

To: NSF and ONR Ship Operations Program Managers
From: Mary Jane Perry, Vernon Asper, and John Morrison
Via: UNOLS Council
Subj: 2010 U.S. Academic Research Fleet Operations Recommendations

- Ref: a) *Criteria and Process for Recommending Non-Operational Periods of Ships in the UNOLS Fleet*, UNOLS Council and Report of Ad Hoc Subcommittee, July 24, 2006
b) *2010 U.S. Academic Research Fleet Operations Support Findings and Recommendations*, NSF and ONR Ship Operations Program Managers, 10 September 2009

The ad-hoc subcommittee of representatives from non-operating institutions reviewed the findings and recommendation of the NSF and ONR Ship Operations Program Managers. Comments received from four operating institutions (Bermuda Institute of Ocean Sciences, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of Delaware, and University of Hawaii) were also in basic agreement with overall agencies' recommendations.

NSF AND ONR RECOMMENDATION 1

Include a maintenance period from January to March 2010 for *Langseth*. Evaluate the five NSF cruises being considered and schedule the three cruises that can be supported based on transit distances, weather considerations (typhoon season), environmental clearance/permitting restrictions, and available funding using revised day rates. Continue to seek opportunities for other funded shiptime to support a stronger schedule.

The current *Langseth* schedule includes three cruises, all in the Pacific with ~134 science and mobilization days, ~30 transit days, and ~189 'maintenance' days. It is not clear whether the five NSF cruises being considered are currently scheduled on other vessels and whether they require *Langseth's* capabilities, as the agency memo states that "the decisions for research cruises to be funded by NSF in 2010 have been made and no additional NSF days are anticipated". However, the ad-hoc subcommittee agrees with the philosophy that funded science requiring *Langseth's* capabilities be supported. Additionally, we agree with the recommendation to continue seeking increased funding from other sources.

NSF AND ONR RECOMMENDATION 2

Implement partial-year schedules for *Endeavor* and *Oceanus* of approximately 130 days each. The Montoya cruise will be supported by the *Oceanus* and the *Cape Hatteras* and the Lohmann cruise will be on the *Endeavor*. This provides for an equitable split of the days on the Intermediates.

The ad-hoc subcommittee supports this recommendation of implementing partial lay-ups for the *Endeavor* and *Oceanus* to ensure that projects are scheduled during the appropriate seasons and weather windows. This recommendation reflects the philosophy of 'sharing the pain' and will help in retaining experienced personnel.

NSF AND ONR RECOMMENDATION 3

Schedule *Seward Johnson* to support all cruises requiring the unique capabilities of the Johnson Sea-Link submersible. Encourage HBOI to inform UNOLS Council as soon as a decision is reached regarding their pending bid to conduct commercial work and to withdraw from UNOLS, as described in teleconferences with NSF and the UNOLS Executive Secretary on June 16, 2009 and August 13, 2009.

The ad-hoc subcommittee agrees with this recommendation and supports encouraging HBOI to make a timely decision.

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4. The Hawaii Ocean Time Series (“HOTS”) cruises are currently scheduled with six cruises accommodated by the *Kilo Moana*, two cruises on the *Wecoma* and two cruises on the *Ka’imikai-O-Kanaloa*.
5. Support the Scripps decision to schedule non-operational periods at the beginning and the end of the 2010 operating year for *New Horizon*, utilizing the crew on other ships and leaving open the possibility of supporting additional work during the year.
6. As has been in recent years, schedule *Cape Hatteras* to work in the Gulf of Mexico, to support the Montoya cruise and be available to pick up additional work during the year.
7. Encourage operators of all ships to find ways to reduce costs and seek appropriate opportunities to support research and education programs supported by other funding sources.

The ad-hoc committee agrees with the agencies’ recommendations and notes that responding operators included comments on how they were actively seeking ways to reduce operating costs and find additional funds.

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8. Emphasize to operators of institution-owned ships that they must decide if their planned schedule can support the cost to operate.

This recommendation should probably include a timeline for operators of institution-owned ships to make such decisions, in order to accommodate funded science on other vessels if necessary.