UNOLS NEWS

Volume 20, No. 2 *Summer 2003*

Highlights

Message from the UNOLS Chair…

This issue of the UNOLS Newsletter highlights the recent activities of UNOLS, and introduces the slate of nominees for election to the UNOLS Council at the UNOLS Annual Meeting in September. As you know, UNOLS has many roles in its service to the oceanographic research community, including ship scheduling, coordination of Arctic icebreaker work, coordination of deep submergence work, and planning for fleet improvement. The upcoming Annual Meeting (September 19th, Arlington VA) provides the national UNOLS membership with summaries and status reports for ongoing activities, as well as opportunities for discussion of the challenges facing us in the coming year. This year, Rear Admiral Richard West, President of CORE, will give the keynote address at the Annual Meeting. We look forward to hearing his perspective on opportunities and challenges for ocean sciences in the coming years.

I invite all interested members of the ocean sciences community to attend the Annual Meeting, as we address a number of important challenges to our facilities infrastructure in ocean sciences. These include academic fleet renewal, replacement of ALVIN, impact of observatories on fleet resources, legal issues involving active acoustics and marine mammals, as well as access to ice-covered regions. It is crucial that we have an active and engaged membership as we work through the difficulties associated with each of these issues. Your participation, either at your own institution, or within the national UNOLS structure, is essential for sustaining the momentum toward solutions. Please discuss these issues with colleagues at your own institution, and pass along your opinions and support to your Dean or Director.

If you have any questions or concerns about the Annual Meeting or the various issues mentioned above, please contact me directly at tjc@coas.oregonstate.edu, or you may contact Mike Prince or Annette DeSilva at the UNOLS Office (office@unols.org). See you at the Annual Meeting!

Sincerely,

Tim Cowles

2003 UNOLS Annual Meeting

Rear Admiral Richard West, CORE President, to provide Keynote Address

UNOLS invites the oceanographic community to their 2003 Annual Meeting on Friday, September 19th at the National Science Foundation. The meeting will highlight the past year's activities and achievements, as well as plans for the upcoming year. Academic Fleet Renewal continues to be a major UNOLS focus. In early 2003, Science Mission Requirements were finalized for two new classes of research vessels. Now UNOLS is working with the agencies to move forward with implementation of Fleet renewal plans. Other areas that will be addressed at the meeting include quality of service initiatives, marine mammal and acoustic permitting issues, deep submergence facility upgrades and renewal, polar science ship issues, and ocean observatory facility needs. UNOLS top priorities for the upcoming year will be presented for discussion. Elections will be held to fill positions opening on the UNOLS Council.

We are pleased to announce this year's keynote speaker, RADM Richard West (USN Retired), President of the Consortium for Oceanographic Research and Education (CORE). RADM West came to CORE as their President in the summer of 2002. Prior to this position, RADM West served as Oceanographer and Navigator of the Navy. He has had a long, successful career with the Navy which included both shore and sea details. RADM West served in Vietnam with the riverine forces and commanded ships during hostilities in the Arabian Gulf. He has commanded three ships, USS OPPORTUNE (ARS-41), USS MCINERNEY (FFG-8), and USS LEAHY (CG-16).

A native of the Finger Lakes region of New York State, West has been awarded the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, the Defense Superior Service Medal (two awards), Legion of Merit (three awards), Meritorious Service Medal, NOAA Administrator's Award Medal, Navy Commendation Medal and various service and campaign medals. RADM West graduated from the University of Rochester. He holds Master's degrees in management and national security.

