

Maritime terrorism and developing case studies for teaching and analysis: an interim report

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Abstract

Maritime terrorism is emerging as a significant issue in global trade and national security. However, very few maritime institutions offer a formal study of maritime terrorism. Students preparing for the maritime professions would be well served in their future careers by having studied theories and typologies of maritime terrorism, and having participated in active discussions of how these threats and challenges will affect them in their future careers. The use of case studies dealing with maritime terrorist incidents would provide a valuable teaching tool in courses dealing with maritime security and/or as stand-alones for workshops outside the formal curriculum.

Keywords: maritime terrorism, hijacking, hostage taking, dirty bomb, LNG.

1 Introduction

The goals and objectives of the project are to: (a) provide students with an understanding of maritime terrorism (including the sources of maritime terrorism), and the likely forms maritime terrorism may take in the future; (b) provide future mariners and maritime business and policy professionals with an understanding of the procedures and conventions in place to prevent maritime terrorist events, and the importance of international cooperation in preventing these events.

The case study is a widely used classroom tool, using “real life” events and “past lessons learned” to shed light on existing issues and problems. In this project, students using the case studies will gain a deeper appreciation of the

risks of maritime terrorism, and the importance of domestic and international codes and conventions, and cooperation, to prevent terrorist events.

The case study provides unique opportunities for students. It emphasizes student-led learning, allowing participants to adopt “role playing” techniques, leading to active classroom discussions and group problem solving. The *Maritime Terrorism* cases developed as part of this project may be embedded in existing classes, or used as “stand alones,” in whole or in part, as seminars.

2 Work completed to date (July 2005)

The five general cases proposed in the original grant are:

- hijacking and hostage taking;
- attacks on ships;
- the use of a ship as a “vector”;
- the use of the ship as a weapon;
- sinking or disabling a vessel to block a chokepoint/port.

Each of these cases has been further refined, as described below. The status of each case (or components of each case) is noted.

2.1 Case 1: hijacking and hostage taking (status: completed)

Specific hijacking incidents have been identified for study:

- *Santa Maria* (1961);
- *Vory* (1974);
- *Mayaguez* (1975);
- *Achille Lauro* (1985);
- *Penrider* (2003).

The following has been provided for each of these incidents: (a) detailed description of event; (b) how event was resolved; (c) specific lessons learned; (d) general lessons learned; and e) preventing future events.

The objective in this case is to compare and contrast each of the hostage incidents, and to draw lessons applicable to today’s environment.

Case 1 focuses primarily on the Achille Lauro hijacking incident. The case has been completed, and test run in my *Ocean Politics* class in Spring 2005. The students were given the case for study, and then presented with questions to answer during class sessions. Students worked in groups, taking the roles of (a) the hostage takers, (b) the ship captain and crew, and (c) the international negotiators and key actors. Students presented their findings and analysis to the

class. Further details of the outcome of this case will be presented to the IAMU meeting in Malmö, Sweden.

2.2 Case 2: attacks on ships (status: in progress)

The following terrorist attacks have been selected for study:

- *USS Cole* (2000);
- *Lady Mediatrix* (2000);
- *Silk Pride* (2001);
- *Limburg* (2002).

The following will be provided for each of these incidents: (a) Description of event; (b) specific lessons learned; (c) general lessons learned; and (d) preventing future events.

The objective in this case is to compare and contrast each of these terrorist attacks on ships, and not only to arrive at an understanding of how to prevent such attacks in the future, but also to understand how difficult it can be to prevent such attacks.

This case will be test run during my Fall 2005 *Maritime Security* class.

2.3 Case 3: the use of the ship as a “vector” (status: in progress)

The following have been identified as ways terrorist groups have used innocent merchant vessels:

- stowaways, with suspected ties to terrorist groups, have been found on several ships in recent years;
- suspected terrorists posing as mariners by using false papers have been identified on at least two occasions in the Mediterranean;
- in the 1998 bombings of the US Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, it is widely suspected that the materials used for the attacks were brought into the country by ship;
- Al Qaeda is believed to charter vessels for its money-making operations (trade in sesame seeds, etc), and in support of its terrorist activities.

The following will be provided for each incident: (a) description of event; (b) how the incidents were discovered, (c) how to prevent similar future events.

The objective of this case is to provide students with an understanding of how easy it can be for terrorist groups to use vulnerabilities in the global shipping industry for their ends; and to understand not only the proposals in place to deal with these possibilities (biometric IDs, etc.), but also how important enforcement of these proposals will be.

This case will be test run during my Fall 2005 *Maritime Security* class.

2.4 Case 4: the use of the ship as a weapon (status: in progress)

Unlike the first three cases, Case 4 involves hypothetical scenarios – ways innocent vessels could be used to attack vital ports or densely populated cities. Here the emphasis is on the “nightmare scenarios”, the “iconic attacks” that not only create significant human and economic damage but, because of their sheer size and audacity, truly terrorize both the target population and the international community as a whole.

The following scenarios best represent these forms of terrorist attack:

- A radioactive device placed in a shipping container, primed to detonate when the ship (or container) arrives at its target destination.
- A chemical or LNG tanker attacked near a port facility or populated urban area, with its cargo released into the atmosphere. Chemical tankers may carry hazardous materials which, if released, could be deadly. LNG tankers have the potential, if attacked, to create superheated “fireballs”.

The following will be provided for each scenario:

- description of event (Status: In progress);
- plans and procedures in place to prevent these scenarios (Status: In progress);
- how well these plans and procedures are working (Status: In progress);
- the costs of these plans and procedures (Status: In progress).

This case will be test run during my Fall 2005 *Maritime Security* class.

2.5 Case 5: sinking or disabling a vessel to block a chokepoint/port

Like Case 4, Case 5 represents hypothetical scenarios of current concern to the maritime industry. Here, the objective of the terrorist group is to create economic damage by impeding access to vital chokepoints or ports.

The following scenarios will be used to illustrate this potential form of maritime terrorist attack:

- Sinking or disabling a vessel to impede access to the port of Singapore. In this case, the links between maritime pirate groups and maritime terrorist groups will be explored.
- Sinking or disabling a vessel in the Strait of Hormuz.

The following will be provided for each scenario:

- feasibility and likelihood of event;
- economic impact analysis;
- preventing event (e.g., *Regional Security Initiative*).

The case will be run during my Fall 2005 *Maritime Security* class.

3 Remaining schedule

All research has been completed – all that remains is for the write-ups of the cases to be finished, and for the test runs of the cases to occur on the CMA campus. Dry runs will occur during my Fall 2005 Maritime Security class for the four cases noted above. Time and scheduling permitting, a run will also occur on the campus allowing for the opportunity for all interested students and faculty to become involved.

Results of all case study runs will be presented in Malmö, along with CDs of the cases (including teaching instructions, power point slides, etc).

4 6th AGA in Malmö, Sweden

Due to the delay in funding approval, the project is not yet complete. As kindly allowed in Mr. Tyler's letter of 8 April 2005, I will complete the final project in time for a full presentation of results to the 6th AGA.

The final report will include:

- the project objective and outcomes;
- how the outcomes are of value to the IAMU member universities;
- the results of how the project has been used at Cal Maritime;;
- all deliverables outlined in the project proposal, available in print and/or on CD.

