

# 2022 UNOLS RVOC Spring Meeting

## 20 April, Wednesday

Aaron Davis	Alice Doyle	Amanda Williams	Andy Nottberg
Anita Lopez	Ash Hayden	Barbara Callahan	Beth Ryan
Blake Powell	Brandi Murphy	Brian Guest	Brian Midson
Bridget Harrell-Donze	Bruce Appelgate	Chris Chuhran	Clair Surrey-Marsden
David Bowman	Dennis Hansell	Don Cucchiara	Doug Baird
Doug Russell	Emma Tulley	Eric Benway	Eric Buck
Fin Moore	Frank Rack	Gabby David	Hollie Anthonysz
Ian Comerford	Ian Leik	Jamie Allan	Jeff Garrett
Jim Holik	Joe Malbrough	John Bichy	Jon Meyer
Jon Swallow	Jonathon Gutoff	Kaya Johnson	Lee Ellett
Mark Miller	Mark Van Waes	Meegan Corcoran	Mike Prince
Murray Stein	Rick Trask	Rob Sparrock	Robert Kamphaus
Rose Dufour	Ross Hein	Sarah Fuller	Sean Higgins
Shery Keleher	Stewart Lamerdin	Stuart Younghusband	Tim Twomey
Tom Glennon	Trevor Young		

Participants: 58

Recording of the meeting available:

### Welcome – Doug Baird

Third year of virtual meetings. Hopefully next year will be in person.

Round robin introductions

### UNOLS Update – Doug Russell

Slideshow available: [UNOLS Update](#)

- 3000+ days of science in 2021
- Still catching up in 2022 on cruises deferred due to COVID
- MFP - Cruise Planning module is the current focus, all of 2022 ship scheduling accomplished in MFP. 2023 ship scheduling process well underway
- Meeting still virtual, planning on in person starting in May
- Seeking update from GW for COVID-19 Guidance
- RVSS 11<sup>th</sup> edition
- Focusing on DEI issues with help of MERAS
- Crewing Tiger Team – 5 meetings to date
- Office at UW finishing up year 3 of the initial 5-year award

### Agency Updates

#### NSF – Rose Dufour

Slideshow available: [NSF Update](#)

- Send hi-res photos to Rose if you have any
- Annual Report Negotiations underway
- CY2023 new 5-year cooperative agreements
- Crewing is biggest issue in ARF, elevated NSF Chief facilities Office
- NSF Branding Guidance available at: [NSF Logo & Visual Identity Guidelines](#)

- Day-rate breakdown
- Requesting an additional \$3M to cover fuel increases
- Plan for Safe and Inclusive Field / Vessel / Aircraft Research

### **ONR – Rob Sparrock**

Slideshow Available: [ONR Update](#)

- Look at how things were in 2013 vs 2022
- Manpower Support – Enhancing use of Strategic Sealift Officer – Review COI Requirements
- Ship Improvements planned in 2022/2023

Questions:

*Murrey Stein – What did you mean by review the COI?*

*Rob Sparrock – Flexible COI that talks about licensed mariners vs specific positions. All COIs seem to be different.*

*Murrey Stein – So we are talking about renegotiating with the CG?*

*Rob Sparrock – Yes. Some don't want to change and that is ok. But some operators have more constraining COIs than others.*

*Murray Stein – I was recently in discussion with the CG and they have a set standard now, based on SOLAS. I think they are going to insist the new ships are held to the new standard.*

*Rob Sparrock – I think the first ship that is going to renegotiate their COI is UH. They have all able-bodied Seaman and no Ordinary seaman.*

### **NOAA – Claire Surrey-Marsden**

Slideshow Available: [NOAA Update](#)

- Appreciate the continuing partnership with the UNOLS groups
- Swap project ship time
- Lots of lessons learned and shared
- FY 22 – Lots of challenges
  - People
  - Metal
  - Mission

### **State Department – Amanda Williams / Emma Tulley / Gabriella David**

Slideshow Available: [State Dept. Update](#)