RADM West has been a strong advocate for Academic Fleet renewal. His testimony on April 9, 2003 before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Veterans Affairs, Housing and Urban Development and Independent Agencies attests to this:

> *"While funding for individual investigator research is essential to expand our understanding of the seas, the federal government's support for the tools to conduct oceanographic research is just as crucial. Quite simply, the ocean is a harsh and demanding scientific laboratory. It requires robust and often expensive instruments and platforms to study the oceans. While innovations in satellite technology provide important new tools in the oceanographer's toolbox, they have fundamental limits. Although they yield important information on the ocean-atmosphere interface, they cannot peer into the water column where most dynamic ocean processes occur. If we are to continue increasing our understanding of the oceans, we need to maintain and enhance the platforms that go to sea and provide us with a means to explore the oceans."*
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> and
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> *"Because we have research vessels, we are able to conduct investigations into issues that are of highest importance to the nation. Without a robust fleet of ships at sea, scientific advancement in such crucial areas as climate change, natural hazards, and high-risk basic research will be significantly reduced."*

We encourage members of the oceanographic community to attend this year's UNOLS Annual meeting. The meeting agenda will be posted on the UNOLS website when available.

Friday – September 19, 2003
National Science Foundation, Room 1235
4201 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA
8:00 a.m. Coffee & Pastries
8:30 a.m. Meeting

This meeting is open to all investigators, users, operators and sponsors of university oceanographic facilities. It is a public forum for discussing the utilization and scheduling of research vessels and other facilities as well as their support and future planning.

2003 UNOLS Council Slate

Elections will be held at the UNOLS Annual Meeting on 19 September to fill expiring Council terms. UNOLS Nominating Committee members Bruce Corliss (Chair), Ron Benner, and Peter Ortner have assembled a slate of candidates for the UNOLS Council positions to be filled. This election will be held in accordance with the UNOLS Charter as readopted November 2001. The slate is included below. Additional information about each of the candidates is posted on the UNOLS website at <http://www.mlml.calstate.edu/unols/annual/anumt309/slate/slate03.html>.

OPERATOR REPRESENTATIVE (3 year term):

From among designated UNOLS Member Operator institutions

- Dr. Curtis A. Collins, Naval Postgraduate School
- Dr. Spahr C. Webb, Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory

NON-OPERATOR REPRESENTATIVE (3 year term):

From among designated UNOLS Member Non-Operator institutions

- Dr. Cindy Lee Van Dover, Virginia Institute of Marine Science and College of William and Mary
- Dr. Robert H. Weisberg, University of South Florida

AT-LARGE (3 year term):

Individual affiliated with any UNOLS Member Institution

- Dr. Wilford D. Gardner, Texas A & M University
- Dr. Cynthia H. Pilskaln, Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences

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Research Vessel Safety Standards Update

The Eighth Edition of the UNOLS Research Vessel Safety Standards (RVSS) is now available (sporting a yellow cover). The Safety Standards are considered the guidelines for UNOLS Research Vessels. The recent update reflects new items and regulations that have come along in recent years including Standards of Training, Certification and Watch keeping (STCW). Current regulations in accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), and Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) have also been considered. Chapter 8 has been renamed to reflect the variety of lifesaving equipment and appliances that are now in use.

The RVOC Safety Committee reviews the RVSS every three years. The recent Committee included Tom Althouse (SIO) as Chair, Tim Askew (HBOI), Joe Coburn (retired WHOI), Fred Jones (OSU), Paul Ljunggren (LDEO), Bill Hahn (URI), and Matt Hawkins (UDel). The UNOLS Council endorsed the latest revision in March 2003. This edition is dedicated to the late Tex Treadwell, in appreciation for all of his work with UNOLS and in particular for his promotion of these standards for the academic research fleet. The Safety committee will be expanded in the future to include RVTEC members as well.

In addition to hard copy, the RVSS can be viewed online and downloaded in both word and pdf formats from the UNOLS Website at: <http://www.gso.uri.edu/unols/saf_stand/contents.htm>.

Ship Time Request System
- The Heart of Equal Access to Ocean Research Facilities -

By Mike Prince, UNOLS Executive Secretary

Ship Time Requests (STR's) submitted through the UNOLS system are at the core of a system designed to provide equal access to all ocean science researchers to the appropriate research vessels and facilities.

By correctly filling out your ship time request and by keeping them up to date, you enhance the ability of the schedulers and program managers to effectively schedule your project.

