



UNOLS Safety Committee Report

Research Vessel Operators Committee
Tulane University River and Coastal Center
Tuesday, April 18, 2017



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Charge of Safety Committee

To provide a forum for the formulation, review, and recommendation for the approval of the UNOLS Research Vessel Safety Standards (RVSS) for the UNOLS fleet through the RVOC.

Membership

1. Voting Members- 10 members, representing the UNOLS class of vessels; global, ocean, regional, local, as well polar, regulatory, and RVTEC
2. UNOLS Community Members, Federal Agency Reps, Observers all welcome
3. UNOLS Subject Matter Experts- non-voting, expertise as needed, invited by committee

Term limits- 3 year with a possible 3 year renewal

Reporting- This will remain the same, ie. report to RVOC

Meetings- Twice a year to include RVOC as before

Accomplishments since April 2016 Meeting

- 3 new members volunteered & voted aboard
- Updated lithium battery guidance in RVSS researched, drafted, reviewed
- Formatted RVSS waiver request process implemented...one short-fused waiver request submitted & approved
- Observed a JMS ship inspection
- Participated in SCOAR meeting & teleconferences on UAS policy
- Mid-year safety committee teleconference in October
- Hardware issues – man overboard recovery systems & winch display issues addressed.

Safety Committee Discussion from Tuesday 18 April 2017

Lithium battery update – Reviewed draft RVSS language; with minor revisions will be ready for promulgation.

Appendix B suspension and way ahead – Discussed how to proceed...looking at using 46 CFR 189.35 requirements for oceanographic vessel weight-handling gear as the RVSS basis for both inspected and non-inspected UNOLS vessels

Use of non-UNOLS vessels (Chapter 18/Appendix D) – Extensive discussion to address issues raised:

- Ambiguous language – “shoulds,” “recommended”
- Who approves charters...self assessments OK?
- Charter evaluations in other countries & remote areas
- “One size fits all” for charter evaluations...or scale for size of vessel, area of operation, duration?
- Must non-UNOLS vessels fully comply with RVSS? If so, how can this be reasonably enforced/documentated?
- Appendix D checklist adequate? NOAA checklist or CMID better suited?

Safety Committee Outcomes from Monday 18 April 2016 (Continued)

Harassment prevention (Chapter 6/Appendix E) – Update RVSS in line with work of the committee on gender climate:

- Policy posted on UNOLS ships
- Mandatory training (with modules under development) at the start of each cruise
- Point of contact/help access independent of ship & science party

Provide updates on issues above for RVOC consideration & approval

Safety Committee membership – call for nominations to fill one vacancy for a 2017 – 2020 term.