- We go by the Law of the Sea Convention
- Presidential Proclamation on MSR
  - Only applies to foreign scientists wishing to conduct MSR in the US
  - Advance consent in all instances consistent with international law
- New RATS Portal
  - Designed on a Microsoft O365 cloud-based platform
  - RATS Portal: <https://ratsportal.state.gov/>
  - Let us know if you would like to schedule a training.
- US Scientist in Foreign Waters – Gabby David
  - Many Coastal states are cracking down on timelines
  - Hundreds of late reports and data from US scientists
  - Marine Science Guidance Page for all new Coastal State updates and COVID-19 protocols.
- Missing Reports – Emma Tulley
  - 100+ UNOLS reports are outstanding

Questions:

*Rob Sparrock – US Scientist on foreign vessel in US Waters no MSR is required?*

*Amanda Williams – That is correct. If the chief scientist is US we don't need a MSR.*

## Facility Updates

### Wire Pool – Rick Trask

Slideshow available: [Wire Pool Update](#)

- Wire Testing
  - Possible Revision to Appendix A
- Use of Synthetic Rope Operation Guideline
- Wire Pool User Guide
- Wire Pool Website Under Construction
- Enhanced Cable Maintenance Study
  - Evaluating the benefits of lubricating 0.322 EM cable more frequently at sea during haul-in

Questions:

*Doug Baird – Keeping cables healthy via lubricating, is it possible to count the number of times you have used the cable to determine when you cut back?*

*Rick Trask – Like a retirement protocol? I suppose but I haven't looked at it that way.*

*Don Cucchiara – Any ideas on why not to do freshwater rinsing? Would that add any longevity?*

*Rick Trask – The way we set up the experiment was we got some push back on the availability of fresh water from some vessels. I think the freshwater rinse would be advantageous and I think it would improve results. You could do the same kind of experiment and just do a freshwater rinse instead of the lubricating.*

### Winch Pools – Brian Guest / Aaron Davis

#### Aaron Davis - West Coast Winch Pool

Slideshow available: [West Coast Winch Pool Update](#)

- Hawboldt Mooring Winch
- Replacing Dated Winches with Modern Ones

Brian Guest – East Coast Winch Pool

Slideshow available: [East Coast Winch Pool Update](#)

- Overview of available equipment

Questions:

*Joe Malbrough – Tensioner is it on its own trailer?*

*Brian Guest – One of them is on its own axle and one we have to load on a trailer.*

### Van Pools – Kaya Johnson

Slideshow available: [Van Pool Update](#)

- Speaking on behalf of both East Coast and West Coast Van Pools
- COVID Impacts
- USCG regulation determination
- New Cold van

## Other Updates

Ship Inspections – Blake Powell – POSTPONED UNTIL TOMORROW

### CI/CS – Jon Haverlack

Slideshow available: [CIWG Update](#)

- ARF Cybersecurity Program
- Cyberinfrastructure Working Group – [CIWG@unols.org](mailto:CIWG@unols.org)
- RVOC Cybersecurity Action Items
  - Assign 3-5 RVOC Reps to participate in monthly CIWG meetings
  - Readings

- Assessing Cybersecurity Roles and Responsibilities for your vessel
- Complete CIWG checklist
- Contact your institutions CISO regarding SPRS Registration and CMMC 2.0 compliance

Questions:

*Sean Higgins – Just had an ABS 5-year inspection. Cybersecurity was a big part of that. Training program on board and documented. Crew training vs scientists training using IMO framework.*

*Jim Holik – Our working group meets twice a month. Maybe once a month we should make it more operationally oriented. Some of the superintendents should volunteer and once a month sit through the meetings.*

*Brandi Murphy – If anyone wants to be contacted directly about the monthly meetings let me know.*

### **Sat Comms – Jon Meyer**

Slideshow available: [Sat Comms Update](#)

- Personnel Changes
- Leasing and Day Rates
- SatComm Frequencies
- Fleet Hardware
  - Replace 86% since 2020
- Baseline
- Adding CyberGuard to the Marlink contracts
- Evolution of Internet Needs
- [HiSeasNet](#)

Questions:

*Jon Swallow – Thanks for the hard work to get the new dome on our ship. Big improvement.*

### **Projects**

#### **RCRV – Demian Bailey**

Slideshow available: [RCRV Update](#)

- Project to build three vessels
- Major Challenges
  - Design requirements
  - Engineering & modeling
  - GIS Capacity / Performance limits
  - 7 Hurricanes in 2020
  - COVID-19
  - Acquisition by Bollinger in early 2021
  - Hurricane IDA in 2021
- Phase III & Phase IV

Questions:

*Tim Twomey – Are all the propulsion and GenSets Tier 4?*

*Demian – Yes, they are.*

*Tim Twomey - Are they in a urea solution?*

*Demian – Yes.*

#### **Langseth Replacement – Sean Higgins**

- Continuing to work through background folks.
- Went to London in March and visited shipyards.
- Talking to lots of people around the fleet.
- Fleshing out the financial picture.
- Started engagement with MSROC to find out needs.

