

UNOLS COUNCIL – Phone/Web Conference
Wednesday and Thursday, July 13 & 14, 2005, 1:00 pm – 4:00 PM EDT (each day)

Executive Summary:

The UNOLS Council convened a phone/web conference on July 13 and 14, 2005. This conference would serve as their summer meeting. The primary focus of the meeting was to review UNOLS recommendations regarding budget shortfalls and their impact on Fleet operations. As background material Fleet utilization and agency budget projections were reviewed. This was followed by a detail review of each draft UNOLS recommendation. Revisions, based on the Council comments were incorporated into the draft document. The Council accepted the revised UNOLS recommendations and recommended that they be distributed to the UNOLS community. Peter Wiebe will prepare a cover letter to forward the recommendations to Larry Clark. Following the Council meeting, the final recommendations were posted on the UNOLS Website at http://www.unols.org/projects/UNOLS_response_to_Clark_July05.pdf.

Other Council discussion items included:

- Approval of the 2005 Council Slate
- UNOLS Office Review and Competition
- Annual Meeting plans
- Establishing Safety Standards for Human Occupied Vehicles (HOVs)
- National Oceanographic Seismic Facility
- FOFC Fleet Renewal Update and FIC Fleet Improvement Plan Update
- UNOLS objectives, priorities and goals for 2005

Action Items:

CONTINUING ACTIONS (revised and updated)	
Regional Class Acquisition Process:	
Performance Specification – UNOLS will review the next draft of the Performance Specs when made available.	Awaiting next draft from Govt.
National Oceanographic Seismic Facility –Recirculate the revised Terms of Reference for the MLSOC to the subcommittee and NSF. Incorporate any changes. Provide recommendations for the Committee Membership by the end of August.	Marcia McNutt and subcommittee
Notification and reporting of mooring locations, safety zones, and release code conflicts – UNOLS Office will investigate ways to collect information regarding installation and locations of moorings.	UNOLS Office
Frequency Spectrum Management – Form a small committee from those who have expressed interest to liaison with Government managers.	Mike Prince

ADA Guidelines – Form an ad hoc committee to address ADA guidelines for new ship construction/conversion. The ad hoc committee should review and provide input to the paper drafted by Terry Whitledge. Additionally the group should recommend how procedural guidelines could be established for accommodating seagoing scientists with disabilities. The ad hoc committee should include Terry Whitledge (FIC), Dennis Nixon (Risk Manager), one person from the Safety Committee, Seagoing scientists with disability (Amy Bower and/or Dave Glover), Eric Buck (Ship Master, SIO), and Dolly Dieter as ex-officio. The Committee would be asked for a status report at the July Council meeting.	Peter Wiebe
UNOLS Response to Larry Clark letter - The Ad-hoc committee and UNOLS Office will finalize the UNOLS recommendations by 7/15/05. Peter Wiebe will draft a cover letter to forward the recommendations to Larry Clark by 7/15/05. Circulate the cover letter and recommendations to the <unols_all> email list. Send letter to Larry Clark by 7/18/05. Post the Recommendations on the UNOLS website. Provide hardcopies of the	Marcia McNutt (Chair), Eileen Hofmann, Denis Wiesenburg, Peter Wiebe, and UNOLS Office.
UNOLS Office Competition – A subcommittee was formed to review the operation of the current office, and make recommendations about whether or not the Office at MLML is suitable for continued operation. Peter Wiebe has drafted a letter to ask if any other operator institutions would be interested in competing to host the office. Finalize the letter and send to the membership. Statements of interest are due by 8/31/05. The Committee should provide a recommendation to the Council in September.	Peter Wiebe (Chair), Margo Edwards, and Wilf Gardner
Safe Working Load – Contact Tom Althouse, Safety Committee Chair, to request that the committee address this item.	UNOLS Office
Identify Keynote speaker for Annual Meeting – Peter has drafted a letter to Senator Sununu. The Office has sent the letter. If Senator Sununu declines, Representative Wolf or a senior political staff member could be approached.	UNOLS Office and Peter Wiebe
NEW ACTION ITEMS – JULY 2005	
Survey of Untenured Faculty – Draft a brief survey to untenured faculty believe that their chances for a successful career are equal whether or not his/her research involves field work.	Council and UNOLS Office
Establishing Safety Standards for the use of Human Occupied Vehicles - NSF will send a letter to DESSC with a charge to establish safety standards for HOVs. The safety standards will address certification of the vehicle, certification of the ship, and training (vehicle and ship crew). In response to NSF's charge a subcommittee will be formed. Potential members include RVOC Safety Committee representative, HOV operators from WHOI,	Peter Wiebe and Debbie Kelley

