

Malaysia vessel detentions

The Club would like to inform Members that the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) recently launched 'Operation Jangkar Haram', pursuing vessels which are anchored illegally in the eastern waters of Johor as reported by our correspondents Spica Services Malaysia.

The MMEA is officially urging merchant shipowners to seek permission to anchor in the eastern waters of Johor (South China Sea). It is reported that failure to do so, will result in them being ordered out of the area. Johor Maritime Director, Nurul Hizam Zakaria, said the MMEA would not hesitate to act against merchant ships which anchored illegally in the eastern waters of Johor. Since 24 March, 31 merchant ships which anchored without the permission of the Director of the Marine Department have been detained through Operation Jangkar Haram. The reasons for those ships being detained, as opposed to being warned, is unknown.

In support of these actions, the MMEA is reported to be using territorial limits prescribed by a 1979 chart. In the waters of Southern Johor, often inaccurately referred to as Singapore OPL East, these territorial limits are as much as 60 nautical miles offshore.

Detained vessels will in all likelihood be charged in Court, with fines levied against those found guilty. Whilst the fines levied have historically been modest, typically in the region of MYR 50,000 per offence (US\$ 12,000), release procedures typically take weeks to conclude.

Members who require additional information or assistance should contact our correspondents [Spica Services Malaysia](#) or [Spica Services Singapore](#).