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Not to be cited without prior reference to the Marine Laboratory, Aberdeen

MFV *Christina S*

Charter Cruise 0696H

REPORT

13-30 July 1996

Personnel

D Reid	SSO (in charge)
S P R Greenstreet	HSO
F Armstrong	SO
I Gibb	SO (to 25 July)
F Burns	ASO (contract) (from 25 July)
S Quatey	Visitor

Objectives

To carry out an acoustic survey for herring in ICES area Via(N) as part of the ICES coordinated acoustic and mid-water trawling survey in the north western North Sea and North of Scotland.

Narrative

All gear was transported to Fraserburgh by lorry and furniture van on 11 July and loaded onto the vessel. Installation was completed on 12 July. Scientific staff joined the vessel in Fraserburgh on 13 July. *Christina S* sailed at midday to Cape Wrath. The survey commenced on the morning of 14 July. Calibration of the acoustic equipment was carried out on 16 July at Mull. The survey track (see attached map) proceeded southwards down the Minch, covered the area south of the Hebrides from 56°N and up the west side of the Hebrides, out to the shelf break. The final part of the survey covered the shelf area west of Orkney and Fair Isle, up to 60°N, and west of 4°W. Transect spacing was normally at 7.5 nm, this was closed to 3.75 nm in the area of Barra Head, and opened to 15 nm around St Kilda and between 4 and 5°W. Spacings were based on the results of previous surveys. On 19 July the shark tow cable parted, and the shark was lost into the propeller. The shark was destroyed, although no obvious damage was sustained by the vessel. The vessel steamed to Kyle on 20 July to pick up a replacement shark, which was driven down from Aberdeen overnight. A second calibration was carried out in Loch na Biest on 20 July, and the survey restarted at 0300 hours on 21 July. A second, brief, landing was made at Kinlochbervie on 25 July to land I Gibb due to the serious illness of his mother. F Burns joined the vessel at the same time as a replacement. Approximately four hours survey time was lost. Following completion of the survey, the vessel steamed to Fraserburgh. Scientists and gear were unloaded on the afternoon of 30 July for return to Aberdeen.

Results

The survey was completely successful, with no time lost due to bad weather. The total mileage surveyed was 2,450 nm. Fishing exercises were generally successful, although one net was ripped on the last haul of the 39 trawl hauls carried out, 21 contained significant numbers of herring. Haul positions are shown on the attached map. Full analysis of the survey is not yet complete but preliminary indications are that there were considerable changes in the stock distribution from that in 1995. Schools appeared to be generally smaller and less distinct, and more dispersed. No conclusions on stock biomass are yet available.

D G Reid
13 August 1996

Survey track Christina S 13 - 30 July 1996

11W

9W

7W

5W

3W

60

59

58

57

56



Haul positions Christina S 13 - 30 July 1996

11W

9W

7W

5W

3W

60

59

58

57

56