HBOI, and HURL, and science users (DESSC). Input from the Navy and legal council would likely be required. This effort might span 2 years.	
Images for FOFC Report – The UNOLS Office will put out a call for high resolution ship images that can be used in the FOFC Fleet Renewal Update and the FIC Fleet Improvement Plan	UNOLS Office
UNOLS Briefing Package - Peter will draft a document that provides information about UNOLS that can be used to brief policy makers. The draft will be circulated to the Council.	Peter Wiebe
UNOLS objectives, priorities and goals for 2005/2006 – The Council should review the 2004/05 objectives <http://www.unols.org/info/issues.html#objectives> and provide the UNOLS Office with their 2 or 3 high priority items by the end of August. UNOLS will compile the objectives and recirculate by email for Council prioritization. The list can be finalized at the fall Council meeting.	Council and UNOLS Office

Appendices:

- I. [Agenda](#)
- II. [Attendees](#)
- III. [Budget Trends and Ship Demand](#)
- IV. [Draft Slate](#)
- V. [Fleet Renewal Updates](#)
- VI. [R/V Marcus Langseth Conversion Update](#)
- VII. [UNOLS Briefing Package](#)
- VIII. [Safety Standards for HOVs](#)
- IX. [Committee Reports](#)

Meeting Minutes:

Day 1: Wednesday, July 13th

Call the Meeting: Peter Wiebe, UNOLS Chair, called the meeting to order at 1300 EDT and provided an opportunity for participant introductions. The meeting agenda is included as *Appendix I* and the participant list is *Appendix II*. The meeting was conducted via phone/web conferencing.

Accept the Minutes of the March 2005 Council Meeting – A motion was made and approved to accept the March 2005 meeting minutes as written.

FOFC Meeting – Peter Wiebe reported that a Federal Oceanographic Facilities Committee (FOFC) meeting is planned for tomorrow. He will join and participate via phone conference.

Agency Budget Projections – Mike Prince presented Fleet utilization and budget projections, NOAA DART moorings facility needs, and other requirements. His viewgraphs are included as *Appendix III*.

The FY 2006 Budget Request for the Directorate for Geosciences (GEO) is \$709.10 million, an increase of \$14.94 million, or 2.20 percent over the FY 2005 Current Plan of \$694.16 million. The outcome of the request is unknown at present. Within Ocean Sciences, the Research Facilities section would see level funding if the FY06 budget were authorized.

A slide was presented that shows the Facility funding profile and breaks down the amount budgeted for renewal implementation and operations and maintenance for the fiscal year (FY) 2001 to FY 2010. Implementation is the money that is put aside for fleet renewal and mid size infrastructure. Maintenance and Operations budget includes funds for support of technical services and science outfitting, shipboard equipment, and ship operations. Between FY05 and FY06, the OCE budget totals are flat. In order to have enough funds for renewal implementation, this translates to a decrease in operation funds for FY06.

Mike reviewed the total 2006 scheduled operating days as compared to estimated budget levels. The NSF OCE estimated operations cost is \$42M, but by refining the schedules the cost may go down to about \$40m. Linda Goad has been told that she will have a budget of \$37m, but this will also have to cover the cost of any ship lay-ups. So the total budget for ship operations is roughly \$35.5M

The \$5M included in the ONR FY06 request is not included in the UNOLS budget estimates. John Freitag has indicated that if it authorized, it would be used for support of ONR projects on the Navy AGORS. John also pointed that there are other items that have to be supported out of his Facilities budget (FLIP, CIRPAS, UNOLS, etc). His funds to support ship time is actually about \$8 - \$9M.

There is still uncertainty in the NOAA budget estimate, but the most realistic view is represented in the slide projections.

The bottom line is that there is a lot of uncertainty in the budget and there are still programs that need to be scheduled.

