

Antarctic Research Vessels and UNOLS/AICC

- Concept:
 - NSF/OPP funds science that requires the use of both Arctic and Antarctic research vessels
 - UNOLS (NSF/OCE, NOAA, ONR, MMS, USGS, USCG) oversees the operation of UNOLS vessels and the Arctic icebreakers (Polars, Healy)
 - NSF/OPP oversees the operation of contracted Southern Ocean vessels (Palmer, Gould, Odin)
 - Coordination between these efforts is inefficient
 - UNOLS vessels could do some high-latitude work
 - Polar vessels could supplement UNOLS vessels in low latitudes
- Solution?

Background: AICC

(Arctic Icebreaker Coordinating Committee)

- Established by the UNOLS Charter:
 - *to provide polar science projects with planning assistance and to liaise and facilitate communications between scientists, funding agencies and facility providers.*
 - *Specifically, the AICC is to provide oversight and advice to the U.S. Coast Guard for the purpose of enhancing facilities and science aboard their icebreaker fleet.*

Background: ARVOC

(Antarctic Research Vessel Oversight Committee)

- Established by USAP Charter document that forms 4 committees:
 - ARVOC
 - MAUC (McMurdo Area User Committee)
 - PAUC (Palmer Area User Committee)
 - SPUC (South Pole User Committee)
- “The USAP user committees provide advice and recommendations to the USAP prime contractor on the support of science projects using USAP resources and facilities.”
- “The committees have an advisory status but cannot task the prime contractor or NSF/OPP with action items to be carried out.”

From the Fall Meeting Minutes

- Form an ad-hoc committee to develop the terms of reference for a UNOLS Antarctic Research Vessel Coordinating standing committee.
- The ad-hoc committee would also suggest the charter membership for the standing committee.
- After Council endorsement of the terms and members, this item will be added as a Ballot Measure to the 2010 Annual Meeting Agenda
- **ACTION:** Vernon will appoint ad-hoc committee members and draft their task statement. The UNOLS Office will assist.

Draft charge

- "This committee is requested to review the current arrangement of research vessel oversight in both regions to determine if more efficient use of resources might be possible by reconfiguring the committee structure. These recommendations will be provided to the UNOLS Council for review and then transmitted to the NSF when complete."

Since the fall UNOLS meeting:

- Potential outcomes:
 - Merge AICC and ARVOC
 - Form a third committee
 - Enhance coordination between AICC and ARVOC
- Cautions from NSF:
 - More buy-in from NSF is required before proceeding
 - Because of the complexity of funding and logistics support contracts, merging support won't be easy or simple
 - The AICC role of liaising with the USCG is critical, unique, and time-consuming and perhaps not well met by a merged/diluted committee

Action item:

- Discuss the situation and options
- Make recommendations to NSF
- Expect feedback from NSF before proceeding.