

APPENDIX VI

Fred Saalfeld Letter dated 7 Nov 96



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF NAVAL RESEARCH
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IN REPLY REFER TO

5000
Ser 321/96/164
7 Nov 96

Dr. Kenneth Johnson
Chair, UNOLS Council
UNOLS Office
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Saunderstown, RI 02874

Dr. Barry Raleigh
Dean, SOEST
University of Hawaii at Manoa
1000 Pope Road, MSB 205
Honolulu, HI 96822

Dear Drs. Johnson and Raleigh:

The Defense Appropriations Committee Conference Report contained the following language on the construction of a new oceanographic research ship:

"The Committee strongly agrees with the Senate Armed Services statements regarding the inability of the current Navy fleet to meet oceanographic survey requirements. Furthermore, the Committee understands that there are many research efforts which could benefit from the availability of a small water plane area twin hull [SWATH] oceanographic research vessel. Therefore, the Committee has provided an increase of \$45,000,000 to construct a small water plane, twin hull [SWATH] oceanographic research vessel.

This will be one of the first SWATH vessels available to the research community. The Committee has endorsed this initiative to address the need to replace the retiring Moana Wave oceanographic research vessel

The Committee understands that a new SWATH concept developed by the Office of Naval Research may be tested in the near future. This design may produce a SWATH hull which is much faster than the TAGOS class. The Committee urges the Navy to fully evaluate this concept in defining the new SWATH oceanographic ship design."

The language directs the Navy to evaluate a SWATH design to replace the MOANA WAVE in the research fleet. The language also mentions the backlog of military

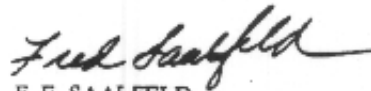
surveys and the possibility that such a vessel could address the backlog. In discussions with the Oceanographer's staff, this design will be approached as an oceanographic research vessel, not an oceanographic survey vessel. However, the capability to do surveys will be maintained as in the AGOR class designs. The Office of Naval Research (ONR) will be the mission sponsor for this vessel, and the Oceanographer of the Navy (N096) will be the resource sponsor.

The process is envisioned to be as follows: ONR will develop the requirements for a Class II/III general purpose research vessel, with input from University-National Oceanographic Laboratory System (UNOLS) and the University of Hawaii. We request that UNOLS and the University of Hawaii convene a group to develop mission requirements for such a vessel, and forward the requirements to ONR by 27 January 1997. ONR will then assess the requirements and forward them to the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) via N096. ONR will request that NAVSEA conduct feasibility studies based on the requirements, and perform trade-off; if the initial cost of the design exceeds the funds appropriated. It is expected that a monohull option will be considered during these studies. In addition, the language also directs the Navy to evaluate SLICE, an ONR SWATH concept, as one of the options for this vessel. This will be done concurrently by ONR and NAVSEA. SLICE will undergo sea-trials next January, after which full-scale data will be available for analysis.

Once the initial studies are completed, and NAVSEA begins work on the Request-for-Proposal for the construction of this vessel, ONR will begin operator selection. However, ONR will not make an operator decision until broad requirements for this vessel are developed and evaluated within an overall ONR fleet strategy.

My point of contact on this issue is Sujata Millick, and she can be reached at 703-696-4530.

Sincerely,



F. E. SAALFELD
Deputy Chief of Naval Research/
Technical Director

Copy to:
CNR
N096 (Capt. Schnoor)
NSF (D. Heinrichs)
NAVSEA (Capt. Williams)