- Working with the director here to get a SMR team going here
- Still targeting Langseth retirement in late 2024 and a new vessel coming online in 2025.

### **R/V Savannah Mid-Life – John Bichy**

Slideshow available: [Savannah Mid-Life Update](#)

- Well into the design phase and have secured our funding.
- Savannah is 22 years old.
- Major Projects
  - Service Life Extension
  - Mission Enhancements

*Questions:*

*Doug Russell – Who is going to manage the project for you*

*John Bichy – As part of our contract with the design firm they are going to help us manage the shipyard phase*

*Rose Dufour – I was able to provide year end money to Skidaway. So, if you have a ready project at the end of the year let me know.*

RVOC Concludes for today – Doug Baird

# 2022 UNOLS RVOC Spring Meeting

## 21 April, Thursday

Alice Doyle	Andy Nottberg	Anita Lopez	Ash Hayden
Blake Powell	Bob Houtman	Brian Guest	Brian Midson
Brandi Murphy	Bridget Harrell-Donze	Clair Surrey-Marsden	Dennis Hansell
Don Cucchiara	Doug Baird	Doug Russell	Eric Buck
Eric King	Frank Rack	Ian Comerford	Jamie Allan
Jeff Garrett	Jim Holik	Joe Malbrough	Jon Swallow
Jonathon Guttoff	Kaya Johnson	Lee Ellett	Maureen Conte
Meegan Corcoran	Michael Kelly	Murray Stein	Rick Trask
Rob Sparrock	Robert Kamphaus	Rose Dufour	Sarah Fuller
Sean Higgins	Stuart Youngusband	Tim Schnoor	Tim Twomey
Tom Glennon			

Participants: 41

Recording of today's meeting available:

**Welcome – Doug Baird**

**Adjusted agenda today. Schedule has been extended by 10 minutes.**

**Introductions of attendees that were not present yesterday.**

**Legal/Insurance**

**Ship Happens – Jon Guttoff**

**Slideshow available: [Legal / Insurance Update](#)**

- **Insurance Issues and Scientists' Seamen Status**
  - **Hull Insurance**
  - **Cyber Insurance**
- **Potential for Increased Risk**
  - **Scientist may be able to impose liability for breach of the warranty of seaworthiness**
  - **Revival of the doctrine of seaman pro hac vice might allow those helping fulfill the mission of the ship (scientists) to claim seaman status**
- **Maritime Workers' Remedies**
  - **Seamen**
  - **Longshore and Harbor Workers**
- **If anyone has any specific questions do not hesitate**

**Questions:**

**Rob Sparrock: Would this still be in effect if the person was not a US National?**

**Jon Guttoff: The Jones Act would never be in effect for someone who was not a US Citizen, but the Sieriki could be used by them.**

**Other Updates**

**Ship Inspection Program – Bob Houtman**

- NSF has restarted the ship inspection program. What I like to call an Assist Visit
- Overall goal is to do an inspection on every ship in the next few years.
- The inspection team usually consists of a three-person team from JMS.

