

UNOLS

Committee Reports

March 2007

Arctic Icebreaker Coordinating Committee Report March 2007

USCGC HEALY completed her dry dock period in February and conducted sea trials March 1-3 and a shakedown cruise from March 8-16. Healy will sail in early April for Dutch Harbor to start the 2007 science missions. Three cruises have been scheduled: the BEST project in April-May (Sambrotto); the Grebmeier/Lovvorn northern Bering Sea cruise in May-June; and Law of the Sea mapping in August-September on the Chukchi Cap/Arctic Ocean (Mayer). The first two cruises will be supported out of Dutch Harbor and the third cruise will be supported out of Barrow. The gap in the schedule has not been filled to date and Healy is scheduled to return to Seattle between the 2nd and 3rd cruise.

USCGC POLAR SEA supported Deep Freeze in 2007, together with the Swedish icebreaker ODEN. The POLAR SEA departed Seattle Nov. 18 and arrived at McMurdo on January 1, 2007, a few days after the ODEN. The ODEN made the first pass through the first year ice and POLAR SEA followed, widening the channel. Favorable offshore wind conditions blew ice out of the ship channel, making operations easier. After the break-out, ODEN was released at the end of January and POLAR SEA departed McMurdo in mid-February. POLAR SEA was diverted to assist a Japanese whaling boat that had caught fire; no assistance was required. POLAR SEA is enroute back to Seattle via New Zealand and Hawaii with an anticipated arrival in Seattle in April, 2007. POLAR STAR remains in caretaker status at the USCG Base in Seattle.

Both the AICC and the USCG recently worked to communicate the upcoming Healy science plans with local Alaskan communities. Capt. Ted Lindstrom traveled to Barrow in mid-February to meet with local community leaders, whaling captains, scientists, the chair of the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission (AEWC; Harry Brower), and the president of the Barrow Whaling Captains Association (Eugene Brower). The visit was very successful. On February 28th, scientist representatives from each of this year's cruises (Sambrotto, Cooper (for Grebmeier), Mayer), Dave Forcucci (USCG Healy Science Liaison), and Carin Ashjian (AICC Chair) attended the AEWK Mini-Convention at the invitation of the AEWK chair to present plans for Healy's science activities in 2007. The meeting went very well. Our efforts to meet with the AEWK were appreciated by the meeting attendees and there were no objections raised by the AEWK to the science plans.

A small (AICC/science, USCG, and NSF) "Icebreaker Retreat" was held December 7th and 8th, 2006 at the USCG Base in Alameda, CA. The goal of the retreat was to continue to strengthen interactions between USCG and the science community, especially in light of the recent NAS icebreaker report and the last summer's tragedy onboard HEALY. Unlike AICC meetings, which focus on the detailed operations of the HEALY and POLAR-class icebreakers, the discussions at the retreat were geared toward "big picture" issues such as the future of the CG fleet of icebreakers, integrating science and CG missions and how to improve communications at all levels within science and CG hierarchies. Several recommendations resulted from the retreat, the most relevant to UNOLS being that a workshop be held to identify science priorities on polar icebreaking needs in response to the NAS report.

AICC met in Seattle January 9th and 10th 2007. Plans for the next AICC meeting are not finalized to date. Robin Muench replaced Robert Bourke on the AICC. Kate Moran will replace Margo Edwards in June 2007. Margo Edwards received the USCG Distinguished Public Service

Award, that service's top civilian public service award. Carin Ashjian replaced Margo Edwards as Chair of the AICC.

The AICC can be reached by writing to the Chair (carin@whoi.edu) or to the UNOLS Office (office@unols.org).

Report submitted by C. Ashjian and M. Edwards.

RVTEC Report
By Bill Martin
March 14, 2007

The 2006 annual RVTEC meeting was held at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution on October 16th. The meeting was held in conjunction with INMARTECH 2006, October 17-19. The RVTEC meeting was condensed from a normal; 3-day meeting down to a one-day meeting to discuss current issues and agency reports. Both meetings were very informative and feedback was very positive.

Currently, RVTEC is looking for an individual to serve as the RVTEC liaison to the Arctic Icebreaker Coordinating Committee (AICC). Nominations are being gathered and reviewed. We should have this filled by the end of March.

The annual RVTEC meeting for 2007 is scheduled for Nov. 6-8 at Moss Landing Marine Laboratory.

RESEARCH VESSEL OPERATORS' COMMITTEE REPORT
SUBMITTED BY TIM ASKEW, RVOC CHAIR
March 15, 2007

The Research Vessel Operators' Committee is back on track with annual meetings now April to April. This year's meeting scheduled for the week of April 23 – 26, 2007, will be hosted by Florida Institute of Oceanography (FIO) thanks to Randy Maxxon, their Marine Superintendent and Dr. John Ogden, Director. Much effort has gone into planning the agenda and lining up special speakers. A special session for all Marine Managers, Directors, and Superintendents, as well as funding agency representatives will be held the morning of the third day prior to the Business Meeting. The topic will be Lean-Six-Sigma in Ship Operations presented by Novaces, Chief Executive Officer Baha Inozu, PhD. The primary goal is to demonstrate Lean-Six-Sigma methodology (improve work place, meet goals, better serve customers) to UNOLS Operator Members.

Another interesting and informative presentation will be presented by Captain Dave Shoemaker. Captain Shoemaker was one of 23 survivors of the fishing vessel F/V Galaxy that exploded, burned and ultimately sank in the Bering Sea five years ago.

The Safety Committee will meet on Monday, March 23, 2007 to finalize the revisions and updates to the Research Vessel Safety Standards. The chapter reviews have been taking place via phone conferencing and picture talk on an almost weekly basis thanks to Mike Prince, UNOLS Executive Secretary. Other important agenda items are Transportation Workers Identification Credentials (TWIC), Winch and Wire Update and Wire and Cables Safe Working Load (SWL). Additionally it is planned to have the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) present an awareness talk on Economic Espionage. The agenda is full and RVOC is looking forward to a productive meeting.

Report of the DEep Submergence Science Committee

DESSC met at the Seattle Aquarium November 9, 2006 for their bi-yearly meeting. The meeting was held in conjunction with the Western Society of Naturalists Meeting Student Workshop. Reports were given by the PI's, Agencies, UNOLS, and NDSF and a summary of DESSC activities and issues was presented. Completed DESSC action items for 2006 include finalization and adoption of Criteria for Adding Assets to the NDSF, incorporation of ABE/Sentry into NDSF, and transfer of the DSL-120a operations to the University of Hawaii. D. Kelley was added as a liaison to the HOV Replacement Committee, which met in Washington DC February 7-8, 2007. Marsh Youngbluth from Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution, and Michael Tryon from Scripps were formally welcomed onto the committee. Ongoing tasks include completion of the document for Establishing Safety Standards for the use of Human Occupied Vehicles (Craig Young represents DESSC on this committee), formalization of a questionnaire for NDSF Vehicle Debrief Interviews (Heady Edmonds, Michael Tryon, and Bill Chadwick), and activation of an online sensors questionnaire for the replacement HOV. The Ocean Observatory ROV Workshop was postponed pending decisions on the Ocean Observatories Initiative. D. Kelley, C. Young, and K. Ludwig spoke at a Western Society of Naturalists reception for ~100 students the evening of November 9th. The Spring 2007 DESSC meeting will be held in Woods Hole May 30-31. This will be D. Kelley's last meeting as Chair.