

UNIVERSITY - NATIONAL OCEANOGRAPHIC LABORATORY SYSTEM

An association of Institutions
for the coordination and support
of university oceanographic facilities

UNOLS Office
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution
Woods Hole, Massachusetts 02543

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting, June 29, 1979
Director's Room 105, The Regency, Denver, Colorado

GENERAL. This special meeting was called to consider fleet operations in the face of declining support. Those members of the Council attending were: G. Anderson, Chairman; G. Keller, R. Fisher, B. Robison and T. Treadwell. T. Stetson and H. L. Clark (on leave to NSF) were also present.

INFORMAL SESSION

An informal session was held from 2000-2230 the evening of June 28 in the same room as the formal meeting. No action was taken, but discussion ranged widely on the following topics:

1. Sub Science Assessment. Candidates' names had been previously forwarded by Dr. Keller to the Agencies supporting the study. Dr. Anderson, newly-elected Council Chairman, will now appoint them to the Science Assessment Panel and Task Force. Chairmen of the two panels will also be appointed as will a liaison between the two.

2. The Fleet Assessment. Some Council Members had seen a draft of the NSF/OCE Study, "Ocean Science Research Facility Requirements, 1980-1985". For the rest of the evening the meeting was devoted to discussions of that report. It appeared to some that NSF had certainly done its "homework" and that we were still faced with a very pessimistic picture regarding fleet funding. It also appeared that the UNOLS' study mentioned in Capt. Treadwell's memo of 28 May 79 to OSB, JOI, Inc., NACOA, RVOC, NSF and ONR regarding the draft format of a fleet assessment workshop should be revised and that we should not duplicate gathering the data presented in the OCE study.

Stetson noted that certain adjustments were already taking place within the fleet as a result of economic necessity; some of these adjustments relate to ACONA, ALPHA HELIX, CAYUSE, MAURY, VEMA, as well as layups to other vessels.

There was general agreement that Mrs. Toye's memo of 10 April 79 to Dr. Frankenberg on the subject of the cost of temporary layups was generally a fair assessment of the situation. One member present felt that the figures came to within 15% of actuality. Dr. Fisher noted Woods Hole and Scripps may be in a position to absorb longer, rotational layups for larger vessels because of being able to employ crews on their remaining vessels. Capt. Treadwell felt "central scheduling" might prove cost-effective. Stetson wants the October ship forecast meeting to be an opportunity to try new techniques of compressing ship schedules to the greater eventual satisfaction of all.

Dr. Fisher made the observation that once a vessel is thrown out of the fleet there will be little likelihood of replacement and that perhaps a modest amount of money was all that was needed to preserve the basic required fleet. It was noted that the U. S. Antarctic program may save some large vessels temporarily but rescue for lesser vessels is not apparent.

Returning to the concept of a UNOLS' Fleet Assessment Workshop, it was felt that certainly large and small operators would be represented as well as OSB members (who are scientists) would be invited.

FORMAL SESSION

GENERAL. This formal session was held from 0830-1405, June 29, 1979.

1. Attendance. Dr. Fisher observed that this was the second consecutive Council meeting at which attendance was so poor that a quorum was not attained. Discussion ensued as to what steps could be taken to correct this situation. Because members were elected to serve the broader interests of the community they are part of, it is imperative that they make every attempt to attend meetings. Dr. Anderson will write a letter to Council members concerning this problem.

2. UNOLS' Fleet Assessment. Capt. Treadwell mentioned he had a range of comments on his UNOLS' Fleet Assessment Workshop memo of 28 May 79 including one from E. Murphy, Acting Chairperson, NACOA. If the OCE study projections are borne out then Capt. Treadwell saw two alternatives: (a) layups, or (b) more money "at the top". It does not appear that the UNOLS' Committee would be successful with the latter unless the Congressional "eye" was caught by some national program involving energy, or food and mineral resources. Dr. Robison mentioned that NSF's Directorate for Applied Science and Research Applications (ASRA) was undertaking a porpoise/tuna study and that some money for ship time was budgeted over the next three years. He also discussed some of the problems a principal investigator faces at a non-operating institution in trying to obtain ship time.

There was some discussion as to whether JOI, Inc. could be the body that could exert some pressure to get money for good science programs or to recommend new major programs, or whether this was an OSB task. A case needs to be made for additional monies if the fleet is to be kept alive.

It was noted some Council members would be attending upcoming meetings as follows: Drs. Fisher and Keller will attend the JOI, Inc. meeting on 5-6 July, and Captain Treadwell will attend the OSB meeting on 11-12 July; both are in Washington, D.C. and are concerned with fleet assessment.

Considerable discussion was generated on the subject of 1980 funding. It was proposed by Dr. Fisher that certain members of the Council model the funding picture for a number of institutional types, e.g., big, medium and small vessel operators. To accomplish this, the Secretary was requested to ask operators to furnish annotated 1980 schedules for each of their major vessels and to indicate thereon the portions of the year that were in the "firm and fully-funded, pending, and not-yet-submitted" stages. These data basically exist as part of the ships' operations proposals now due at NSF, but operators will be asked to update them with any recent knowledge and to transmit same direct to Capt. Treadwell.

Anderson, Fisher, Martin and Treadwell will convene as soon as practicable to compare models on the 1980 funding picture. These will be discussed at the Council's August meeting.

3. UNOLS' Technology Assessment Committee. It was decided to appoint the seven candidates to this committee whose names had been put forth at the May 2 Advisory Council meeting. The term of appointment would be two persons for one year, two persons for two years, and three persons for three years, to be decided at their first meeting. The committee would elect their own chairman. Annually the committee would submit names to the Council from which replacements would be appointed. Stetson noted the Oceanographic Equipment Workshop report is in final draft but that the cost of implementation for each vessel is not exactly known. Work continues on gathering this information. It is noted the report now mainly addresses those vessels of 150' or greater in length. Dr. Mesecar, in a letter to Dr. Keller dated 22 June 79 set forth some possible approaches as how this Committee might function. For a start, Council members felt that the workshop report could serve as a departure point.

4. Other.

a. Safety Standards. Stetson noted the R/V Safety Standards are being updated slowly but that there is no mention of chartering procedures. Drs. Anderson and Fisher have been working out details in their own shops; they will send what they have to the UNOLS' Office.

b. Marine Technician Workshop. It was decided to postpone consideration of this item until it could be more clearly seen what developments come from implementing the new set of NSF guidelines.

Upcoming Meeting Dates

2-3 August 1979, Advisory Council, Newport, Oregon
15-16 November 1979, Advisory Council, VIMS
15-16 May 1980, UNOLS' Annual Meeting, Wash. D.C.

Thomas Stetson
Executive Secretary
UNOLS