Understand the timing of the scheduling process

UNOLS research vessels are scheduled on a Calendar Year basis, with preliminary schedules created in the summer of the year before. Every attempt is made to finalize schedules by the end of September for the following year, but late funding decisions, changing requirements and other factors have made this increasingly difficult. Major projects requiring large ships, multiple ships and facilities, or operations in the remote regions of the world, should be submitted as early as possible and should be planned with as much flexibility as possible for the actual scheduling of field work.

In order to create schedules based on funded projects, NSF has determined that proposals to their agency must be submitted by the February deadline in order to be scheduled in the following calendar year. Proposals submitted later, such as for their August deadline would be approved for ship time no earlier than January of the year after next (August 2004 proposal would go to sea no earlier than January 2006 if funded).

Proposals submitted to other agencies should be submitted early enough so that any ship time requested for the following year can be considered for scheduling at the UNOLS summer scheduling meeting.

Accurately tie the ship time request (STR) to proposal information

In order to ensure that projects are tracked correctly by program managers and schedulers and are scheduled according to approved funding levels, it is extremely important that the identifying information on the ship time request is reflective of the proposal (or proposals) submitted. This is especially important for collaborative proposals. There have been several occasions in the past when a funded project was not recognized and scheduled properly because the information was different than in the proposal.

Ship time requests should be submitted under the name of the lead PI on the proposal for which ship time will be approved. Co-PI's, collaborators and prospective Chief Scientists can be listed in the appropriate sections of the ship time request but should not be listed as the PI. The request can be entered into the system by someone other than the PI with their own contact information noted, but the PI should still be listed as such for purposes of tracking the request with the proposal.

Once the proposal has been submitted and a proposal number has been assigned by the granting agency, the ship time request should be edited to show the agency proposal number (e.g., for NSF this would be the OCE number). There is no way that this can be done automatically under the current system. The correct proposal number helps track the request and is required for the ship operators for their proposals.

Continue to edit the online version as changes become necessary during the review and approval process.

Keep your Ship Time Requests current and remove unnecessary requests

Create a <u>new</u> ship time request when submitting a new proposal, including resubmission of a proposal that was previously declined. If you use an existing ship time request that the schedulers and facilities program mangers associate with a declined project, it could get lost in the process. A new ship time request will ensure that it is associated with the new proposal.

Use more than one ship time request if your project requires more than one ship doing substantially different work, especially when the work area will be very different. Also, use more than one request when the number of years or cruises exceeds the limits of the form. Divide the requests in any logical way. Keep request up to date when requirements for timing, type of equipment or type of ship changes. Remove requests from the system that are no longer required because

the work has been completed or the project was not funded.

Make sure that when you create a new request or make changes to an existing request that you click on the "Final Form Submission" button, which will transmit your request to the facilities' program managers, schedulers and yourself. It will also enter the request into the searchable database used by schedulers. If you need to save your work and make changes before submitting the request as final, you can use the "submit as draft" button, but remember that this will not put the request in the system and make it available to schedulers. The email you receive at that point is for your records only and does not go to anyone else.

Use a password that you can easily remember so that you can return to edit your request in the future. Contact the UNOLS Office if you need help with your password.

Changes are planned to enhance and improve the system to make it easier to use and to be a more effective tool for scheduling, cruise planning and reporting.

Over the next year, the UNOLS Office, working with OCEANIC will create an updated version of the ship time request system. The current system has been in existence for over ten years and is based on text files and scripts. Although effective in making sure that a PI located at any institution or location can make their research vessel and facility requirements known to program managers and schedulers, the system can be awkward and difficult to use and keep up to date.

A newer system built on a Structured Query Language (SQL) relational database with a web based front end will be designed. This will allow PI's to create an account and manage their ship time requests and track the associated research vessel schedules by logging in with a single password. Requests will be automatically tied to the PI's contact information and to project specific information. New projects and new requests can be created by duplicating and then editing older records. Schedules will be tied directly to requests, as will reports and cruise planning information.

