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Charter Vessel MV *Bon Esprit*

3-14 September 1992

Cruise 9212H

REPORT

Personnel

P W Rankine	HSO (in charge)
M R Robertson	HSO
J G Fraser	ASO

Objectives

1. To participate in the ICES coordinated herring larval surveys in ICES subdivision VI a(N).
2. To count and identify all herring and other fish larvae collected in the plankton samples during the survey.
3. To collect surface sea water and salinity data during the survey

Narrative

The *Bon Esprit* left Aberdeen at 2150 on 3 September and steamed for the north coast after picking up two crewmen off Wick, at 1200, the following day. The sampling equipment was tested and calibrated and the plankton wire re-spooled en route. Sampling commenced at 1800 later that day but was curtailed by winch failure at 2400. The *Bon Esprit* then steamed to Ullapool, in very heavy weather, arriving at 0800 the next day. Acting on advice given by Mulco Engineering Ltd, in Aberdeen, the winch was made functional again and the ship left Ullapool at 1200 that day. Sampling continued as in Figure 1, in severe weather conditions, until 1000 on 6 September when the power supply box of the ship's AC generator short circuited. The ship then returned to Ullapool, anchoring off in the south westerly gale at 0900 on the 7th. The generator was repaired by a shore engineer later than day but sailing was delayed due to the increasing gale force winds.

The *Bon Esprit* left Ullapool at 0900 the next day and sampling continued, in heavy weather, until 1500 later that day when worsening conditions forced the ship to take shelter in the Sound of Mull. The ship weighed anchor at 0600 on 9 September and sampled stations at Coll and Tires but was unable to negotiate a passage around Barra Head. Sampling of Minch stations was then repeated as in Figure 1 until 1130 on 11 September when the worsening weather again prevented further sampling to the west of Skye. The *Bon Esprit* then dodged northwards and sheltered overnight in the Inner Sound of Raasay. The south westerly force ten gale prevented further sampling on the

12th, however, numerous flowmeter calibrations were completed, within the Sound, while awaiting a decrease in the weather conditions.

The ship left Raasay at 2330 that night and steamed for Station 30, off the Butt of Lewis, arriving at 0430 the following morning. However, while attempting to lift the sampler, the hydraulics of the ship's crane failed, seriously damaging the crane and necessitating major repair work in Aberdeen. The ship then returned to Aberdeen, docking at 1000 on 14 September.

Paul W Rankine
20 October 1992

