

Meeting Minutes

2006 Research Vessel Operators' Committee Annual Meeting April 25-27, 2006 University of Washington, School of Oceanography Ocean Sciences Building, Room 425 Seattle, Washington

APPENDICES

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[XII. R/V Marcus Langseth Update](#)

[XIII. R/V Hugh R. Sharp Update](#)

[XIV. UNOLS Postcruise Assessments and PCA Results](#)

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XVI. New MAS Medical Profile Forms

- a) [Domestic Travel Form](#)
- b) [International Travel Form](#)

[XVII. Long Core System Presentation](#)

- a) [LongCorer Animation video - wpm format](#) (27.8 MB)
- b) [LongCorer Animation Video w/sound - avi format](#) (154 MB)

[XVIII. Load Handling System Symposium Update](#)[XIX. Improving Gender Climate at Sea](#)[XX. Insurance and Legal Issues for the Oceanographic Fleet](#)**MEETING MINUTES****TUESDAY, 25 APRIL 2006**

Tim Askew, Chairman, RVOC called meeting to order. Recognition was made of this 45th year of RVOC meetings which began in 1962. List of attendees is included as [appendix II](#).

Welcoming Remarks by Daniel Schwartz, Manager of Marine Operations and introduction of Dr. Russ McDuff, Director, School of Oceanography - See [appendix III](#). Dr. McDuff welcomed RVOC members, gave history of UW School of Oceanography, meteorological local area ("It rarely rains in Seattle"), and introduced Dr. Debbie Kelly.

Guest Scientist Presentation– Dr. Debbie Kelley, Associate Professor, School of Oceanography on hydrothermal vent systems and the "Endeavor Observatory".

Old Business:

Members accepted the minutes from 2004 meeting.

Review of Group Purchase Updates for 2005: See [appendix IV](#).

- Life Raft totals (Al Suchy)

12 - 25 Person Life Rafts:

3 ea Wecoma
2 ea Oceanus
2 ea Cape Hatteras
5 ea Thompson

2 - 20 Person Life Rafts:

2 ea Atlantis Explorer

1- 15 Person Life Rafts:

1 ea Thompson

1 -12 Person Life Rafts:

1 ea Clifford Barnes

- 19 Furuno Radars total (2003-2005) (Pete Zerr) SCBA and turn out suits for 10 institutions.

- Furuno Doppler Speed Logs (Al Suchy): Doppler Speed Logs (Al Suchy) (5) DS-

50Ts, (4) DS-80 and spares/connecting cables.

- GPIRBS (Steve Rabalais) 13 institutions (21 vessels) in 2005. 2006 group purchase being assembled.
- Stability Reviews (Tom Althouse) – ([appendix V](#)). 8 existing ships done in 2005. Several complete, others still waiting to be scheduled. Preliminary light ship growth of 2.8% to 9.4% over service life. Only 7 UNOLS vessel currently have Glosten Ship Stability Program. (GSSP). 2 vessels have other computerized stability programs. May be funding support for computerized stability programs in 2007.
- Science Van Construction (Matt Hawkins): Wrapping up latest production order. 2006 group purchase under consideration at NSF.
- NTV-OSRP and Salvage Contractor (Mike Prince): 11 vessels completed in 2005. UNOLS Office negotiated contract with OOPS. Contracted to act as “Qualified Individuals” and develop plans. Need to clarify training requirements and schedules.

Retainer fees to cover spill response company [National Response Corporation (NRC), ~\$200/yr/ship] and salvor [Marine Response Alliance (MRA)] Fee only charged in California.

For 2006 and beyond, operator will be responsible for contract and fees with OOPS, NRC, and MRA.

Tom Smith notes that Alaska requires special consideration for coverage. Contact him for details if transiting in Alaskan waters.

California also has special requirements per Mike Prince, but details fairly clear through contract with OOPS.

New Business: [None]

Committee and Liaison Reports:

UNOLS (Mike Prince, Exec. Secretary): Mike provided a summary of UNOLS Committee activities that took place over the past year.

Safety Committee (Tom Althouse): See [appendix VI](#) and minutes recorded by Mike Prince. Highlighted new RVSS format which is given on RVOC web site. Will poll members for elimination of Chapter 10 (“Explosives”) due to changes in science operations and minimal use these days. May add guidelines for snorkeling.

Dennis Nixon volunteers to review RVSS due to long standing interest in the Safety Standard and their importance to UNOLS fleet. Steve Etchemendy (MBRI) also volunteers to help with external review.

