Additional new items Robison reported on the progress of swath designs for Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute. The question of coordination of U. S. and foreign scientist contacts and arrangements was briefly noted. A related question of communicating foreign vessel availability was also noted. Nowlin reported on The Glosten Associates work to develop a total UNOLS fleet value plus estimates of replacement costs. UNOLS ship accreditation, meaning of such status, and possible changes in philosophy of this imprimatur also were noted as items of continuing importance. All of these will be items on the July meeting agenda.

Future meetings The next meeting will be in St. Helena (Napa Valley), July 19-20. The last meeting will be in Woods Hole — tentatively October 4-5. This will be confirmed after input from committee members and agency representatives who were unable to attend this March meeting.

Gorsline assembled the comments and notes for the FIP epilogue and will telemail the typed draft copy to all members for comment.

Meeting adjourned at 10 am March 30, 1990.

May 1, 1990

Status report on DPP Ice-breaker Robison and Royer reported that the DPP Advisory Committee and the Oversight Committee for the Research Vessel with Ice-Breaking (RVIB) Capability have discussed aspects of the general utilization, availability, and use of the new RVIB and the POLAR DUKE. FIC should keep tabs on these discussions. So far DPP has been receptive to oversight committee concerns. Suggestions for improving scientific use have been well received and design modifications made. The FIC noted that this oversight committee should continue to be used in a timely fashion. (Note: post-FIC meeting telephone discussion with Sutherland by Gorsline noted his continued dedication to this advice). Gorsline will write to Sutherland noting FIC concerns and in appreciation of his efforts. The actual plans for the construction and lease of the ice-breaker were discussed. The ship is scheduled to be delivered in Chile in early 1992. Present costs are $33 million for initial construction costs and $11 million per year for 10 years as a lease, with a $55 million option to buy at the end of the 10-year period. The construction and leasing firm, Edison-Chouest, has purchased materials from the recently closed-down Finnish yards. Discussion by the committee noted that construction and operating expertise of such vessels is mostly foreign. The committee questioned whether the vessel will be available for general (non-DPP) work north of 60°S and noted that, if so, UNOLS should be concerned with such schedules. The committee recommended that the UNOLS Chairman, George Keller, correspond with Peter Wilkness at DPP regarding these concerns. The developing number of ice vessels, both U. S. and foreign, and the utilization of such vessels will be an important item for future FIC review and discussion. There are questions of the capabilities of ice-breaker designs in open ocean work. All segments of the polar community will need to be brought into the communication net on these problems.

New FIC fleet data needs Gorsline noted that a number of ship-use factors need clarification. What is a reasonable number for actual ship-use days per year by class and perhaps on an individual vessel basis? Can we quantify some vessel characteristics that can be compared with the FIC scientific mission requirements references? There are major questions concerning the basis of RV classification – which now is length. These will be studied at future FIC meeting. Gorsline will prepare a preliminary comparison of large and intermediate vessels with the appropriate reference to scientific mission requirements for the July meeting.

FIC budget status Nowlin reviewed the budget situation. The committee is operating well within the projected costs and should be able to cover operations for the next year to year-and-one-half, if NSF provides third year support as tentatively committed in the initial grant.

Report on BERNIER conversion Langseth briefly reviewed progress. The vessel is now formally the MAURICE EWING and entered the yard in November with the main structures completed in March. Present schedule is for delivery in mid-April and trials into May. The financial plans are going well. The ship will do some field work before arriving in New York in June 1990. Major installations include new power boards, fire system, air conditioning, Becker rudder, winches, and 11 new science berths. Presently the plan is for a Krupp-Atlas hydrosweep system. The acoustic profiling well is in, as are 3.5 and 12 kHz transducers (2 each). There is some question about the installation of the acoustic Doppler system, which is based on agency concerns about the scientific productivity based on use of existing systems. FIC will review this problem at the July meeting with added input from funding agencies.

Status of AGOR-24 Kaulum reported that as of the time of the FIC meeting, the AGOR-24 was back in the 1992 budget. That situation is volatile at present. If budgets are tight, it seems likely that Navy will give more priority to an ice-capable vessel for the eastern arctic than to AGOR-24, which is a general-purpose ship. If the vessel is approved, eventual assignment will be by open competition. The committee asked about the status of the TAGOS ships and Kaulum reported that they are coming along; TAGOS-19 will be in the water in May.

Status of work by subcommittee for scientific mission requirements for submersible support vessel This subcommittee was meeting while the FIC meeting was in progress. Progress will be reported at the July FIC meeting.

Research Submarine Scientific Mission Requirements study Robison reported that the draft report is completed. It will now be sent for community review.

Status of the University of Alaska Ice-capable RV Design Proposal Royer reported that this proposal was submitted to NSF and briefly reviewed the progress of the search for supplemental funds from state and other sources. These will provide logistic support for the design study work by the overview committee. The design draft will be distributed to the community for comment and reactions. The next big step will be to seek funding for preliminary design and then for construction. He will report at greater length in September to the UNOLS Council meeting and at the July FIC meeting. The committee discussed the general picture of the international availability of ice-capable vessels, particularly USSR vessels. The Soviets have made offers of ice-breaker time. More on this in July. This led to a general discussion of the general impact of foreign RV availability on UNOLS programs. FIC will monitor developments.

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Meeting Report

UNOLS Fleet Improvement Committee

March 29-30, 1990; San Antonio, TX

Present were committee members Donn Gorsline, Ken Johnson, Mark Langseth, Worth Nowlin, Bruce Robison, and Thomas Royer. Observing were Keith Kaulum (ONR) and Sheri Pappas (FIC Office).

Agenda Meeting notes of the previous meeting were reviewed and a correction by Keith Kaulum accepted. Some agenda items were deleted due to absence of reporting members: the systems aboard AGOR-23 and the small research vessel compendium; these will be reviewed at the July meeting of FIC. The remaining agenda items were discussed and the following actions, information, or discussion noted:

Modification of the Fleet Improvement Plan Gorsline reported on the changes and comments from the UNOLS Council Meeting in Monterey. Nowlin provided a new version incorporating those comments and additions plus additional editing, and the document was then reviewed in detail by the committee. All of the major comments were accommodated in the body of the report, or in an added epilogue which was later sent to the committee by Gorsline for further revisions. The report was approved as the final version and will be published as soon as the epilogue is accepted by the committee. Courtesy copies of the new version will be sent to Keller, Heinrichs, and Hartwig for their information, with letters from Gorsline acknowledging their comments.

Report on AGOR-23 construction Kaulum reported that the basic ship structure is in process. Tentative launch date is July 9 in Pascagoula. It will probably be another year before formal delivery to University of Washington, at which time a celebration will be held when the vessel reaches Seattle. The ship is presently scheduled to be put into service May-June, 1991. It has been renamed the THOMAS THOMPSON. The ship will be well founded scientifically and much of the basic shipboard scientific equipment is now purchased, including a Krupp-Atlas hydrosweep system.

Report on KNORR, MELVILLE refits Kaulum reported that the KNORR is back in the water. The target date for leaving the yard is June 15 with a two-week shakedown, then to WHOI for scientific outfitting. Tentative schedule is for the ship to do work in Iceland in August, but that could slip. With complex jobs and much work to be done, the present schedule may not be met. The MELVILLE will be cut apart in April and is due out of the yard at the end of the year. Unexpected costs and problems were encountered with asbestos but NSF will try to provide some of the added costs.