Mike presented a slide showing ship days scheduled versus ship days available:

- There is underutilization in all ship classes, but this is because of budget shortfalls and not ship time demand.
- The Global ships are underutilized by one ship.
- On the East Coast there is 1.5 ships over capacity. No ships have time scheduled in the first part of the year. Multi-ship operations mid year make it difficult to consolidate work onto fewer ships.
- On the West Coast there are four ships available, but only 2.4 ships worth of time scheduled.

- Most of the local vessels have fairly light schedules.

A slide was presented showing the operational days as compared to cost for the years 2002 to 2006. Total operating days is less than 4000 days in 2006 as compared to greater than 5000 days in 2004.

Current projections of deferred ship time indicate 499 days for 2006 and 308 days for 2007. In addition there are 1400 days pending from May panels that will not be approved for ship time in 2006. Linda indicated that of the 1400 pending days, probably half would be declined. Ship time requested in the May panels will be considered only if it makes the scheduler healthier, as an example, it would displace transits.

The potential for additional ship time was discussed. The Navy \$5M budget request seems promising and ONR managers are considering how it could be used. NOAA is evaluating options for support of the DART moorings. They are considering commercial contractor support. They will need flexible ship scheduling because of unknowns associated with the buoy construction timeline. They will require ships with spacious aft working deck and crews to support this type of work. It would be difficult for UNOLS to accommodate the DART time without dedicating a ship fully to the program. Shannon McArthur (NOAA) has asked that UNOLS consider support of two mooring locations, A1 and A2, one is off Cape Verde and the other in the Caribbean. Mike pointed out that there are UNOLS vessels in many of the areas where buoys are located.

UNOLS Response to Larry Clark letter – The Ad-hoc committee of Marcia McNutt (Chair), Eileen Hofmann, and Denis Wiesenburg with assistance from Mike Price has drafted preliminary recommendations regarding fleet operations in 2006 and plans for ship lay-ups that will fit the budget realities and minimize impact on funded scientific programs. Their draft recommendations were distributed to Council and UNOLS members prior to the meeting. Most feedback has been favorable.

Marcia reviewed each individual recommendation and Mike Prince displayed the text on the web conference screen. Revisions were made to the draft as it was reviewed. There was considerable discussion as the draft was reviewed. The draft text is provided below in italics and the associated comments/suggestions follow.

Short term recommendations (2006 operating year)

- ***Issue: How many ships should be taken out of service in 2006 to meet the budget projections?***
 - ***In the absence of additional funded work or an increase in the ship operations budget, there are not enough days next year to fully utilize all of the ships in the UNOLS fleet. Ship Schedulers and Agency Program Managers should develop scheduling options that lay-up the Alpha Helix, one intermediate-class vessel on the west coast, one intermediate-class vessel on the east coast and one global- or ocean-class vessel. The Weatherbird II (as it is being replaced by the Seward Johnson II) should be retired from service and current plans to retire the Gyre should be carried out. NSF should make a determination***

regarding the optimal start date for the Marcus Langseth operations. Should the \$5M for UNOLS operations that is currently in the Navy budget be appropriated, it would obviate the need to lay up the one global- or ocean-class vessel. A preliminary evaluation shows that there is little funded work for a regional-class vessel in Alaska, about two and a half ships' worth of regional and intermediate work on the west coast, and about four ships' worth of similar work on the east coast. There is around five ships' worth of work for the global- and ocean-class vessels (not including Marcus Langseth). The local vessels all have light schedules, but laying these up does not save significant amounts of money and would leave many projects stranded.

Comments:

- Mike Prince – Providing recommendations regarding lay-ups is proving difficult because of plans for multi-ship operations.
- The Council approved the wording of this item.
- Linda Goad suggested changing “\$5m ...would obviate the need” to ““\$5m ...might obviate the need.”
- Mike Price asked John Freitag to provide specific guidance to the schedulers regarding how Navy funds should be spent/scheduled.

➤ ***Issue: How should UNOLS deal with uncertain budgets for NOAA?***

- *Schedulers should be careful to create schedules that do not leave the vessel stranded in remote locations or rendered unworkable by the lack of approval for funding a particular project. All NOAA field work is dependent on Congress appropriating the budget requested by NOAA for each project. In some cases, the requested budget is for an increase over the base budget for the program and is more vulnerable than the other scheduled projects. Also, care should be taken to ensure that the total cost of a scheduled NOAA project is less than or equal to the proposed budget. Given the NOAA budget uncertainties, scheduling will need to be concluded without NOAA programs, while trying to retain some flexibility for inserting those programs at a later date when the agencies needs are certain. While this approach is not optimal for UNOLS or NOAA, it is the only fiscally responsible course of action unless the agency is willing to guarantee some level of UNOLS support.*

Comments:

- Bruce Corliss – Can programs such as NOAA's still be accommodated if submitted late during the scheduling process? Mike Prince – Yes, but maybe not optimally.
- Peter Wiebe indicated that NOAA has been aware of this stance.
- The Council accepted this section as written.

