft in SE Asia



1st Incident at 0106 LT: Six armed pirates boarded a tanker enroute to Yangon, Myanmar at 0106 LT in position 07:10N – 098:12E, around 34nm SSW of Phuket Island, Thailand. Pirates tied up the 2nd officer and duty AB on the bridge and mustered the rest of the crew in the Mess Room. The 2nd officer managed to activate the SSAS alert unnoticed by the pirates who later escaped after stealing all crew personal effects and cash.

2nd Incident at 2130 LT: Seven pirates armed with guns boarded a product tanker enroute to Penang using a speed boat and hijacked the vessel at 2130 LT in position 07:12N - 098:00E, around 38nm SW of Phuket, Thailand. Pirates tied all crew members hands, stole all the crew's cash and personal items. They transferred the ship bunker to their mother vessel. Once transfer completed, the pirates cut off the vessels navigation and radio equipment and release the crew. The crew managed to sail the tanker to a safe port.



Analysis: The tactics and procedures used in the early morning attack are consistent with those used in STS theft incidents. However, no STS occurred. Other incidents elsewhere near Malaysia have occurred when a tanker is carrying an undesirable cargo, so the STS was abandoned and the pirates settled for robbing the crew. In this instance, that is most likely what happened. The tanker may have been carrying unrefined product or some other liquid, so the pirates abandoned the attempt. They appear to have remained in the area, or returned that evening, when they hijacked the second vessel and successfully transferred the cargo to another hijacked vessel. This over 150 nm from any previous attempts, and over 300 nm from the closest successful STS theft, and may represent expansion by an existing group into new territory, or the emergence of a new pirate gang, which may have carried out the April and August attacks in the Straits of Malacca as well. Either way, this marks the eleventh STS theft this year, 7 more than in 2011-2013 combined.