Mary-Lynn Dickson recommended as good individual for possible review.

Safety Committee is now up to full force due to addition of Peter Zerr and Todd Chlauppek.

Highlighted that wire Safe Working Load (SWL) remains a significant topic for UNOLS vessels..

Dennis Nixon proposes that wearing of work vests while on deck with rails down be mandatory in the new RVSS. Subject also raised on hardhats, ear/eye protection, and safety shoes under same topic. Personal EPIRBs also suggested for consideration.

Ship Scheduling Committee (Mike Prince): Many vessels under utilized in 2005. NSF budget decreased and ship costs rising. 2007 “at best” will be same as 2006. Possible recommendation for lay-up of some vessels. If long term problem, UNOLS Council will be making recommendations for retirements.

Ship and Port Security Update (Eric King & Dan Schwartz): See [appendix VII](#).

FIC (Al Suchy): See [appendix XIII](#) FIC’s biggest involvement has been with the Regional Class Research Vessel (RCRV) and preparations for the new “Ocean” Class, including update of SMR’s. Naval Research Advisory Commission (NRAC) – Continued involvement of navy in building/owning research vessel. Also involved heavily with Fleet Improvement Plan integration with FOFC plan – must be “integration” and “linkage”. Must also compare demand with current funding issues – show that demand much higher than current funding levels.

No commitment for funding (yet) for midlife’s on current “Global” class.

DESSC (Mike Prince and Debbie Kelley): Involved with HOV Safety Committee and Science Oversight Committees for Alvin replacement. Development of remote HOV that is capable of full ocean depth. Discussion of including MBARI rock drill as part of Jason facility.

HOV (Dolly Dieter): See [appendix XIII](#).

RVTEC (Bill Martin): Met in October at OSU. Provided last minute input on science equipment to RCRV through ad hoc subcommittee (January – March 2006). 2006 INMARTECH meeting in October to be held at WHOI.

AICC (Mike Prince): Meeting recently in DC. See AICC report on UNOLS web site. AICC good at de-briefing every PI that comes off the polar vessels (phone conversation followed by list of formal recommendations). Dale Chayes (LDEO) provided technical support for polar vessels.

SCOAR (Mike Prince): Mike gave an overview of recent SCOAR activities.

SOCP – (Tim Askew): See presentation.

1100 - Agency Reports:

NSF (Linda Goad): Referred to Mike Prince’s discussion of funding difficulties from scheduling. Detailed comments and discussion to follow at Round Table.

ONR (John Freitag): Discussed preliminary details of Naval Research Advisory Commission (NRAC) meeting results which is reviewing Navy’s involvement in building/owning the “Ocean” & “Global” class vessel’s. Report from NRAC due on

May 9, 2006.

ALVIN began major overhaul last year (5 year event). Discovered cracks around welds in port holes – led to extensive non-destructive testing. Conclusion is that cracks have been there for a long time – perhaps since construction. Inclining experiment require on ALVIN after overhaul.

Navy funding also tight. Expect similar level of funding support in 2007 as in 2006.

John's IPA with ONR ends on July 1, 2006 – this will probably be his last RVOC meeting.

NOAA/FOFC (Beth White): Update given on FOFC plan which is coordinated report for all agencies. Waiting for results of NRAC committee. FOFC working group meeting in May to determine how to move forward.

NOAA News: OKEANOS EXPLORER (converted TAGOS) – larger technician and officers “tele-presence” by science. Less science berths.

SWATH vessel to replace *RUDE* – Halter Marine, Inc. won bid. Potential cost increases due to hurricane damage (and future possibility of damage) in gulf coast as well as material cost increases.

USCG (Tom Wojahn, Jonathan Berkson): National Academy of Sciences study to clarify long-term polar icebreaker needs of the nation.

POLAR STAR and *POLAR SEA* nearing end of their economic service life. *HEALY* relatively new. *POLAR SEA* going through maintenance to make useful for next 3-5 years. *POLAR STAR* is in 18-month lay up – waiting on national policy decisions.

State Department. (Liz Tirpak): Overview of “Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs” which handles vessel clearances. Overview of clearance procedures and recommendations. See [appendix IX](#).

Pilot of new clearance database system (all web-based) will be available in June 2006. Big step forward in processing, tracking, and getting historical data on clearances.

Special Reports:

SACT (Ian Sage R/V Alliance grounding):

Distraction on captain's part from cell phone call and science. Wind set him farther south than anticipated – did not have adequate navigational checks “seat of pants”. Ran aground on charted rock at 7 knots.

