

Unauthorised boarding and theft from vessel at anchor

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An unknown individual boarded a vessel at anchor during night hours.

What happened?

An unknown individual boarded a vessel at anchor during night hours. The intruder most likely accessed the vessel from the forward mooring area using a small boat, and entered the accommodation through an unsecured access door. Personal belongings were stolen from crew cabins. CCTV records later captured one individual on the forecastle deck using a heaving line to descend from the vessel. No crew members were injured and there was no operational impact to the vessel.

IOGP Life Saving Rules:



Bypassing safety controls



Intruder making their escape

Why did it happen?

There was inadequate vigilance during the night watch in an anchorage known to be at high risk from theft. The Accommodation access door was left unsecured, allowing unauthorized entry to the vessel. The external deck areas were not adequately monitored during night watch, reducing the likelihood of early detection. Better control of vessel access whilst the vessel was at anchor, might have prevented the occurrence. Regular security rounds might have deterred the intruder or caught them earlier.

What do we learn?

- Exercise increased vigilance during night watch, particularly in high-risk anchorage areas.
- Ensure non-emergency accommodation access doors remain closed and locked at all times, while emergency exits remain unobstructed and capable of being opened from the inside.
- It is important to maintain effective night watchkeeping and proper monitoring of external deck areas.
- The Ship Security Plan (SSP) exists for a reason – follow its requirements at all times. Conduct regular security rounds and maintain strict vessel access control.
- Our Member ensured the further promotion of security awareness during toolbox meetings and crew briefings, and conducted periodic security drills to reinforce and practice crew response to unauthorized boarding.

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