



# UNOLS 2020 Annual Meeting

US Academic Research Fleet COVID-19 Response

UNOLS Office



# COVID-19 Response & Return to Operations

- Pause in Operations – 17 March, return to ops ~1 July
- Guidance for restarting science operations developed & promulgated
  - Operators conduct risk assessments, implement risk mitigation, develop outbreak management plans for each science cruise
  - Joint decision with Chief Scientist on Go / No-Go
  - Risk Reviews with funding agencies & UNOLS Office
- Each institution developed Risk Management Plans that met their own particular needs
- On-line Meetings with Marine Superintendents & Principal Investigators to review updated guidance
- Focus on **high priority (“Priority 1”) / low risk** cruises
- **72 cruises in process or successfully completed!**
- **One cruise cancelled due to positive test before planned departure**
- Resources – see [UNOLS Coronavirus Webpage](#)
- Many cruises deferred to 2021
  - ~1/3 of scheduled 2020 fleet days lost/deferred
- Monthly Check-Ins with Marine Superintendents

## UPDATED - CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) - CONSIDERATIONS FOR SCIENTISTS AND OPERATORS

• HOME / NEWS / UPDATED - CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) - CONSIDERATIONS FOR SCIENTISTS AND OPERATORS

### Categories

Agency Updates

AICC Updates

Council Updates

Cruise Field Notes

DESSC Updates

Early Career Updates

FIC Updates

MSROC Updates

OOSC Updates

RVOC Updates

RVTEC Updates

SCOAR Updates

Ships News

SSC Updates

Jun 3, 2020 Posted In: [Ships News](#)



We are posting updates as we receive them. Links to the CDC, WHO, and other relevant maritime resources are below.

**UPDATE 18 June 20**

[International Chamber of Shipping - Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Guidance for Ship Operators for the Protection of the Health of Seafarers, Vers. 2.1 dated 29 May 2020](#)

**UPDATE 3 June 20**

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Considerations for Making Decision Regarding Conducting Science Onboard U.S. Academic Research Fleet Vessels V.1.8](#)

**UPDATE 2Jun20**

[USCG Marine Safety Information Bulletin - Novel Coronavirus - MSIB Number: 02-20 \(Change 5\)](#)

**UPDATE 14May20**

[George Washington Medical Maritime Medical Access \(GW-MMA\) Coronavirus Guidance](#)

**UPDATE 29Apr20**



# Background for UNOLS COVID-19 Considerations and Guidance Cont'd

- Real world events
  - U.S. Navy Vessels
  - F/V American Dynasty & sister ships
- CDC, WHO, ICS, USCG
- GW Medical
- UW Medical
- Discovery Health



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## Coronavirus outbreak strikes Seattle factory trawler as most of 126 crew tests positive

June 1, 2020 at 8:24 am | Updated June 1, 2020 at 5:56 pm



The American Dynasty was docked in Bellingham last week when one crew member reported feeling sick, tested positive for COVID-19 and was... (Greg Gilbert / The Seattle Times) [More](#)

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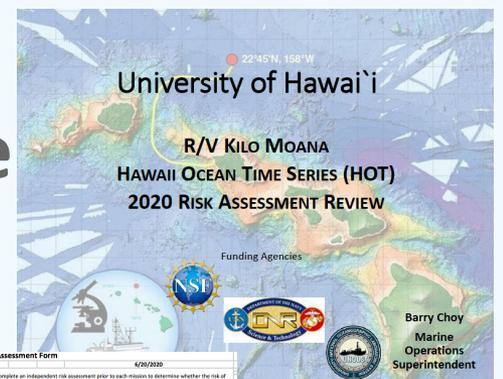
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# UNOLS COVID-19 Considerations and Guidance

- Pre-cruise planning
- Preparing for Operations
- Risk Assessment & Mitigation
  - Marine Superintendent & Chief Scientist
- Self Isolation and Testing
  - Strict self isolation
  - Testing results timelines
- Final Risk Determination – Go / No-Go
  - Joint decision
- Agency concurrence
- Continually reviewing about virus progress & adjusting the Guidelines as necessary

Exceptional collaborative effort by Ship Operators, Scientists & Federal Agencies to make science happen!