The committee working on this project would appreciate your input. Any suggestions that will be useful in creating the new system can be sent to the UNOLS Office via e-mail to: <office@unols.org>.

Lessons Learned Questionnaire for New Ship Design

By Mike Prince

Earlier this year the UNOLS Council approved the first versions of Ocean Class and Regional Class Science Mission Requirements (SMRs), which were developed with considerable community input. These documents, along with previous SMRs are posted at <http://www.mlml.calstate.edu/unols/fic/smr/>.

The harder task is to take these requirements and actually design, build and outfit research vessels that accomplish these requirements, and that can be efficiently operated and maintained.

Most Researchers, Captains, Chief Engineers, Operations Managers, Port Engineers, Marine Technicians, Mates, Deckhands and Cooks have encountered some element of design, construction or outfitting that they either really like or (all too often) made their job more difficult. Most program managers have probably paid to fix something that wasn't done right the first time.

We would like to capture as many of those good ideas and past mistakes as possible and compile them into one document before we get much further into the design and construction phases of the current fleet renewal process. We are also looking for ideas that will help make the overall process of design and construction responsive to community requirements and at the same time keep costs under control.

An online questionnaire has been posted on the UNOLS website to let folks tell us about these valuable "lessons learned." Ship operators, officers, crew, technicians and scientific personnel are encouraged to share their experiences by completing the questionnaire. The questionnaire is posted at <http://www.unols.org/fic/lessonslearned.html>.

Responses to the questionnaire will be compiled into one document for future use by designers, builders and program managers. Responses will be posted on the UNOLS website (anonymously).

Federal Research Aircraft Brochure

The Federal Oceanographic Facilities Committee (FOFC) has developed a Federal Research Aircraft Brochure. The purpose of the brochure is to provide information about federal aircraft available for oceanographic research. The brochure is also intended to help promote interagency cooperation, coordination, and scheduling of assets. It provides information on the National Oceanographic Partnership Program (NOPP) agencies with participating aircraft. These agencies include the Department of Energy, National Science Foundation, Federal Aviation Administration (not a member of NOPP), Office of Naval Research, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, U.S. Coast Guard, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. For each of these agencies, the brochure provides information on websites, missions, platforms, airborne sensors, scheduling, and contacts. A copy of the brochure can be downloaded from the web at: <http://www.omao.noaa.gov/pdffiles/fedairbrochure.pdf>.

Committee on Future Needs in Deep Submergence Science

Earlier this year the National Academies formed a committee to study Future Needs in Deep Submergence Science. The National Science Foundation, Office of Naval Research, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration are the sponsors for this study. Information about the study including the Committee's membership, statement of task, presentations from meetings, and future plans can be found on the web at <http://dels.nas.edu/deepsubmergence/>. The Committee membership includes: John A. Armstrong (Chair), retired from IBM; Keir Becker, University of Miami; Thomas W. Eagar, MIT; Bruce Gilman, retired from SonSub Inc; Mark Johnson, BP Deepwater Production GoM; Miriam Kastner, SIO; Dhugal John Lindsay, JAMSTEC; Catherine Mevel, Laboratoire de Géosciences Marines; Shahriar Negahdaripour, University of Miami; Shirley A. Pomponi, HBOI; Bruce Robison, MBARI; Andrew Solow, WHOI; and Greg Zacharias, Charles River Analytics Inc.

The Committee has met twice. The first meeting was held in Woods Hole on 7-8 May. Dick Pittenger, Director, Marine Operations, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI) and Dan Fornari, NDSF Chief Scientist, WHOI, provided the Committee with an introduction to the National Deep Submergence Facility (NDSF). There were additional presentations on the future of deep ocean research.

