

UNOLS Overview

UNOLS is an organization of 62 U. S. institutions that have academic research and education programs in the ocean sciences and an interest in promoting the best possible national shared use facilities to support these programs. Twenty-one of the UNOLS institutions are operators of these major shared use facilities, including research vessels, submersibles, aircraft and major instrumentation. Facilities are owned either by one of the Federal agencies or by individual institutions. UNOLS serves in an advisory role to the facility operators and to the supporting Federal agencies, and as a coordinator or facilitator of community-wide efforts directed toward scheduling, access, and improvement of existing facilities, and planning for future facilities.



UNOLS Charter

The UNOLS Charter was originally adopted in 1972 and serves as the bylaws and guiding document for operation of the organization. The introduction and objectives underscore the overall purpose of UNOLS

1. INTRODUCTION:

Recognizing the need for coordinated use of federally supported oceanographic facilities, the community of academic oceanographic institutions, which use and operate those facilities, by virtue of this Charter, do hereby establish an organization of academic oceanographic institutions. The organization shall be named the University-National Oceanographic Laboratory System (UNOLS). UNOLS is solely an advisory body. Execution and enforcement of its recommendations are matters for member institutions and for agencies, which fund the construction and operation of UNOLS facilities.

2. OBJECTIVES:

An objective of UNOLS is to coordinate and review the access to and utilization of facilities for academic oceanographic research, and the current match of facilities to the needs of academic oceanographic programs. UNOLS makes appropriate recommendations of priorities for replacing, modifying or improving the numbers and mix of facilities for the community of users. Another objective is to foster federal and other support for academic oceanography, thereby continuing and enhancing the excellence of this nation's oceanographic program. Emphasis is placed on ships and other seagoing facilities.



UNOLS Vision

A healthy and vigorous United States research and education program in the ocean sciences requires broad access to the best possible mix of modern, capable and well-operated research vessels, aircraft, submersibles and other major shared-use facilities.



UNOLS Mission

UNOLS provides a primary forum through which the ocean science research and education community, research facility operators and the supporting Federal agencies can work cooperatively to improve access, scheduling, operation and capabilities of current and future academic oceanographic facilities.

Goals

✧ **Promote broad, coordinated access to oceanographic research facilities**

- ✧ Maintain a system that facilitates broad access to research vessels and other facilities.
- ✧ Support coordinated, efficient and effective scheduling of research vessels and facilities.

✧ **Support continuous improvement of existing facilities**

- ✧ Foster co-operation among facility operators, funding agencies and research scientists with the goal of continuously improving the quality and capability of existing ocean science facilities and the quality, reliability and safety of their operation.

✧ **Plan for and foster support for the oceanographic facilities of the future**

- ✧ Provide leadership and broad community input to the process of planning for and supporting the improvement, renewal and addition of facilities required to support the ocean sciences in the future.

2004/2005 Major Objectives

✧ Access, Scheduling & Utilization (Ongoing Responsibilities)

- ✧ Scheduling improvements - Improve systems and results to maximize access to facilities.***
- ✧ MMPA/ESA Permitting - Facilitate compliance and cruise planning.***
- ✧ Outreach and Education - Bring the knowledge of ocean science research to the public along with an understanding of the facilities needed to support that research.***



✧ ***Continuous Improvement***

(Improvements to Existing Facilities and Systems)

- ✧ Quality Improvement - Use Post-Cruise Assessments as core of quality improvement plans
- ✧ Standards of Service - Set standards for facilities, instrumentation and service.



✧ ***Plan for Future Facilities***
(New Opportunities and Facilities)

- ✧ Fleet Renewal - Support the implementation of existing FOFC plan, concept designs and funding for new ship construction.
- ✧ Facilities Improvement Planning - Update the UNOLS Fleet Improvement Plan in order to assess the current and projected status of the Academic Research Fleet and other major facilities, detail the scientific facility requirements of the future based on recently published documents and make recommendations in support of the review and update of the FOFC renewal plan and for additional research vessels and facilities that may be required.



✧ ***Plan for Future Facilities (cont)***
(New Opportunities and Facilities)

- ✧ Icebreaker renewal – Support efforts to plan for and carry out service life extensions and science system improvements for POLAR Class icebreakers in addition to continued support for improvements to HEALY support of science.
- ✧ Submergence vehicle renewal – Provide support for the development and design of vehicles and tools to enhance access for submergence science.
- ✧ Seismic Research Vessel - support efforts to convert and begin operations of a new National Oceanographic Seismic Facility (research vessel).