➤ ***Issue: Which ships should be laid-up?***

- *The choice of actual ships to be laid up in 2006 should be made by Agency program managers based on criteria that maximizes the amount of field work accomplished within the budget, meets any ship specific science requirements, and fairly distributes the pain of lay-ups among operating institutions. The*

ship operators and schedulers working with the UNOLS office can provide scheduling options to choose from with associated financial models and analysis of scientific impacts. The UNOLS Council and this committee can also provide further recommendations about the relative merits or considerations for the specific options once they are developed.

Comments:

- Marcia – Lay-up recommendations are best made by NSF working with the ship schedulers.
- Mike Prince – A comment was submitted by David Farmer (URI) suggesting that ships with outside funding should be given special consideration when considering lay-ups. These institutions could stand to lose the outside funding if they are laid-up.
- Linda Goad voiced concern over day rate increases.
- Mike Prince – We want to make sure that we don't discourage outside funding. In lay-ups we should consider the outside funding.
- Bill Martin added that if *Thompson* was laid up, there is a concern that their state support would be lost.
- Peter recommended that text be added to this section that would take into consideration institutional contributions to vessel support and use of the ships by organizations outside traditional groups such as NSF, ONR, and NOAA.
- This section will be revised to reflect comments.

➤ ***Issue: What type of lay-up should be recommended?***

- ***The minimum number of ships should be put into cold lay-up for an entire year (as opposed to partial lay-ups for a larger number of vessels) with any required inspections or surveys delayed to the end of the lay-up period as part of the re-activation process. Any shipyard periods should occur at the end of the lay up period unless scheduling at other times does not increase the cost of lay-up. Crew members and technicians should be employed on other UNOLS ships to the maximum extent possible. Lay-ups should be considered temporary cost-saving measures. Efforts should be made to retain experienced crew or technicians and maintain the research vessel and its equipment.***

Comments:

- A comment was submitted by Knox, et al regarding concern over the types of ship lay-ups and their impact on future operations. It is good to try to save money, but the fleet should not be left with the scenario that it is difficult or impossible to reactivate the ship when needed. Marcia recommended that this recommendation be redrafted so that it includes the need to maintain certifications during lay-ups.
- John Freitag has indicated that he prefers rotating partial lay-ups. Marcia said that they received considerable input indicating that the partial, rotating lay-ups were not preferred since they did not save money. There are significant costs associated with partial lay-ups. John would like this to be referred to as a rotational “maintenance” instead of a “lay-up.”
- If the Navy supports the cost of rotational maintenance and they result in no increase to the ship day rate, NSF would likely be receptive it.

- This section will be revised to reflect Council comments.

1500 *Break*

UNOLS Response to Larry Clark letter (continued)

- ***Issue: Can the cost of operating UNOLS vessels be reduced?***
 - ***Other methods for fleet-wide cost savings should also be explored thoroughly, but it is likely that many of these trends in increasing costs are outside the control of UNOLS operators.*** Recent increases in the cost of fuel from commercial and Navy sources along with the costs and level of effort necessary to implement new regulations for vessel security, oil spill response, and International Safety Management (ISM) plans have caused increases in total operating costs and daily rates. Increased training and experience requirements for crew members and a competitive market for experienced crew, along with increasing costs of maintaining aging vessels to higher standards of readiness, have also contributed to these higher operating rates. Operators and the funding agencies should continue to explore methods such as group purchases, sharing crewmembers and the use of Navy fuel sources to help control costs. In 2006, a higher percentage of ship time requests are for the larger, more expensive Global class vessels, which keeps the total fleet costs higher despite a dramatic decrease in total operating days. There does not appear to be, at this point in time, any incentive for PIs to accommodate their science on smaller, less expensive research vessels. NSF should explore whether or not such incentives are feasible. If not, this trend towards the use of larger, more expensive vessels will need to be accommodated in planning future operations budgets. It is not clear that any of these methods will result in major savings, so it will be important to keep operations budgets in line with the actual costs necessary to properly support the funded seagoing science.