- Plus a NSF representative and possibly Rob Sparrock from ONR.
- Ship operator suggests a few dates.
  - Then we share between team members and find which will fit the best.
- Six weeks before the inspection I send out a pre-inspection letter to the ship operator.
  - The letter asks for some input to make sure the visit is efficient.
  - Ship condition form.
  - Summary of recommendations from the last inspection.
  - It also asks about any recent USCG or ABS inspections.
    - We like to inspect as many tanks as possible, but if the USCG or ABS has just done them, we could use their inspections instead.
  - Winches and wires line.
  - We ask that you provide input at least ten working days before inspection.
- We are in the process of setting up a SharePoint site that we can use in the future as a place for you to submit you input
- The inspection will be two to three days depending on the size of the ship.
  - Day one will take place pierside.
  - Day two we get u/w, drills and full power run, science ops, then return to pier side to complete all of the activities. If it is a two-day inspection, we will do the debrief as well.
  - Day three, only for the larger ships, pier side activities and debrief
- JMS will put together a preliminary report in a few weeks.
- JMS sends the preliminary report to us and then after we go over it they will provide the final report.
- We completed the inspection of the Atlantis in early February and the Walton Smith in late February.
- We are scheduled to do the Sproul in June and the Atlantic Explorer in September.
- Potentially we will consider doing one or two more in 2022, the rest will have to be in 2023.
- We do this to show to scientists that the ships are seaworthy.
- We also hope that you will use the items that were documented during the inspection in your budget proposals the following year.

*Questions:*

*Doug R – Timeline for operators to get requests into you for 2023?*

*Bob Houtman – If it is too early it becomes a moving target. Really would want the submission of dates to really be committed to the dates.*

*Murray Stein – Will you be sending outlines of the inspection to help the crew get ready?*

*Bob – Yes, six to eight weeks before*

**Issues**

**COVID-19 – Doug Russell**

- I spoke to George Washington Medicine regarding our guidance, and they advised us to not change much from how we are currently doing them.
- I mentioned that PCR tests are getting hard to do and she suggested observed antigen tests as the preferred alternative (as opposed to self-tests). You can have a person go to a drug store to get an observed antigen test or over a video call. We can incorporate that into our COVID plans.
- GW emphasized that people should be fully vaccinated and boosted as available. They reiterated that vaccines and boosters are the greatest protection we have.
- They are not happy about masking requirements going away. They encourage people to keep wearing a mask when you can.
- They also restated to isolate anyone who has COVID on a ship.

*Discussion:*

*Robert Kamphaus – With masking mandate going away I looked at the UNOLS guidance and there is no clear guidance on masking during travel. People could read that to say that masking during travel is not required by the UNOLS guidance. Could you strengthen that in the guidance?*

*Doug Russell – If everyone agrees with that, we can add something about masking while traveling.*

*Doug Baird – Do people need to mask while driving? Masking while traveling may not always apply.*

*Robert Kamphaus – How about when using commercial travel?*

*Rose Dufour – How is the COVID requirement affecting our crewing problems? We want all our crewmembers to be vaccinated. But if they aren't we going to impose requirements on them for the whole cruise?*

*Sean Higgins – Columbia University requires a person to be vaccinated to be hired. I have not seen the vaccination issue come to us with the people or the recruiters we are talking to. It may have an impact on hiring but I haven't seen it. I think the UNOLS guidelines are just not very useful right now. We do lots of testing onboard.*

*Murray Stein – My understanding is that they are not requiring masks on airplanes. If we are going to require people to mask, we have to differentiate between types of masks. We should mention specifically that it has to be a N95. Other masks just give a false sense of security.*

*Rose Dufour – Sean thanks, I agree we have to move from pandemic to endemic. Figuring out what we are willing to enforce and what is reasonable, is a good next step.*

*Stuart Younghusband – We mandate fully vaccinated, and PCR test day 2 of joining ship. Historically we have delayed sailing while people are in isolation. Then we retest and sail thereafter. One thing we are looking at is acquiring PCR equipment onboard and doing away with delaying of sailing. Providing it is a non-critical person. Person would isolate onboard. Provided they can get over it in a reasonable manner and return to work. Looking at relaxing our controls a little bit further. We did mandate vaccinations for people. Does anyone have any experience in delays due to a positive test?*

*Doug Baird – Anyone have any experience of delays due to positive tests?*

*Murray Stein – We discuss a positive COVID result at sea, and we would probably isolate the positive person.*

*Doug Baird – I had several people with positive tests while we were in the shipyard and none of it was from travel. I am more concerned about people getting sick from being in port and relaxed than I am concerned about them due to COVID.*

*Stuart Younghusband – Do you see further relaxations of requirements due to crewing issues?*

*Doug Baird – I would hope so.*

*Sean Higgins – I would agree with you about the travel. We haven't had anyone get COVID from travel. In port periods are more worrying. The continual restrictions are causing more problems.*

