

TITLE:	SATELLITE TRACKING EQUIPMENT	DATE	06/06/2005
CATEGORY:	NAVIGATION	AREA:	ASIA

The problem of piracy in some areas of the world is one that will "not go away". Not only are cargo vessels at risk but there is a steady rise in the number of tugs and barges that are being hijacked. Investigators believe that the hijacked tug boats could be used as phantom vessels. After hijacking the identity of the tugs is changed very quickly - in one case a tug was recovered in a shipyard, her name and port of registry already changed.

A Member's tug was hijacked late last year, but due to the foresight of having a satellite tracking system fitted, both the tug and her barge (carrying coal) were recovered within 36 hours. Thankfully the crew had been landed ashore unharmed.

Satellite tracking systems are relatively inexpensive to both fit and operate and allows the operating companies to monitor a vessels position on a personal computer via an internet connection.

There are many various tracking systems available which offer differing levels of information that can be monitored, including main engine operating criteria. Systems can be purchased which also comply with SOLAS X1 - 2/6, Ship Security Alert System.

However, the purpose of this Loss Prevention Bulletin is to highlight the effectiveness of a tracking system in assisting in the recovery of a vessel in the event of a hijacking. In the incident involving our Member, no claim was made, which clearly demonstrate that the cost of the equipment was easily recovered by the unsuccessful nature of the hijacking.

If Members require any more information then please contact the Club.