

Ocean Observing Science Committee Report to UNOLS Council

March 2014

The members of OOSC are part of a very small group of people outside the funding of OOI that have a modest understanding of OOI. They have patiently waited as OOI is constructed and now, finally, approaches operational status.

OOSC continues to engage the Ocean Observatory Initiative (OOI) through interaction with Jean McGovern and Bob Houtman at NSF, and Tim Cowles at the OOI office in COL and the Program Advisory Committee that reports to the Consortium on Ocean Leadership board.

Some background

The construction of OOI has been largely funded with 'stimulus' money. The total amount approaches \$400M. The construction phase is about 80% completed and ends in less than a year. During the construction OOSC was not able to engage in the process because of the way contracting and purchasing was conducted under the stimulus funding rules.

The next phase is Operations and Maintenance (O&M) and funding comes from the core NSF science budget. The oceanographic community is concerned about the impact on the core budgets. OOI management has been advised that there will be a cap of \$55M on the operational budget of OOI. This is considerably below the earlier estimates. As OOSC plans for future activities it recognizes there are still significant unknowns.

OOI relies on the cyber-infrastructure (CI) component to provide system control and most importantly the user interface to the data streams. At this time the delivery of the CI systems are severely delayed. This also impacts OOSC planning of user workshops.

Activities to date

OOSC was created in October 2010. Our main activity focused on staying abreast of OOI construction and, probably most importantly, continuing to learn about how OOI will work for researchers. The chair has represented OOSC/UNOLS at several COL Program Advisory Committee briefings and numerous telecom briefings. The committee has held telecons as needed and the Chair has sent out summaries as needed.

User Forums - although several user forums were considered we determined that it was premature to have any given the uncertainty in data accessibility and the construction schedules.

The future

There has been considerable informal discussion about OOSC's function in the future. The vision is that OOSC will function much as DeSSC serves the deep submergence community: oversight of the assets, ombudsman for the research community, insuring maximum participation, and promoting new technology.

In the coming months OOSC will work with NSF, OOI, UNOLS and the oceanographic community to establish how OOSC can address the needs of the OOI research community.

We anticipate workshops for interested researchers and observatory user groups to help with the management and operations of the OOI.

The workshops will facilitate researchers learning how to access the streaming data and how the data is quality controlled and calibrated. They would also discuss what research questions are best answered with the OOI systems.

The UNOLS process for creating new groups and revising charters will be addressed in the coming months.

OOSC members will be attending the upcoming OOI data management review in late March.

Members of OOSC

Larry Atkinson (ODU) – Chair

Emmanuel Boss (Maine)

Suzanne Carbotte (LDEO)

Steve DeMarco (TAMU)

Mary Jo Richardson (TAMU)

Raphael Kudela (UCSC)

Ruoying He (NCSU)