*Tim Schnoor – Does the foreign clearance guide provide any guidance for vaccinations? Has anyone started requiring a vaccine to enter?*

*Sean Higgins – According to the agents we talked to yesterday in Mexico, no. They are not requiring vaccines to enter.*

*Doug Russell – I was just in France, and you had to show proof of vaccine to enter.*

*Sean Higgins – In London they wanted to see proof of vaccine if you had it. It lessened some of their requirements if you did have the vaccine.*

*Tim Twomey – We just had an incident on the Atlantis. We are working with Canadians. In early April we did a science team change out. I heard after they left that five of the science team had tested positive. We went to St. Johns, tested everyone, and they all tested negative. Few days out to sea one AB had mild symptoms and he tested positive. He isolated for five days. Then he went back to work and wore a mask until the 10-day mark. Then we had three more people test positive on board. If they had mild symptoms we isolated them. If they had no symptoms, they continued working but wore a mask for ten days. We continue to test and closely monitor the crew. If we weren't within a day of port we might have a different decision, but we are continuing operations.*

*Rose Dufour – I wanted to talk about the pre-cruise assessments. I know they are a lot of work, but they have been helpful. Maybe we could come up with an abbreviated format.*



Anita Lopez – I agree with Rose that the pre-cruise risk assessments have been very helpful. Additionally, just to note all of our cases have been travel related. We have concerns with the mask mandate being lifted and people traveling to Hawaii. Maybe it is because it is such a long flight but, all our cases were travel related.

Doug Baird – Even if the mask mandate is not in place, people can still wear a mask.

Anita Lopez – I agree, and we here at UH plan to look at our policies.

Doug Baird – I think the guidance needs to be specialized and the focus based on location.

Anita – I agree, and I think it goes back to the risk assessments because they are based on specific locations.

Robert Kamphaus – I have a problem that we are just going to welcome COVID on board. Vaccination is great but people get sick and still have symptoms.

Tim Twomey – Isolated people with symptoms and not people without symptoms.

Robert Kamphaus – If you are isolating people, you could quickly run out of people. I still think some precautions have to be taken for people coming on board. I think it would be helpful to have that guidance from UNOLS. We get a lot of credibility when we tell people we are doing this because UNOLS told us too.

Doug Baird – But I would like to point out that UNOLS gives guidance, it does not make rules.

Robert Kamphaus – That guidance is still welcome. I still think travel exposure is a big risk and it is mitigatable.

Doug Russell – I am going to propose if we update our guidelines to say UNOLS strongly encourages masking will traveling. That way you can make your own decisions.

Doug Baird – I am good with that.

Sean Higgins – I think the general guidance is helpful. We can then tailor to the specific circumstances.

Doug Russell – Add a second booster to the guidance as well.

Rose Dufour – I guess the timing of the boosters is important. If it is only good for four months, should we back date it so it will be effective for the cruise?

Sean Higgins – I am going to do whatever my university requires.

Jamie Allan – I am really struck by the figures in the US, that it very much looks like we are in an endemic state.

How is UNOLS policy in terms of the flu? I think the flu vaccine should be encouraged as well. I would encourage that we need to move on. If we do a risk benefit ratio there is less risk now than there was a short time ago. And there is a risk in mask wearing especially to communications. I really think we are at the point where we need to move on. And I don't know what the benefit is to elaborate testing.

Doug Baird – Agreed. I think whatever guidance comes out should be up to the individual operator and the individual science party.

Doug Russell – I will draw up a draft, send it out and see what people think. What I hear is, give flexibility to the operator. Keep pre-cruise risk assessments but maybe make them shorter.

Rose Dufour – I agree, but going back to the pre-cruise risk assessment, I think we need to keep it. There will always be some people that might be more susceptible to a bad COVID outcome. I would be supportive of giving people more flexibility.

Doug Russell – I will work on some revised language and get it out to everyone.

## **USCG COI – Rob Sparrock / Rose Dufour**

### **Discussion**

- Issues with specific CG Sector.
- I have concurrence from CGHQ that ARF vessels, even though publicly owned, are not exempt from COIs.
- The federal agencies, NSF and ONR, see COIs as mandatory and expect you to follow them.
- CGHQ says you are not exempt from them, so you do not need an MOU.
- CGHQ will not tell the local OCMI what they need to do. The chain of command is that the district level is next.
- If you are told that you cannot get a COI or are given an CG-835 requiring you to get a MOU with the CG, your next step is to appeal to the CG District.