“Lloyd's Open Form”: Signing over VALUE of vessel to salvor, and RESPONSIBILITY for recovery of that vessel. Transfer of responsibility goes back when the ship hits the blocks at the repair yard.

Insurance company repays Owner after repairs are made – must act as “Prudent Owner” with no insurance coverage in awarding repair contract.

Salvor will apply for salvage award in maritime courts 5-10% of the full value of the

ship (including scientific equipment on board at the time!) Science equipment is not covered under “cargo liability” insurance.

\$6.7 M in shipyard repair cost repairs PLUS salvage costs.

Important points:

- Emergency operation procedures and ISM code are essential
- Call supervisor, then insurance company, implement emergency plans, keep a log. Write down and record anything and everything.
- Be aware of insurance deductibles.
- Have press strategy (and lawyer familiar in dealing with the press)

NIOZ (Marieke Rietveld): See [appendix X](#). Discussed Ocean Facilities Exchange Group (OFEG), European Ocean Research Fleet, new construction, and research development in India and China.

ISOM 2006 25-26th October, Galway, Ireland.

ERVO (Per Nieuwejaar): Soon to be ISOM Chair. Brief description of personal background. Overview of Norway’s fleet renewal plan (18 vessels in total) – working together on a consolidated, coordinated plan.

Used fisheries echo sounders to determine location of “black smokers” – determined by accidents.

Stressed necessity and benefit of building new R/V with low underwater radiated noise – not just for fisheries research, but all forms of acoustic research.

NERC (Geraint West): “Times of Change” at Southampton - reorganization underway – now National Oceanography Center (NOC).

Update on R/V JAMES COOK (CHARLES DARWIN Replacement).

Funding likely for DISCOVERY Replacement (~\$100M).

Research Vessel Updates:

Alaska Region Research Vessel (ARRV) - Tom Smith/Dolly Dieter: See [appendix XIII](#). Funds appropriated in 2007 federal budget.

WEATHERBIRD II Replacement - Lee Black: See [appendix XI](#). Named R/V *ATLANTIC EXPLORER* – formally the *SEWARD JOHNSON II* from HBOI. Bought in September 2005, converted over winter in Norfolk, Virginia. Added new pilothouse to upper deck. All winches cross-decked from the *WEATHERBIRD II*.

MARCUS LANGSETH (EWING Replacement) - Paul Ljunggren: See [appendix XII](#).

HUGH R. SHARP Update (Matt Hawkins): See [appendix XIII](#).

NMFS Fisheries Vessels (Beth White & Robert Wilmot): See presentation.

1530 Break

Insurance and Admiralty Law Update - Dennis Nixon. See [appendix XXI](#).

Comments on Alliance grounding:

- P & I (Protection and Indemnity) – not Liability – on vessels. They will reimburse you for repair cost - not pay up front.
- Salvage paid for out of hull insurance in the US.
- Lloyd's Open Form (LOF) Contract – can cost more if Captain does not sign. "I admit my vessel was in peril and in need of assistance". At some later time (usually in arbitration) then costs will be settled. Maximum cost ("Moiety") – 50% of value of vessel in current state. Usually is 5 – 10%. It is a "reward" for salvaging the vessel – not a payment for services on (say) an hourly rate.

World market expects to see a 25% increase in 2006. UNOLS operators may see much lower due to good operating record. (Rita and Katrina bled coffers in US – no more reserves in reinsurance market)

Highly suggests consideration of fleet-wide policy requiring inflatable PFD's, with light and personal EPRIB's.

Our safety standards MUST keep pace with evolving industry practices.

1700 Adjourn

WEDNESDAY, 26 APRIL 2006

0830 - Continuation of Special Reports and/or Research Vessel Updates:

Regional Class Research Vessels (RCRV) - Dolly Dieter: See [appendix XIII](#).

Two companies announced by end of April '06

Construction of 3 ships from FY'08 thru FY'12

NSF Solicitation for operator of first ship – Sept '06 (Order of region not set in stone – may go to west coast first – not following any set plan either FOFC or UNOLS. All depends on quality of the proposal)

Deadline for expression of interest – Jan '07

Selection of Operator – April '07

LANGSETH: "Learning experience" – time line never proceeds as planned. Work closely with NSF to ensure process follows appropriate procedures. New "Large Facilities Program" division at NSF.

NSF will be hiring additional personnel (possible IPA) to help handle construction of large facilities.

HOV (Human Occupied Vehicles) - 2 years behind schedule.

