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Recommendations for non-operational
periods by UNOLS vessels during 2007

UNOLS recommendations regarding criteria and process for recommending non-operational periods for UNOLS research vessels.

(1) Even though that much of the work of scheduling for CY 2007 was complete by this time it was decided to give the process a trial run.

(3) Lay ups

Only one vessel – *Cape Hatteras* – was recommended for full year lay-up (Gulf of Mexico work resulted in partial schedule).

Several vessels on east & west coast also recommended for partial schedules.

Science driver – time of year (many projects in “peak” season) and widely dispersed locations

Four Ship Operating Institutions responded;
comments included:

- * (2) issue of timing of this exercise
(moot point by end of 2006)
- * (4) consensus response that recommendations
were the right choices at the time, given the
information available
(no alternative recommendations were offered)

(5) comments on potential interpretation of priority criteria of “Meeting Science Needs” may functionally result in taking “Special Purpose” vessels off the table as candidates for lay-ups.

We recommend that the “Meeting Science Needs” criteria be applied without any prejudice to type of work or ship required.

(need to look at the past and at potential delay to projects that might result from scheduling decisions and give precedence to projects that have been waiting longer for available shiptime).

(6) comments on “Sharing the Pain” highlight that laying up ships for long periods of time has a negative impact on personnel:

- overlapping partial lay-ups for more than one ship at the same institution equivalent to full lay ups;
- lengthy partial schedules in two adjoining years can be comparable to a full year lay-up in terms of the impact on crew.

OUR recommendation is that plans to “share the pain” take into account a multi-year vision of utilization for the vessels being considered for layup.

Comments on timing:

(7) Essential to have early timing for guidance and recommendations for non-operational periods (at least as a first cut). Earlier discussions will provide opportunities to explore alternate solutions before the process progresses too far to be changed.

(8) We recommend that the agency program managers in conjunction with the UNOLS Scheduling Committee provide a set of plans for utilization of the UNOLS Fleet for 2008 in the July timeframe. The UNOLS Council Ad-Hoc committee would endeavor to provide feedback within a month.