*Doug Baird – If I appeal that means I want a COI. I don't want a COI. We work with ABS and get inspected every year. The only advantage I see to a COI is a foreign port call to get the Port State control paper. Otherwise, I see the COI as a very strict document that prevents me from hiring opening level personnel. I see great benefit to letting the COI expire as the Portland USCG says will happen.*

*Rob Sparrock – This is my personal opinion, as an employee of ONR, if you receive notice that your COI will expire your university will have to decide whether or not you are in compliance with the law to operate without a COI. The person in most jeopardy would be the master of the vessel. They are personally liable. Once we have the debate about if you are in compliance, it will end up being a discussion between ONR legal and your institution's legal office. In the interim, without an appeal going to the CG district office, ONR legal is not going to step in. That will be the first litmus test if the COI is pulled. The first direction we would give them is that they would have to appeal. ONR will not force the ship to get underway without a COI while waiting for appeal.*

*Rose Dufour – We have also had the discussion of whether or not a ship would be able to get hull insurance or have the government support any accident without a COI. We need to find out if it is even possible the way it is structured. The general understanding is that a public vessel is a vessel owned and operated by the government and that is not the case here.*

*Rob Sparrock – The pulling of the COI is more of an administrative issue. Your COI getting pulled because the local OCMI has a disagreement with CG HQ.*

*Erick Buck – We have had no problems getting COI inspections here in San Diego. But our local CG has told us we are no longer allowed sailing short. We have to have the crew that is listed on the COI. They are watching us closely.*

*Rob Sparrock – Nothing that you said is different from what is in the law. You can still request to sail short, and the CG can say no.*

*Jonathon Guttoff – There is a distinction between what a court would say vs what is happening at the various sectors. I think a court would say they are not public vessels and do need COI. I think it might be smart to structure the agreements between ONR and NSF to make them public vessels. If someone thinks to take an enforcement action, if it ends up in a federal court, I think the court would find that these aren't public vessels, COIs are required, and the US is not liable for any costs the vessel might incur.*

*Doug Baird – How do we get that legal opinion in writing? I would like to know what is truly required.*

*Rob Sparrock – I can tell you what the manual says, but it won't force the OCMI to follow the manual. If you are not happy with the local OCMI you go to the district to appeal.*

*Jonathon Guttoff – Someone needs to appeal to the district. Then if the district doesn't go to HQ.*

*Robert Kamphaus – I was supposed to appeal the CG-835 I have against my ship. I am beyond my deadline, but I am still going to do it. It is on my list of things to do, I just haven't gotten it submitted to the district office.*

*Sean Higgins – I have an appeal filed with the district office. I talk to Travis Nolan from the CG's Portland office biweekly. They promised me an answer by next Tuesday. We have been taking pilots in and out of Newport as required. They have written their findings and have submitted it to USCC HQ. I am anxious to see what the OCMI comes back with. Portland has been frustrated with the lack of communication with HQ. I was beyond the deadline as well, but they did allow it to move forward. I am not hopeful I am going to get an answer by Tuesday.*

*Rob Sparrock – I have had the same frustration with CG HQ. They are bouncing me between people.*

*Sean Higgins – The states are very happy to consider me a public vessel. From CG perspective they don't care what the states think. I think this ambiguity exists on multiple levels.*

*Rob Sparrock – Ultimately, I think HQ should have a chance to resolve this. But until the CG puts it in writing our legal offices don't have anything to appeal.*

*Doug Russell – Going back earlier to what Jonathon talked about concerning insurance rates, wouldn't dropping COIs increase the insurance rates?*

*Jonathon Guttoff – If no one was inspecting them, the insurance rates would go up. But as long as ABS is inspecting them, I think the rates should remain the same. Insurance companies won't insure unclassified ships. So ABS would have to inspect them.*

*Doug Russell – I just thought having CG inspection in addition to ABS would be helpful.*

*Jonathon – I do think the underwriter would question why the ship suddenly no longer has a COI.*

