

2007-2008 Marine Operations Committee Annual Report

The Marine Operations Committee (MOC) is charged with recommending SIO policy concerning all aspects of marine operations dealing with ships, the Nimitz Marine Facility, and the marine technical group. The committee met monthly over the past year. Minutes for all meetings, including updates on ship status and the shipboard technical services, are available at the SIO Staff Council website.

Overall, ship operations have continued to run smoothly. This year we welcomed Bruce Appelgate as the new Associate Director for Ship Operations, following the retirement of Bob Knox in this position. The committee extends our thanks to Bob for his service.

Although equipment and capabilities of the SIO fleet are continually updated and improved, two items are particularly noteworthy. A new EM 120 multibeam swath mapping system was installed on the Melville in September, 2007 and is working well. A Simrad EK-60 fisheries acoustic system was added to the New Horizon. In addition to this hull mounted system, a pole mounted system was also acquired that is available for use on other vessels.

Among the challenges facing the oceanographic community are budgetary constraints and the longer term prospects for renewal of the UNOLS research fleet. Nonetheless, schedules for the SIO research vessels have fared relatively well, and we anticipate that SIO researchers will continue to be actively involved in UNOLS and fleet renewal planning. Another change is the introduction of TSA Transportation Worker Identity Cards for regulated port facilities. This program will be instituted at the Nimitz Marine Facility at the end of 2008 the identity cards will be required for unescorted access to the facility.

Significant changes were made to the process for requesting UC Ship Funds. The State of California provides limited support for SIO research vessels (see <http://shipsked.ucsd.edu/> for details). Two proposal calls, one in the spring and one in the fall, were instituted to allow comparative evaluation of proposals by the UC Ship Funds Panel of the MOC. Requests outside of this review process will also be entertained in special circumstances. In addition, the accessibility of data from previous research supported by UC Ship Funds (following the NSF data policy guidelines) may be considered in evaluating proposals.

Changes were also made to the Marine Operations Isotope Usage Panel, a standing subcommittee of the MOC that assists in evaluating proposals for radioisotope use on SIO research vessels. In order to facilitate communication with the UCSD Radiation Safety and Surveillance Committee (RSSC) the chair of the Isotope Usage Panel will attend meetings of the RSSC.

Jeff Gee, Chair