R/V SHARP COVID-19 Risk Assessment Form 4/26/2020

The Vessel Operator (University of Hawaii Director of Marine Operations) and the Mission Chief/Scientist shall complete an independent risk assessment prior to each mission to determine whether the risk of successfully completing the mission (with or without operations) is commensurate with the risk of a crew member becoming infected with COVID-19. Consideration will be given to whether there is a strong management plan in place to address any incident that may occur during a cruise. Risk shall be assessed as High, Medium or Low using the UNOLS Assessment 'COVID-19 Considerations for Conducting Science Onboard U.S. Academic Research Vessels'. This form and the SHARP Mission Planning COVID-19 Operational Guidelines and Risk Checklist form. The use of a checklist or scorecard coming in contact with COVID-19 about the ship cannot be fully eliminated. These policies and procedures aim to minimize the risk, similar to other safety policies and procedures aboard any vessel.

Please use "X" in the Appropriate Columns and Provide Comments and Mitigation Factors. Split boxes can be used as high based on mitigation factors. Red/high risk, Yellow/medium risk, Green/low risk.

Risk Factor	Yes	No	N/A	Comments / Mitigation Factors
Science operations are 10-days transit from a US port, intends to stop at a non-US port, or is a multi-stop operation.		X		
Science operations are within 3-5 days transit from a US port.	X			
Science operations are within a week of transit back to a US port.	X			The ship will remain within a 12-hour or less transit of home port during the cruise mission.
The vessel is at full Berthing Capacity	X	X		All Crew and Science can have their own berth.
Science party has been reduced to the minimum necessary to carry out the work.	X			Only 20 science party. All Crew and Science can have their own berth.
Diagnostic virus testing PCR for COVID-19 is available and all crew and scientist will be tested / have tested negative within four days of the mobilization day. Additional testing is performed.	X			Crew is scheduled to be tested 4 days prior to mobilization day. Science will test on day 1.
Non-Local personnel (crew and science party) who have traveled by air to the port of call have successfully self-isolated (see UNOLS Self-Isolation guidelines)	X			The Scientific Technician must either arrive 24 hours or can take a direct flight from Hawaii to San Francisco, they will arrive and be immediately self-isolated. The person has been staying in their homes and will follow CDC's travel guidelines. They will also be instructed to put their masks on the ship. The person has been wearing their masks during their trip. The person is a 34 year in duration. The person will marry. History with the SHARP Marine Unit and the other Science Party person (their spouse).
Local crew and science personnel have strictly adhered to local governmental and institutional health screening, distancing, hygiene, and face covering regulations/guidelines.	X			See the SHARP policy for details.
The Outreach Prevention and Mitigation policies and procedures outlined in the SHARP Outreach and Mitigation Plan are in place and sufficient relative to other risk factors above. Note that the risk of a COVID-19 outbreak cannot be 100% reduced.	X	X		See the SHARP policy for details. Note that the risk of a COVID-19 outbreak cannot be 100% reduced.
The Outreach Response procedures in the SHARP Outreach and Mitigation Plan are sufficient relative to the other risk factors above.	X			See the SHARP policy for details.

Director of Marine Operations Overall Mission Risk Determination: Low enough for the San Juan expert to fly. Very small science party, short mission will allow extra distancing measures aboard the ship. All personnel will be tested "in ship prior to mobil day. San Juan has been working from home. It is all in the kit bag.

Chief Scientist Overall Mission Risk Determination: Low enough for sailing.

### Risk Assessment for RV SALLY RIDE Sommer Cruise (SR2003) during the underway period 1 to 3 July 2020 departing and returning to the Nimitz Marine Facility, San Diego California

The Chief Scientist and the Marine Superintendent have taken the following into consideration in determining whether risk is at an acceptable level for conducting a scheduled science cruise on a Scripps Institution of Oceanography vessel.

**Pre-Cruise Planning - Cruise Risk Assessment CRUISE LOGISTICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- Is effective COVID-19 testing available and in place?

Scripps Institution of Oceanography uses a FDA approved molecular test. This test detects genetic material of the virus using a lab technique called polymerase chain reaction (PCR). Also called a PCR test, a health care worker collects fluid from a nasal or throat swab or from saliva. Molecular tests are considered very accurate when properly performed by a health care professional. All tests used health care professional to administer and analyze the results.

- What are the virus infection rates for the port of embarkation and any anticipated port(s) of call? Consider along track ports of refuge, storm evasion and repairs as well.

San Diego County has a 14-day rolling average percentage of positive tests at 3.4%. This cruise remains in close proximity to San Diego, which would be used for refuge, storm evasion and repairs.