*Rose Dufour – Getting NSF general council involved probably wouldn't be helpful, because they aren't maritime lawyers. But we might look at a firm that does specialize in CG CFRs. With regard to how the vessel ops feel, I think it is important to take a step back and say I am not sure NSF is comfortable using a ship without a COI. Bob Houtman let me know if I am wrong here.*

*Bob Houtman – I think it would be difficult for us to drop that requirement.*

*Doug Baird – Maybe I can join Robert's appeal. There might be some strength in us both appealing.*

*Murray Stein – Need a Safe Manning certificate for foreign clearance.*

*Rob Sparrock – I agree with that.*

*Doug Baird – This COI issue is also ensnaring the RCRVs. Travis Nolan from the USCG Portland office has been talking to his counterpart who is dealing with the RCRVs. It is causing some issues with the COI aspect of the RCRVs under construction.*

*Rob Sparrock – What I have been telling the CGHQ is that I don't need an MOU because the ships are exclusively under institution use. If ONR takes over control, then the ship is part of the Military Sealift Command. An MOU is because you don't want to do something the CG tells you to do. None of the provisions need to be in an MOU.*

*Kaya Johnson – This could also influence a Vessel Security Plan or a Facility Security Plan. If the definition is clarified that we are not public vessels and we need COIs, then we might need Security Plans.*

*Sean Higgins – Since we own the ship and not NSF, we had to do a vessel Security Plan and other issues.*

### **Crewing - Doug Russell**

- Kicked off the Crewing Tiger Team a few months ago. Well represented by various members. Identifying issues. Crewing is an issue that is not just restricted to ARF.
- Came up with ideas for the issues we are having.
- We went back and looked at the 2019 Crew and Scientist Quality of Life at Sea Survey that was done several years ago.
- We briefed our findings to ONR and NSF a few weeks ago:
- Quality of Life Survey Results
  - Pay – huge issue that is hard to tackle because every institution does it differently
  - Internet connectivity - Improved
  - Single staterooms - improved
  - Habitability – improved
  - Food – variable no matter what
  - Working environment – Improvements but still being worked on
  - Gyms – Small ships hard, bigger ships improvements
  - More time between cruises and port calls – We are talking about adding flexibility of adding days between mission to the schedules, ONR and NSF supportive
  - Beer/wine – Not happening
  - Swim Calls – Not happening
  - Reduction of noise and vibration – is being addressed as ships go through midlife and new ships are built
  - Bedding – This is Marine Operations issue within each institution purview to correct
  - R/V Neil Armstrong crew would like some variety – pigeonholed in North Atlantic - has been brought up to ONR and NSF

### *Discussion:*

*Lee Ellett – Internet connectivity – Improvements have been great, and the agencies have been supportive. But another issue that has come up is IT support for mariners. Most universities have gone online. Mariners need dedicated computers and IT support to facilitate. This is outside the level of support offered by the techs on board.*

*Doug – Maybe more time in port will assist with this.*

- Here are the ideas we have come up with to try to help the situation:
  - Pay – Complex issue – every university is different - how do you find out what is realistic in your location
  - Hiring Incentive – happening at some of the institutions already, NSF and ONR are supportive
  - Ship Business / Crew Time – insert extra days in port calls to allow for extra time
  - Conduct Surveys – Why people leaving and staying
  - Outreach – working on updating UNOLS brochure and reach out to all of the schools -
  - Crewing Management –
    - Create a ARF crew exchange / crewing pool
    - Considering a crewing coordinator, hiring another person for the UNOLS office that would be focused 100% of time
    - Or hire someone else to do it for us
    - The operators could go to someone like Crowley – not cheap
    - Need a cost benefit analysis – in house or hire agency
    - Provide StemSeas type opportunities for potential crew

*Rose Dufour – I think we need to do more concerning outreach than update the brochures. We need to do a slick video. Life onboard an academic research fleet.*

*Crew management – I have heard from one of the institutions that is getting crew from an agency that some of the mariners are not of the best caliber of character. And they are earning much more than crew and that is causing problems. Things we need to consider.*

*Doug – Thanks for bringing up the video. I know you have been very supportive of funding it.*

*Murray Stein – Short on recruiting cadets from maritime academies and community college programs. They are required to do some time uw.*