Comments:

- Marcia recommended that some of the ship operation costs associated with complying with new homeland security regulation be examined to see if they and exemptions could be requested.
- Marcia doesn't see much creativity on the part of PIs to come up with ways to use smaller less expensive vessels. Perhaps UNOLS could work with NSF to provide more incentive for PIs to use smaller vessels.
- Linda Goad replied that NSF Program Managers know the ship costs associated with proposed fieldwork. They have experienced the scheduling process and sometimes move PIs to save funds.
- Rose Dufour commented she feels that there will be a decline in ship time requests (STRs) because PIs think that proposals with ship time requests have less chance of award.
- Peter Wiebe – There are many PIs who think critically about the appropriate ship for their work.

- Mike Reeve – NSF is considering fleet wide cost savings measures. Some years back they conducted an Academic Fleet Review to evaluate if they were spending their money in the best way. The Director of NSF, Dr. Bement has asked if an independent review should again be carried out.
- Linda Goad remarked that the Europort study of UNOLS indicated that the Fleet doesn't have any incentive to save money since there is no competition. She feels that there is price fixing and that operators consult with each other when developing operating costs. Linda added that the ship operation proposal reviews indicate that there is too much shore support.
- Mike Prince – Should an outside group (non-operator and non agency rep) be asked to examine the ship op proposals to provide recommendations on our cost structure. They could define what could be considered legitimate cost items.
- Cindy Van Dover expressed concern about a lack of competition.
- Bruce Corliss feels that there is competition. In lean times operators try to trim budgets.
- Mike Prince indicated that some operators are more concerned over costs than others. Those with non-agency funding have to try to keep day rates low in order to attract outside work.
- Marcia – This item will need additional revision. The recommendation should indicate that there are factors outside of our control. But it should also indicate that UNOLS should look at all cost factors. We should also look at incentives for reducing costs.

Longer term recommendations assuming level funding for next four years

- *Issue: Should ships be permanently retired to meet the budget projections? NSF and ONR in conjunction with FOFC fleet renewal planning should consider retiring research vessels early based on a more thorough evaluation of past utilization trends versus projected budgets for the next few years. If the decision is made to devote long-term a proportion of the current operations budget as a facilities account for new construction or if operational under-utilization is projected to continue, then the standing UNOLS fleet will need to be smaller than the current fleet (e.g., some ships retired and not replaced). Alternatively, retirement dates could be accelerated to devote the funds saved directly to fleet renewal. Once construction is complete, those funds can be returned to support operations of the new ships.*

Comments:

- Marcia – If future budget reductions persist, then retirements should be considered. This should be addressed by FOFC.

The review and discussion regarding the UNOLS response to Larry Clark's letter will be continued during Day 2 of the meeting, as some Council members needed to sign-off from the meeting. Discussion on other UNOLS items continued.

Nominating Committee Report– Bruce Corliss, Nominating Committee Chair, presented the draft 2005 Council Slate. In addition to Bruce, the Committee included Denis Wiesenburg and Eileen Hofmann. The draft slate is included as *Appendix IV*. There are two Council positions open for elections and three candidates have been selected to run in each position. A motion was made and accepted to approve the 2005 slate as drafted.

UNOLS Office Review and Competition – A subcommittee of Peter Wiebe (Chair), Margo Edwards, and Wilf Gardner have been tasked with performing a review of the UNOLS Office and announcing the opportunity for competition. Peter reported that he would draft a letter to the membership explaining the NSF request for a review and competition. The letter will announce that operator institutions can compete on hosting of the UNOLS Office. The subcommittee will also review the performance of the Office. If the review is favorable, MLML will be asked to recompetes as the host. Mike Prince displayed a copy of the draft letter.

Bruce Corliss asked why there were new NSF rules for the office. Mike Reeve explained that this was not a rule that singling out the Office. It is a recommendation from the Academic Fleet Review (AFR) that all facilities be reviewed every five years. NSF would like to comply with the AFR recommendations. Peter Wiebe commented that we should bring the UNOLS charter into alignment with the NSF plans.