ALVIN replacement – 1 year behind schedule. Sphere to 6500m is still the challenge. Also syntactic foam and battery selection.

AARV- Funds available ~Jan 2007 then go through NSF proposal process – including

operator selection.

Hybrid Remotely Operated Vehicle (HROV): Capable of operating in both tethered (ROV) and un-tethered(AUV) mode. Capable of full ocean depth. 36 hour endurance.

Post Cruise Assessments and PCA results (Mike Prince): See [appendix XIV](#). Positive comment revolve around crew and personnel. Negative comments revolve mainly around ship's scientific equipment.

Safety Statistics and MAS (Mike Prince): See [appendix XV](#).

Long Core System (Al Suchy): See appendix [XVII](#).

Handling systems by Allied Marine. Winches by ODIM – similar to R/V COOK designs.

Total project cost ~\$5.0M (ship modifications, handling system, winch, and rope.

“BOB” = Braid Optimized for Bending (Peugeot Sound Rope) Breaking strength = 356,000 lbs. Special consideration given by Coast Guard on Sub-Chapter U requirements.

Load Handling System Workshop - Matt Hawkins: See [appendix XIX](#).

Harassment Survey (Liz Caporelli): See [appendix XX](#). Brochure developed by WHOI that tailors sexual harassment issues to specifically to seagoing operations.

Medical Services Contract (Mike Prince): Mike gave an overview of the Medical Fleet Insurance. Also showed new MAS Medical Profile forms. See [appendix XVI\(a\)](#) and [appendix XVI\(b\)](#).

1030 Break:

Wire Testing (Rick Trask/Dolly Dieter):

General discussion indicates that:

- Re-evaluation of the UNOLS wire specifications is required.
- Testing and the spec should better emulate actual use in the field.
- Field data is necessary to validate actual use for incorporation into the spec. This will require continuous data monitoring and logging by all operators.
- Operators should strive to keep field operations in line with good practice – reduce snap loading, regular inspection/maintenance/cut back, reasonable FS on yield strength.

1200 Lunch:

NTSB – Morgan Turrell: Gave a PowerPoint presentation - Marine Accident Section: “What to expect if ship has accident”

- Let NTSB handle all comment with the media.

1500 Break

Workshop Reports:

Wire SWL and Handling System Design Standards:

Two issues from discussion:

1. For the Ship Operator: As science continues to push the upper limits of cable and wire capabilities, wire factor of safety (FS) needs to be addressed so that operations can advise science and crews when “safe” operating limits of cables have been reached. This needs to be done in consistent, fleet-wide manner – both to assist with operational planning, and ensure safety of personnel and equipment.
2. For the Funding Agencies: To help determine at what point existing equipment needs to be modified, larger winches & wire need to be employed, different cable technology needs development in support of science (for example: long coring).

Action Items:

1. Draft procedures for reducing wire FS from 2.5 down to 1.25 using the UK model as a starting point. This will require greater emphasis on maintenance, inspection, and periodic testing than is currently used by the UK model. This final document should be included in the RVSS.
2. Begin providing regular (annual?) cable samples and accompanying wire use data to Rick Trask so that a data base of field data can be compiled. This will necessitate that all UNOLS vessels have and maintain an accurate, dependable cable monitoring system. Operators will also need to provide details of wire path and descriptions of use.
3. Upon reviewing preliminary test data provided by Rick Trask (UNOLS Cable Pool), it appears the UNOLS wire specifications are in need of review – mainly with regard to cable cycles and load cycle amplitudes. Implementation of Action Items 2 (above) will provide the necessary data for Rick Trask to proceed with review of the specifications. QA testing data from the cable manufacturers also needs to be provided.

RVSS Section on “Personal Safety: Create uniform policy on alcohol, drugs, and sexual harassment.

THURSDAY, 27 APRIL 2006

0830 Round Table Discussion (Marine Sups and Program Managers):

Ship Inspection Program (Dolly Dieter): Fill out SCF completely well before the inspection and get requested information to inspection team per the guidelines – if not done prior, inspection may be cancelled which could jeopardize operations proposal. Also – open and ventilate tanks PRIOR to inspection.

If you have a problem – put it down on SCF – helps you and NSF.

Each section will be graded (1-5) with overall score (1-5) – like NSF proposal grading.

ISM: Ian Sage suggests that from ALLIANCE grounding experience they are worth their weight in gold. Keep them up to date and USE them. Dennis Nixon points out that insurance companies say ISM really works – documented reduction of claims as a result.