*Doug Russell – Couldn't agree more. Priority in our outreach.*

*Stuart Younghusband – Do you offer training? Potential to advance their careers. In the past on our ships people had to leave to advance. We are trying to remedy that.*

*Doug Russell – We do try to provide training to our young mariners. We have a lot of people able to work their way up.*

*Rob Sparrock – ONR is supportive of increasing number of crew berths by one for crewing initiatives. Important for scientists to understand that we are in a manpower crisis.*

*Doug Russell – That is helpful. That is a problem for all the ships, how to provide a bunk for training.*

*Bob Houtman – I think if we don't take some specific steps, we are going to have ongoing issues. I absolutely support that.*

*Rose Dufour – Bob is right on target with that. I have been keeping program managers at NSF apprised of the crisis. The no sails have been getting people's attention here and at the university level. It helps to get people's attention. Having a complete turnaround on crew is not good for science or the ship.*

*Sean Higgins – There are so many factors that go into this. Trying to balance a budget is so difficult. We have had these cycles before. We are not competing in a fair marketplace. I am getting lists of conditions from people on what they are willing to work on the ships. It has become a money issue.*

*One of the young oilers on the Sikuliaq, I was talking to, she was calling home to tell people about the job possibilities. I think we need to get on the road and go to these training centers. We are just not competing.*

*Rose Dufour – We understand it is a money issue. We are going to have to figure out a way to support higher pay costs. We will just have to do less science. If that is what it takes, that is what it takes. And I do agree we need to hit the road. We need to be out there recruiting.*

*Doug Russell – We need help with that. We don't have enough people to send people out to every training center and community college.*

Rose Dufour – Having a permanent person in the UNOLS office would help with that. Another thing we need to discuss is the turnover of crewmembers going from one institution to another institution. Making more money is a problem. It has become a pattern. We need to bring in new people, not just move people around and add to the problem.

Doug Russell – More to come.

#### **Other Marine Sup Issues – Doug Baird / Marine Sups**

- None were brought up

#### **Action Item Review – Doug Russell**

1. Suggestion to put item in newsletter about RATS portal
2. CIWG would like to have operations centric monthly meetings.
3. COVID Guidelines update
4. UW and UAF submit joint COI appeal to CG District office

#### **Chair Elect Announcement**

Doug Baird - We received one self-nomination – Doug Ricketts – Any discussion before we vote? No? We have our next Chair Elect.

#### **Next RVOC Meeting**

Doug Ricketts has volunteered to host next RVOC

Robert Kamphaus – Anita Lopez also volunteered to host at UH.

Doug Russell – Anita is hosting the IRSO meeting. We had talked about doing it jointly with RVOC, but IRSO decided to do it in the fall.

Rose Dufour – I know it has been traditional to have the annual RVOC meeting in the spring, but what is traditional anymore?

Sean Higgins – The monthly meetings have been great. I really appreciate them.

Doug Baird – We plan to continue those. We plan to do in-person meetings in addition to the monthly meetings.

Doug Russell – We will continue every 6-8 weeks.

Brandi Murphy – I just want to remind everyone that the OCT, NOV, DEC timeframe is packed with meetings.

Rose Dufour – With the monthly RVOC meetings we could have the annual meetings whenever we want. It doesn't have to be the same time every year.

Doug Russell – We will work on dates.

#### **Conclude RVOC**

Saved from Meeting Chat:

11:33:38 From Frank Rack to Everyone:

Thanks all! I have to go to another meeting.

11:52:47 From UW Marine Science Building to Everyone:

Can you zoom in please?

12:11:04 From JOSEPH MALBROUGH to Everyone:

We have two cadets coming from Maine Maritime Academy this summer to gain sea time, hope to give them research experience and see them in the future or at least pass the word to others.

12:16:59 From Timothy Twomey to Everyone:

That's the best academy! We have asked upcoming missions if berth options are there as well. Its typically end May-Aug window. Cadets definitely reach out after graduation to companies they had a good experience with...

12:32:30 From JOSEPH MALBROUGH to Everyone:  
We should host with visits to RCRV perhaps 2024?

12:33:45 From JOSEPH MALBROUGH to Everyone:  
Or meeting coincide with workboat?