

Alvin de-brief summaries - 12/07

Ledwell	Jan 2007	EPR
Shank	Jan 2007	EPR
Valentine	Jul 2007	Southern California
Lee	Aug 2007	Endeavor
Becker & Dilorio	Sep 2007	Endeavor, Juan de Fuca
Cary	Oct 2007	Guaymas EPR 9N

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Pre-Cruise Planning:

Pre-cruise communications between PI and Alvin Ops Group not always being relayed adequately to Alvin shipboard party

For complex operations, direct communication between PI, Expedition Leader and Pilots must occur well in advance

In spite of doing things “by the book” Navy and/or foreign clearances still frequently are not received until 11th hour

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Mobilization/Demobilization:

Shipping is becoming increasingly complex and expensive

It was suggested that there should be more coordination between PIs and WHOI to help consolidate shipping to keep costs down

PIs and Alvin group need to make sure there is adequate time to prepare and interface equipment and do briefings before cruises with short initial transits

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Operations - Vehicle:

Very few dives lost to mechanical failures and most made up elsewhere by rescheduling maintenance days, etc.

All mechanical failures repaired by next day

Batteries performed excellent and only power-shortened dives were due to excessive thruster use or were immediately after a long period of Alvin down time

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Operations - NDSF Equipment:

Few problems noted

Navigation generally considered acceptable but some PIs wished in hindsight that they had taken the time to deploy the LBL system

The Alvin CTD identified early in year as in need of regular program of maintenance - This has now been implemented

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Operations - User Equipment:

Large variety of often complex equipment was successfully interfaced with Alvin systems

Key to success is a thorough discussion of all equipment issues and science needs with ALL of the Alvin pilot team well before the dive

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Personnel:

Significant changes in personnel in the past 1-2 years

We lost senior pilots Gavin and Tony, Pat has moved to Ops Manager, and Bruce to Expedition Leader - leaving us with a significantly less experienced pilot team

However Mark's skills have matured to excellence, Sean's are approaching that level rapidly, and the newest pilots are advancing

The PIs found that the new team did "The usual excellent job"

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Data hand-over:

All PIs satisfied with data hand-over

Data is not always accessible at sea or is difficult to find - Needs to be centralized Data Portal

Recommend PIs should bring a large hard drive with them to ease bringing data back to their labs

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Additional PI Recommendations:

A better and simpler Alvin user information sheet is needed including photos and detailed specs of all available equipment - This should be part of the pre-cruise planning questionnaire

Alvin office (shore and ship) should retain all science gear wiring diagrams for future use

Alvin dives should not be scheduled on the Juan-de-Fuca after mid September - Not uncommon to lose half of dives