Mike Prince reported that the Charter indicates that the Office should be regularly reviewed. The Charter specifies an Office review on a regular interval and that the Office can be held by an institution for up to nine years. It also allows two periods of review and provides an opportunity for competing.

Mike Reeve would like to ensure that there is the opportunity to compete every five years.

Peter stated that this is a discussion that should take place at the next full Council meeting. He will edit the membership letter to comply with the Charter.

Annual Meeting – The meeting date is October 14th. Peter Wiebe explained that he plans to contact Senator Sununu. He asked the Council if the Senator were not available, would a Staff member be appropriate? Another suggestion was to contact Representative Wolf. The Council agreed that a member of the Staff would be fine.

1640 *Adjourn Day One*

Day 2: Thursday, July 14th

Opening Remarks – Peter Wiebe re-opened day two of the meeting. The meeting resumed with review and discussion of the draft UNOLS letter to Larry Clark.

Longer term recommendations assuming level funding for next four years

- ***Issue: Should ships be permanently retired to meet the budget projections?*** NSF and ONR in conjunction with FOFC fleet renewal planning should consider retiring research vessels early based on a more thorough evaluation of past utilization trends versus projected budgets for the next few years. If the decision is made to devote long-term a proportion of the current operations budget as a facilities account for new construction or if operational under-utilization is projected to continue, then the standing UNOLS fleet will need to be smaller than the current fleet (e.g., some ships retired and not replaced). Alternatively, retirement dates could be accelerated to devote the funds saved directly to fleet renewal. Once construction is complete, those funds can be returned to support operations of the new ships. Longer term issues – should ships be permanently retired

Comments:

- Eileen Hofmann – expressed concerned that once a ship is retired, it cannot be brought back into service. She worries about putting this in the letter.
- Denis Wiesenburg indicated that retiring ships early could free money now.
- Tim Cowles voiced concern that there could be the impression that by retiring ships early we can make due with a smaller fleet.
- Marcia McNutt – Perhaps we need to state that this recommendation is a result of budget shortfalls, not demand on ships.
- Mike Prince – Start the recommendation by reminding that UNOLS and the scientific community have recommended increasing the size of fleet, we are considering this only because of budget shortfalls.
- Wilf Gardner – Change title so that it indicates early retirements as opposed to permanent retirements.
- Present options for meeting budget shortfalls could include rotating lay-ups or early retirements in the anticipation of new vessels coming on-line.
- The paragraph could start by explaining that a temporary reduction in fleet is only under consideration in order to meet demands.
- Linda Goad pointed out that there has been precedence for taking ships off line early (*Washington, Thompson, Moana Wave*).
- Bruce Corliss – We could take a more cautious approach. If the timeframe for construction is known, it would be easier to take a ship off-line early while new ships are constructed.
- Peter Wiebe commented that it would be difficult if *Endeavor* and *Oceanus* go offline at the same time.
- Bruce Corliss – Retirement dates could be accelerated by one to two years, but access to geographical region must be ensured.
- Add the term “Or near term operational deficits.”
- Add that it will be necessary for ship operations budgets to increase to support the future fleet.

- ***Issue: How can UNOLS plan long term for fleet size and composition?***
- *Given the uncertainty from year to year in what portions of the budget are devoted to research funding for ship time, science support, and fleet renewal,*

long-term planning is difficult to achieve. Ideally, the relative proportion of funding devoted to ship time versus science support should be set such that funded proposals for field programs have approximately the same panel and reviewer scores (averaged over the long term) as those that do not include field programs. If NSF is not currently tracking the relative success rates for these two classes of programs, it should be tracked, and we recommend that this information be made available to UNOLS in the future for planning fleet size. In addition, except under unusual circumstances, PIs should not have to wait more than a year to execute funded field programs. The proportion of the budget devoted to fleet renewal should be set so as to meet the future demands as vessels are retired. To date, this subcommittee has not seen the basis for determining the amount of the budget devoted to fleet renewal to know whether the increased amounts currently budgeted are sufficient or appropriate. In planning for new ships, an emphasis needs to be placed on the future day rates of the ships in order to avoid the natural tendency to want to upgrade the capabilities of each new ship regardless of the overall balance in the fleet.