The second meeting was held on 25-26 June in San Francisco. Tim Shank (WHOI) made a presentation on deep submergence biological science: enabling technologies, current limitations, and future needs. Peter Brewer (MBARI) discussed advances in ocean chemistry with ROVs. Undersea vehicles for geophysics were presented by Mark Zumberge (SIO). Edie Widder (HBOI) reported on future deep submergence needs for midwater biology. Potential marine science research in abyssal to hadal depths was presented by Patty Fryer (U. Hawaii and DESSC Chair). The future of telepresence was addressed by Henry Fuchs, (UNC). Dale Green (Benthos, Inc) reported on the development of self-contained sensing, processing and telemetry systems for undersea applications. Trends in deep-diving ROVs for science were presented by Jim Newman (Woods Hole Marine Systems, Inc.). Lastly, a presentation was made by Dana Yoerger (WHOI) on complementary survey and sampling with HOVs, ROVs, and AUVs.

The results of this study may have important implications for the scientific community involved in deep ocean research. The committee is working to identify the key scientific drivers for deep ocean research and to fully explore the role of manned, unmanned vehicles and other state-of-the-art technologies in this field. Input from individuals involved in various scientific initiatives or programs with existing ties to deep ocean research have been solicited. Additionally, public input has been encouraged. The OSB website listed above provides a means for the community to submit comments.

UNOLS COMMITTEE NEWS

Research Vessel Operators' Committee Update

By Steve Rabalais, RVOC Chair

Plans are in progress for the 2003 RVOC meeting at the Large Lakes Observatory, University of Minnesota in Duluth, MN. Meeting dates this year were changed from the usual Tuesday-Thursday venue to Wednesday-Friday (8-10 October) in order to accommodate those wishing to celebrate Yom Kippur.

On day one, after welcoming remarks by representatives from the Large Lakes Observatory and Steve Rabalais (RVOC Chair). The floor will be opened for discussion of old and new business items. Committee and liaison reports will follow with presentations from RVOC representatives to various UNOLS committees, including AICC (Dan Schwartz), RVOC Safety Committee (Tom Althouse), and Ship Security Committee (Dan Schwartz). RVOC representatives, Paul Ljunggren and Lee Black, to the Ship Operators Cooperative Program (SOCP) will report on the SOCP activities during the previous year. Matt Hawkins, Chair of the RVOC Van Committee, will provide an update on the new RVOC Van Manual and his efforts to develop guidelines for van securing procedures on UNOLS vessels.

Various operators from foreign institutions, including the UK Natural Environment Research Council, SACLANT Undersea Research Centre (NATO), and Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research have been invited to provide overviews of their operations and share developments and improvements to their oceanographic research vessels.

A complete recap of vessel activities since the last RVOC meeting in 2002 will be included in the research vessel update section of the special reports on day one. Information on the status of mid-life refits on R/V PELICAN (LUMCON) and CAPE HATTERAS (Duke) will be provided by the Marine Superintendents from the respective institutions. Plans for the construction of new vessels at four academic institutions and NOAA are on the agenda during research vessel updates. Plans for two of the new vessels, ALPHA HELIX replacement and CAPE HENLOPEN replacement are nearing completion and a contract for construction of the HENLOPEN replacement will be let before the end of the year. Progress on various UNOLS/RVOC initiatives, including salary surveys, computer maintenance program evaluation, and winch, wire and rope standards, etc. will be addressed.

Final selection of major agenda items for day 2 of the meeting is not complete. Issues under consideration include:

I. Health and medical issues
   a. Special provisions for onboard presence of medical professionals.
   b. What are reasonable expectations for normal operations?
II. Crew retention and replacement
   a. Maritime schools and their potential for providing a source for qualified crew on UNOLS vessels
   b. Effect of revised licensing requirements by the USCG on attracting and keeping crew
III. The establishment of (Federally funded) standards for training routines for the fleet
IV. Update on ISM compliance
   a. ISM Certification of compliance for transient science equipment
   b. Fleets efforts toward voluntary ISM compliance for <500ton vessels.
V. Boatswains and deckhand training session provided by reputable expert in the field.
VI. Security
   a. NOAA Marine and Aviation Operations progress with new security rules, ISPS Code (and results of contracted security assessment), an overview of the "Company and Ship Security Officer" training course.
   b. Cost and workload impacts of meeting SOLAS requirements.
   c. Ship specific security arrangements for ships operating in high-risk areas.
VII. Sea Wave- Operators experiences with this new method for Internet connectivity at sea.
VIII. Importance of Human Factors in Ship Design- Presentation by researchers in the field

The final day of the meeting will be dedicated to roundtable discussions of issues related to the operation of academic oceanographic research vessels, and will close with a business meeting.

