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FISHERIES LABORATORY, LOWESTOFT, SUFFOLK, ENGLAND

1975 RESEARCH VESSEL PROGRAMME

REPORT: RV CLIONE, CRUISE 13 PART C

(PROVISIONAL: Not to be quoted without prior reference to the author)

STAFF

J W Ramster
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B F Riches
D Gaunt Institute of Oceanographic Sciences, Wormley (IOS)
G Philipps IOS, Wormley
K Tipping IOS, Wormley (Part-time)

DURATION

Left Lowestoft 1230 h, 26 September
Docked Lowestoft 0200 h, 29 September (All times are Greenwich Mean Time)

LOCALITY

Smith's Knoll area

AIMS

1. To assist the Trinity House tenders MERMAID and READY in anchoring Data Buoy I and subsequently to lay two sets of oceanographic sensors in the vicinity of the buoy.
2. To recover the IOS acoustic releases and sub-surface buoys laid on part A of this cruise.

NARRATIVE

The ship left Lowestoft at 1230 h, 26 September and by 1545 h was searching the Data Buoy site area for any signs of the triangle of surface markers left there earlier in the month: there were none to be seen. Consequently an acoustic search began and two systems were reached but could not be fixed. Indeed weaker and weaker signals were received as time went on. A sector-scanner search of the region was then begun and only one target could be found in the region of the data-buoy site that could reasonably be supposed to have been produced by a sub-surface buoy. This did however check the ability of the radar range and bearing from the Smith's Knoll Lightship and the local Decca signals to allow the ship to return to the site area.

By this time (1907 h) it had become too dark for further attempts to be made at firing the acoustic release systems that had been found and so the ship moved off two miles to do some tests on the systems being carried on board. During these it was noticed that the releases in the site area had been re-activated into "call back" mode. After these tests the ship lay overnight in the Smith's Knoll area.

At first light the next day preparations were made to mark at least one of DBI's anchor positions with a surface marker buoy when news was received that the Trinity House Tender READY would not be working on the Date Buoy project during the next 24 hours because of the poor weather forecast. The ship left for Lowestoft immediately and at 1230 h, 27 September, Mr Springer was landed as he had been complaining of chest and abdominal pains. Mr Tipping of IOS, Wormley also went ashore at this time.

The ship returned to the working area in order to do what it could to facilitate the planned buoy-anchoring operation. At 1530 h a new acoustic search began in near-gale conditions as an unidentifiable trawler towed through the position. No contact was made with the moored systems and at 1645 h the vessel had to move towards the lee of an anchorage in Corton Roads as a full gale was developing.

By 0745 h the next morning however conditions were much improved and the ship moved back to the working area yet again and began a new acoustic search. Eventually two sets of signals were received from an area some way from the original triangle of moorings. Once more however the systems could not be brought to the surface. A sector scanner search suggested that only the southernmost station of the original triangle remained in place but subsequent efforts to fire this acoustic release and to contact the other systems failed. At 1800 h the search, which had taken place in excellent and ever-improving sea and wind conditions, was called off and the ship set course for Lowestoft docking at 0200 h, Monday 29 September.

RESULTS

1. For various reasons the Data Buoy did not leave the quay at Brooke Marine's shipyard and neither of the Trinity House Tenders got within ten miles of the Data Buoy site during the period of the cruise. Consequently RV CLIONE was not able to accomplish the major aim of this cruise.
2. Acoustic contact was made with two of the ICS releases put out on marker buoys earlier in the month but neither they nor the third release, which was presumed to be on the rig seen on the sector scanner, could be fired.
3. Very hazy scanner pictures of a sub-surface buoy were seen at various times but no images of the wire or the anchor clumps were picked up.

J W Ramster
Naturalist in Charge
6 October 1975

SEEN IN DRAFT: J R French (Master)
WG (Fishing Skipper)

INITIALLED: AP

DISTRIBUTION

Basic list

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