Comments:

- Mike Reeve – NSF doesn't track proposal success. It is complex and there are levels of reviews and various scores.
- Marcia McNutt – How does NSF decide on what is the appropriate percentage for ship operations budgets as compared to science budgets?
- Mike Reeve – Traditionally, there has been a relative disconnect between the science and the ship operations budgets. NSF has traditionally tried to put all awarded proposals to sea. When they have had an excess in the ship operations budget, the excess would be returned to science. Up until now, they haven't been faced with a shortfall in the ship operations budget.
- Marcia McNutt – Perhaps this section needs rewording. - UNOLS would welcome the opportunity to work with NSF to make long-term projections.
- Deb Kelley – There is a perception among the science community that it is becoming more difficult to get large programs funded, so PIs are starting to propose smaller programs. Reduced ship time demand will become self-fulfilling.
- Marcia McNutt – If oceanographers rely on ship time to obtain their tenure, there will be less desire to follow the career path of a sea-going scientist.
- Peter Wiebe – There should be a look at how many requests were for ship time ten years ago and how many of these were successfully awarded, as compared to the request and success level now.
- Marcia McNutt commented that if there is a perception that chances of proposal success are lower for sea-going requests, it doesn't matter if it is a reality. Perhaps a survey should be sent to the UNOLS member representatives asking that untenured faculty provide input on this topic.
- Bruce Corliss added that recently tenured faculty be included in the survey.
- Margo Edwards indicated that this perception is very prevalent at RIDGE meetings.
- Marcia McNutt - Ideally young scientists should believe that their chances for successful careers are equal whether they pursue fieldwork or laboratory based

research. UNOLS welcomes the opportunity to work with NSF ensure that this is reality and the perception.

- Linda Goad commented that the facility budget represents about 1/3 of the oceans sciences budget, with the remaining 2/3 for science support.

➤ ***Issue: What steps can UNOLS take to ensure implementation of long-term fleet plans?***

- *Recommendations in the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy's report call for an increase in funding for the ocean sciences and for maintaining a capable research vessel fleet. Discussions currently ongoing at CORE and JOI are focusing on ways to advocate for Federal support to implement these recommendations and on the necessity for fleet renewal to support other major ocean research initiatives, such as observatories. **UNOLS should work more closely with these organizations to ensure coordinated long-term fleet planning and funding.***

Comment:

- UNOLS will work to make fleet information more available to policy makers. Sections of the document that were reviewed on Day 1 and earlier in the meeting were reviewed.

General Discussion: Mike Prince pointed out the high demand for large ships in 2006 is a result of the fact that most of the deferred work from previous years is for large ship work. A lot of the requests for smaller ships come out of the May panels, which are not being considered for scheduling in 2006. Rose suggested a footnote to indicate this.

Mike Prince will make the revisions to the recommendations to reflect the comments and suggestions raised during this meeting.

A motion was made and passed to accept the Ad-hoc committee recommendations as revised in this meeting (Gardner/Corliss).

Next steps:

- Peter will complete a cover letter to forward the UNOLS recommendations to Larry Clark.
- Mike will distribute the recommendations as a final revision to all UNOLS Member representatives and committees). We will ensure that RVTEC managers are included in the distribution.
- Linda Goad requested an electronic version of the recommendations so that they would be available at the Ship Scheduling meeting.

Break

UNOLS Issues:

Post Cruise Assessment Committee - Curt Collins announced that an individual is needed on the Post Cruise Assessment Committee to replace Dale Chayes. Peter Wiebe appointed Bill Martin to the committee.

Establishing Safety Standards for Human Occupied Vehicles (HOVs)– Peter Wiebe reported that at the spring DESSC meeting NSF expressed the need to establish safety standards for HOVs. His slides are included as *Appendix VIII. Alvin*, owned by the Navy, has always been certified by the Navy. The replacement HOV currently under design will not be Navy owned and will not be Navy inspected. John Freitag explained that the Navy only certifies their own vehicles. NSF has traditionally only supported submergence science HOV programs that use Navy certified HOVs. Dolly will send UNOLS a draft charge to establish HOV safety standards. The safety standards should address certification of the vehicle, certification of the ship, and training (vehicle and ship crew). In response to NSF's charge a subcommittee will be formed. Potential members include a RVOC Safety Committee representative, HOV operators from WHOI, HBOI, and HURL, and science users (DESSC). Input from the Navy and legal council would likely be required. It is a complex issue and the effort might span two years.