- Where on the "epidemic curve" are load and unload port(s) and the home of crew / science party? Is it now safe to work in that port? Have Shelter in Place orders been lifted? Can necessary crew and science party personnel safely travel to the port?

San Diego has seen a recent uptick in new infections due to increased mobility, more businesses open and additional testing. Social distancing and the wearing of facemasks are required per State Order. The County Public Health Order (dated 19 June 2020) states, "All persons are to remain in their homes or at their place of residence, except for employees or customers traveling to and from essential businesses, reopened businesses, or essential activities." Some crew traveled to San Diego in early June (about half reside in San Diego) and all will have completed 14 days of quarantine aboard SALLY RIDE as well as three negative RT-PCR COVID-19 test results prior to the cruise start. All scientists and technicians either reside in San Diego or will have been in San Diego for the completion of a 14 day pre-embarkation period that includes eight days under shelter-in-place, six days of supervised self-isolation, and three negative RT-PCR COVID-19 test results prior to the start of the cruise.

- What are current rules (federal, state, local) for sheltering in place, and/or essential services that may not permit oceanographic science operations? Have these rules been lifted for the port of origin for the cruise and the end-port?

### R/V SIKULIAQ COVID-19

#### Mitigation and Response



Version 1.4 20 April 2020



# Life onboard ship in these COVID times

- Masks required
- Social Distancing
- Increased cleaning regimes
- Lots of hand-washing
- Single state rooms when possible
- No/limited self-service of food & drinks
- Meals in shifts – reduced mess deck seating
- Limits to personnel in the gym & lounges
- Relax protocols after 14 days underway if no issues

UGA/ Skidaway Institute of Oceanography

R/V Savannah

COVID-19 Response Plan

Revised: 19 May 2020

- Introduction
- Risk assessment
- In Port Vessel Protocols
- Operational Procedures to Prepare for Cruise
- Outbreak Management Plan

## I. Introduction

On March 11<sup>th</sup> 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a worldwide pandemic. The disease outbreak started in China in all human life around the world, including the maritime industry. The Institute of Oceanography. The RV Savannah's last cruise prior to March. On 16 March, the ship entered an out of service status.

This document serves to describe the processes and necessary sea operations and manage potential outbreaks at sea. The plan is based on recommendations by the UNOLS office, Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), State of Georgia, and the University of Georgia.

## II. Risk Assessment

The UNOLS organization has provided vessel operators and chief scientist guidance on how to assess and mitigate risk in order to resume general re-start date of 1 July was recommended; however, it is the project PI and Chief Scientist to together decide when to resume science cruise on a UNOLS vessel has occurred on the RV Sikuli other operators to develop guidelines for future cruises on vessels.

To reduce risk and help minimize the probability of infection developed and implemented by each vessel's operational instructions. In addition, an outbreak management plan must be developed to address infectious disease that arises while underway.

To help determine if a cruise can feasibly be conducted, a Chief Scientist Questionnaire was developed by SKIO Marine Operations Chief Scientist for completion (Appendix 1).

- Travel requirements of science personnel

## Risk Assessment, Mitigation and Response for Operations on the RV Blue Heron

This document outlines how the UMD marine superintendent, master of the RV Blue Heron, and Chief Scientists of research expeditions on board the RV Blue Heron will assess and mitigate the risks associated with expeditions on board the research vessel during the COVID19 pandemic. The assessment incorporates advice from other vessels in UNOLS, the George Washington University Maritime Medical Access group (medical advisors to UNOLS) and information from UNOLS executive staff.

Please address questions to:

- Dr. Doug Ricketts, Marine Superintendent  
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- Captain Russ Lee, Captain R/V Blue Heron  
[218-722-8228.r.lee@du.edu](mailto:218-722-8228.r.lee@du.edu)

## Introduction

The safety of the crew and science party is paramount.

The marine superintendent, master of the vessel, and chief scientist must consider many issues when determining whether a scientific expedition may take place during a pandemic and may have different opinions as to whether an expedition can be carried out safely. Each of the three has the authority to veto a cruise after careful consideration of all appropriate factors including assessing the risk of unsuccessfully completing a science mission and the risk of adverse health impacts on the crew and science party.

If the chief scientist or marine superintendent (with consultation with the master of the vessel) determines that risks are unacceptable and the cruise should be postponed, they will document the basis of their determination in writing and inform each other. Additionally, the UNOLS Office, NSF Ship Operations, NSF Science Program Manager (for NSF funded science) and program managers for other agencies that funded the impacted science will be informed of the decision.