DEep Submergence Science Committee - Recent Activities

By Patricia Fryer, DESSC Chair

The DEep Submergence Science Committee met at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution on 11-12 June 2003. Minutes of the meeting will be available soon on the DESSC web page <http://www.unols.org/dessc/>. The meeting began with reports from the funding agency representatives in attendance and from UNOLS. DESSC heard the National Facility Operators report including the NDSF vehicle operations summary, a status report on the archiving of all deep submergence data in the WHOI archives, a report on upgrades to National Facility vehicles, science sensors, and R/V ATLANTIS.

DESSC discussed the responses to its recent request for input regarding upgrades to science sensors and operational capabilities of the NDSF vehicles from the marine biology community and these suggestions are currently being summarized and will be available through a link from the DESSC web page soon. When they have been posted, DESSC will request that the marine biology community review them before the annual request for upgrades is submitted by the NDSF.

The next DESSC Winter Meeting will be held in Portland, OR on January 25, 2004 prior to the Ocean Sciences Meeting (26-30 Jan). There will not be a DESSC meeting prior to the Fall AGU meeting in San Francisco as has been the practice in recent years. A special session organized by members of the deep submergence science community is scheduled at the Fall AGU meeting in San Francisco at which science reports will be given and an opportunity to interact with facility operators will be available.

DESSC heard a report on the activities of the OSB Committee on Future Deep Submergence Facility Needs. The efforts of the committee can be seen at the following URL: <http://dels.nas.edu/deepsubmergence/> and DESSC encourages all interested members of the user community to provide the OSB committee with their comments at: <http://dels.nas.edu/deepsubmergence/submit_comments.html>.

The DESSC reviewed the NDSF vehicle scheduling for 2004 and beyond and heard an update summarizing the funding status of programs. This information has been plotted on world maps that can be viewed on the DESSC website at <http://www.unols.org/dessc/maps/ndsf_maps04.html>. Long-range planning issues were discussed particularly as pertains to programmatic activities of RIDGE 2000, the MARGINS initiative, and seafloor observatories. The UNOLS working group on Ocean Observatory Facility Needs reported on the progress of their study, which includes consideration of submergence facility needs of ocean observatory science.

The DESSC discussed various outreach and education activities planned for the near future. It addressed issues of interest for marine archeology, the RIDGE lectureship program, and the development of a NDSF DVD (by Dan Fornari). Copies can be obtained by contacting the UNOLS Office at: <office@unols.org>.

DESSC heard a summary of a report from WHOI regarding efforts to secure a replacement for the NDSF Chief Scientist, issues relating to further integration of the ALVIN and ROV operations, and to operational matters within the NDSF. DESSC reiterates its recommendation that a new NDSF Chief Scientist should be selected as soon as possible.

Operational summaries of other deep submergence facilities were presented. Of particular note were the successful sea trials of the Advanced Tethered Vehicle (ATV) by Scripps Institution of Oceanography on R/V REVELLE in May of this year.

After the DESSC meeting adjourned at noon on June 12, the New Alvin Construction Advisory Committee and several of the DESSC members met to hear an update on the New Alvin design efforts and to discuss various aspects of the new design, particularly the viewport positioning and design of the interior of the sphere. The community was recently sent an email message from the UNOLS Office that provided a URL at which a pdf of a brochure describing the design study for the new ALVIN can be downloaded: <http://www.whoi.edu/marine/ndsf/vehicles/newalvin/New_Alvin_brochure.pdf>. Quotes from members of the deep submergence science community regarding the importance of "being there" are included as an insert to the brochure. The insert can be downloaded from the WHOI website at: <http://www.whoi.edu/marine/ndsf/vehicles/newalvin/Alvin_quotes.pdf>.