National Oceanographic Seismic Facility – Marcia McNutt reported that during the last Council meeting the draft terms of reference for a UNOLS standing committee, the *Marcus Langseth* Seismic Oversight Committee, were presented. At that time NSF expressed concern about the words regarding committee scheduling responsibilities. The draft has been revised to address these concerns. The revised draft will be circulated for approval. Once the charge is finalized, committee appointments can be made. The terms of reference should be finalized by the end of August so that it can be distributed at least 30 days in advance of the UNOLS Annual meeting.

The ad hoc Committee will recommend their top choices for the standing committee membership. Staggered membership terms will be indicated. All MLSOC charter members could serve at least one full first term.

Mike Reeve agreed with this plan.

Academic Fleet Renewal Activities and Plans:

FOFC Fleet Renewal Update and FIC Fleet Improvement Plan Update - Dave Hebert reported that he and Peter have participated in FOFC meetings. The FOFC has developed a draft Long-Range plan document. It has not been released to the full FIC. FOFC and FIC have been working to make sure that the statistics between the two reports are consistent. FOFC has hired a technical writer, John Everett from Ocean Associates, to assist in writing and editing their document. They hope to have a final draft available for review by 1 August. FOFC has requested high-resolution pictures to include in their report. The UNOLS will send out a call to the ship operators for images.

Dave reported that the FIC has met and held phone conferences to discuss the UNOLS Fleet Improvement Plan update. Almost all of the science sections have been drafted and the Fleet trends and utilization figures are being finalized. The Committee hopes to have a draft version in October. The level of detail will be on the scale of the 1995 Fleet Improvement Plan.

Renewal Implementation – Brief written summaries of various fleet renewal implementation efforts were distributed to the Council prior to the meeting. The summaries are included as **Appendix V**. They included:

- Regional Class Acquisition
- Ocean Class Acquisition
- Global SMRs
- Ship Design, Construction, and Operational Changes
 - BBSR plan's to acquire *Seward Johnson II* from HBOI and retire the *Weatherbird II*
 - *R/V Hugh R. Sharp*
 - GYRE Decommissioning Plans

Peter asked if there were any actions needed from UNOLS regarding the *Gyre* retirement. Mike Prince indicated that Texas A&M should send a letter to UNOLS with notification that once *Gyre* is decommissioned.

A report on the *R/V Marcus Langseth* conversion effort was provided by LDEO and is included as **Appendix VI**.

UNOLS Briefing Package for Congressional Staffers - Peter Wiebe explained that a UNOLS briefing package would be useful to explain what is UNOLS and what it does. His slides are in **Appendix VII**. The package could explain Committee structure and tasks, a Fleet description and distribution, and their decommissioning dates. The status of the UNOLS fleet today in terms of current and near-term funding shortfalls and consequences could be addressed. The funding status of design and construction efforts could be included.

The briefing package could be used when approaching the Senate, House and others. Wilf suggested that we could coordinate with UCAR on the effort. Denis Wiesenburg suggested that the document be a one-page glossy flyer. John Bane recommended that aircraft be included in the flyer. Eileen Hofmann suggested that the brochure include information about important discoveries made while working aboard the ships. Margo Edwards suggested that although USCG icebreakers aren't part of the UNOLS fleet, they should be included in the package. Peter Wiebe will prepare a draft package and send it to the Council when ready.

Break

UNOLS STR/Scheduling Database - Mike Prince provided a brief status report on the UNOLS database project. Aaron Payne is working on the system. The system is based

on a sequel server database. The active server pages are still under construction, but the Ship Time Requests are complete. Users will have one password to log into the system. The system will be database driven. Funds to support Aaron will likely run out by the end of the year.

UNOLS objectives, priorities and goals for 2005 – 2006 – Mike Prince reported that last year's objectives, priorities and goals are available at [<http://www.unols.org/info/issues.html#objectives>](http://www.unols.org/info/issues.html#objectives). These should be updated on an annual basis. They are used to tell the community where our focus is for the year. They are also included in the UNOLS Office proposal. Mike reviewed the posted objectives and goals and asked that the Council give them further consideration. He asked the Council to look at the 2004/05 objectives and let the office know what the objectives will be in the coming year. He asked that input be provided by the end of August. Each Council member should send in two to three items.

Committee Reports – Committee Chairs provided written reports in advance of the meeting. They are included as *Appendix IX*.

Adjourn Day 2