OSRP – Oil Spill Response Plan (Vessels >400 ITC): Shipboard Oil Prevention Emergency Plan (SOPEP) is an international plan that can combine with your domestic OSRP.

OSRP's require:

- Drills
- Quarterly requirement – call in, send fax
- Annual Table Top Exercise: (Director, Captain, etc.) \$1500/yr + travel.

Medical Services Contract (Mike Prince): Need feedback on new forms. Two version – one really short, one slightly longer to include immunizations.

Review bid package and advise on what vendor is supposed to provide.

Ship Operator needs to provide MAS/MedAire with record of what's in vessel's medical locker.

Test communications periodically with MAS/MedAire.

Training – MAS/MedAire is supposed to provide access to training if requested.

EMT's vs. STCW “Medical PIC” on board discussed.

New version of “Ship's Medical Locker” (by USCG) great – on line (See new RVSS)

Need better guidance on what needs to be carried in ship's medical locker – too extensive to be sustainable (expensive and early expiration dates). MAS said they will take back and give you credit toward next batch. Scripps has found MAS/MedAire to be good at recommending how to reduce the medical inventory – just need to ask.

Safety Committee Actions: Revise RVSS to new format. Once complete, review of each section by two separated committee members, then proceed to final vote and UNOLS Council Acceptance.

Create new chapter on “Personal Safety” to ensure reaffirmation of drug, alcohol policy and add sexual harassment

Future Group Purchases (Dolly Dieter): Plan early. Not only cost savings, but also standardization across the fleet.

Mandatory Agency Reports (Linda Goad): Quarterly accident/safety reports now **mandatory** per the new Cooperative Agreement. Send via e-mail and include ship name and quarter in subject line of any e-mail. Use Word Doc format developed by

WHOI (on RVOC web site).

Shipyard plan must be pre-approved. Copy of spec's and cost to Linda. Final report from yard indicating all change orders and deletions.

Formal request for all changes/additions in use of MOSA funds – including CO's at yard.

Revised Ship Scheduling System (Mike Prince): Demonstration of new web-based system. Will begin field testing with operators in the next few weeks.

Wood Rules: Customs rules for wood pallets. New Customs rules took effect Sept. 2005. Full compliance July 2006. Countries like New Zealand require wood shipping crates to be built of treated/approved materials. Processed flake board OK. "Bug Stamped Certified". Or use all plastic.

Alcohol Testing (2 hour rule): Takes effect June 20, 2006. Have alcohol test kits aboard (breathalyzer or swab) like drug test kits.

www.maritimesafety.org

Consider referencing this in new "Personal Safety" section of RVSS.

Other Items:

1. Membership agrees to eliminate \$5000 membership fee to SOCP from UNOLS Office budget.
2. "Seafarers Bill of Rights": ILO (International Labor Organization) combining 68 various conventions into one comprehensive one.
3. Salvage Insurance (Dennis Nixon): Large ships owned by the Navy have this separately, plus privately owned vessels have under clause of Hull Insurance. Current "Intermediates" do not have. Is it advisable for NSF to do what the navy does (purchase separate Salvage Insurance policy), or let operator purchase hull insurance. Reconsider "Group Purchase" for insurance upon renewal.

New MAS Medical Forms – (Both forms one short, one slightly longer to include immunizations) accepted by membership vote to use as standard medical form on ALL vessels with the following changes:

1. Change "Passport/Country" to "Citizenship"
2. Eliminate "Social Security Number"

1200 Lunch

1300 Business Meeting

Assignment to Committees: None. Tom Althouse announced retirement in few years and suggested consideration of next Safety Committee Chair to allow gradual transition.

Review of Action Items Pending: Completed during meeting and Workshop review. To be circulated after meeting for further review and comment.

Suggestion for 2007 agenda:

1. David Shoemaker F/V Galaxy Fire (Call Beth White)
2. Group Purchase of Insurance (P&I, Hull, etc).
3. Vessel Data Recorders (VDR)
4. Crew Endurance Management Study (Joint Industry and USCG)
5. Seafarer's Bill of Rights
6. Continue Science PRESENTATION at beginning of meeting
7. Training Issues – lowering expenses/time. Coordination of Group Training by region?

Nominations and vote on 2007 meeting location: Vote Results: Duke (3), Florida Institute of Oceanography (9), and Skidaway (3). FIO will host by show of hands. Randy Maxson to be notified and to advise on possible dates (Avoid spring breaks and Easter 04/08)

1300 Adjourn