

North Korean heroin ship is seized by SAS

By Barbie Dutter in Sydney

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Australian SAS tracking an international drug smuggling syndicate raided a North Korean ship in a dramatic dawn operation off the Australian coast yesterday, following a four-day chase in treacherous seas.

SAS troops and commandos were dropped by helicopter while a naval boarding party clambered up the hull of the Pong Su 35 miles off New South Wales.

The 4,000-ton ship had been shadowed since last Wednesday when 110lb of heroin, worth an estimated £30 million, was seized and four men arrested, in the southern state of Victoria.

Defence officials said they ordered in the navy after the ship repeatedly refused to halt in high seas.

Rear Adml Raydon Gates said police boats had been unable to stop the ship. He added yesterday: "Of course, in showing some force, as required in the operation, you put out a warship with a five-inch gun on board and people do pay some attention."