Scientific Committee for Oceanographic Aircraft Research (SCOAR)

The Scientific Committee for Oceanographic Aircraft Research (SCOAR) held their inaugural meeting on February 25 & 26, 2003 at the Center for Interdisciplinary Remotely-Piloted Aircraft Studies (CIRPAS) in Marina, California. They reviewed their committee membership, goals and objectives. The services to be provided to the facility users were discussed. This was an organizational meeting. CIRPAS representatives reported on the structure of their organization, the role of key personnel, the facility's capabilities, past and planned support of the oceanographic community, and objectives and desires for interaction with SCOAR. Federal Agency representatives including ONR, NSF-GEO/ATM, NOAA - AOC, and NASA, provided reports.

SCOAR's initial goals are to provide ocean science community input to CIRPAS, to distribute through various publications an inventory of available aircraft, contacts, and specification links, and to promote the availability of aircraft for the ocean sciences. The Committee likes the concept of the UNOLS ship time request form and thinks that a similar form for aircraft would be useful.

Research Vessel Technical Enhancement Committee

The 2003 Annual RVTEC Meeting will be hosted by the United States Coast Guard (USCG) and will be held in Seattle, WA at the USCG Integrated Support Center on 18-20 November. Various agenda items are being considered. The agenda for the meeting, as well as an online registration form will be posted on the UNOLS website when available.

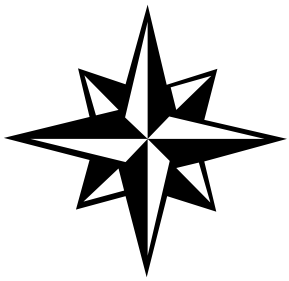
The meeting will include a discussion on technical support services. Over the past year, an RVTEC subcommittee has been developing draft outlines defining the technical support services that are provided and should be planned when using UNOLS vessels. The outlines include pre-cruise planning requirements that need to be addressed by the operator and user. The subcommittee members include Jean Captain (U.Minn), Stewart Lamerdin (MLML), Woody Sutherland (SIO), Barrie Walden (WHOI), and Marc Willis (OSU).

In other activities, the Scripps Institution of Oceanography (SIO) Shipboard Technical Support group is hosting a UNB Multibeam course in San Diego on January 5 - 10, 2004 (Monday - Saturday). Registration packets will be available soon. Class size is limited and priority will be given to UNOLS technical group personnel until September 20, 2003.

Ship Scheduling Committee

Just as this newsletter goes to print, the UNOLS ship schedulers are meeting to plan operations for 2004. The scheduling meeting is on 23 July at NSF. In preparation for the meeting, schedulers have been putting together letters of intent. One complicating factor facing the group will be the cruises that were deferred from 2003 into 2004. They total approximately 300 days, a complete year for a large vessel. Additionally, the cruises are scattered around the globe. Fitting in these cruises plus the new funded ones will be among the schedulers' biggest challenges.

The scheduling meeting will also include consideration of security issues. The schedulers will address constraints as results of time/weather windows, submersible and equipment logistics, clearances, and acoustic permitting. Elections for the Ship Scheduling Committee Chair and Vice-Chair will be held.



Arctic Icebreaker Coordinating Committee

The Arctic Icebreaker Coordinating Committee (AICC) has been busy during the first half of 2003. On February 6 & 7 they held a Committee meeting in Seattle, WA. The major agenda items included:

- Review of the 2002 science operations debrief interviews and recommendations for improvements based on the feedback received.
- Scheduling and planning for 2003 & Beyond for HEALY, POLAR SEA, POLAR STAR - Plans and platform availability for 2004 and 2005 were discussed, as well as expeditionary planning.
- Non-US icebreakers and foreign clearances issues.
- Science Modifications, Infrastructure and Equipment.
- Science operations and technical support

As reported in the last issue of the UNOLS Newsletter, heavy ice conditions this year in the Antarctic required the USCG to send two icebreakers south. HEALY and POLAR STAR supported these operations. HEALY returned from the Antarctic operations in the spring, in time to begin its scheduled Arctic science operations. This includes work in the Nares Strait, the Chukchi Cap and SBI mooring operations.

The future of the USCG POLAR Class icebreakers and planning for their mid-life refits is an area of major concern. The mission for these two icebreakers over the upcoming years is predicted to be some of the toughest that they have faced due to the current and predicted ice conditions. These ships are nearing 30 years of operation and although the hulls are capable of lasting another 30 years, the machinery and outfitting urgently needs attention. A meeting was held at NSF on March 21st to address these issues and examine alternative courses of action. NSF, USCG, AICC and ARVOC representatives all attended. The group considered the types of science improvements that could be potentially included in refit plans. They also discussed how to maximize use of USCG icebreakers for next few years.

On 11-12 June a Polar Class Icebreaker Workshop was held in Seattle to provide science community recommendations for improvements that would enhance the science capabilities of these vessels and provide science justification for extending their service life.

Fleet Improvement Committee

The Fleet Improvement Committee (FIC) has been focusing much of their activities on Fleet Renewal activities. They have been keeping abreast of ship design efforts that are currently underway including the Alaska Region Research Vessel and the CAPE HENLOPEN Replacement Vessel. In early July, a FIC member accompanied Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory representatives to Norway to visit a commercial seismic vessel. The vessel is being considered as a potential replacement for EWING.

Over the past few months, the Naval Architectural firm, JJMA Inc. has been conducting a study for NSF that further defines the Regional Class designs and examines various acquisition strategies for the vessel's design and construction. The elements of the JJMA tasking include:

- Refinement of the Regional Class concept designs to come within the 25M cost cap.
- Effects of tonnage on regulatory requirements and life cycle cost
- Technologies to optimize reliability, manning, and life cycle cost
- Ship specification and other documentation to support acquisition

The study began in March and is scheduled to be complete this summer. FIC members along with Regional Class Steering Committee members attended an interim review meeting in May. A second meeting will be held on 23 July at NSF (just as this newsletter goes to the printer). Initial JJMA findings predict that a ship can be built that meets the desired Regional Class SMRs and is within the construction budget, approximately $28M.

UNOLS CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

Committee	Meeting	Start Date	End Date	Location/Notes
Scheduling	Fall	Sep 17		NSF
FIC	Fall Meeting	Sep 17		NSF
Council	Fall Meeting	Sep 18		NSF
UNOLS	Annual Meeting	Sep 19		NSF
RVOC	Annual Meeting	Oct 8	Oct 10	U Minnesota, Large Lakes Observatory, Duluth, Minnesota
RVTEC	Annual Meeting	Nov 18	Nov 20	USCG Integrated Support Center, Seattle, WA
AICC	Fall Meeting	Nov 17	Nov 18	Seattle, WA (tentative dates)
DESSC	Winter Meeting	Jan 25, 2004		Portland, OR

Meeting Announcement

The science community is invited to attend the

DEep Submergence Science Committee Annual Planning Meeting

Sunday, January 25, 2004
Portland, Oregon

The meeting room and agenda will be posted on the UNOLS Website when available:
<http://www.unols.org/dessc/>

I would like to thank all who contributed information and articles for this issue of the Newsletter. Articles are always welcome and encouraged. Copy can be submitted via mail, FAX or e-mail.

Thank you, Annette DeSilva - Editor, UNOLS News

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UNOLS 2003 ANNUAL MEETING
Friday, 19 September 2003
National Science Foundation, Room 1235
4201 Wilson Boulevard Arlington, VA
8:00 a.m. – Coffee
8:30 a.m. - Meeting

Keynote Speaker
RADM Richard West, CORE President

Visit the UNOLS website for the meeting agenda <http://www.unols.org>

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