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Not to be cited without prior reference to the Laboratory

FRV "Scotia"

3SR87

Cruise 3/87

LD

Report

4-24 March 1987

Personnel

K A Coull	HSO (in charge)
J R G Hislop	PSO
J A Gauld	HSO
A P Robb	HSO
W S MacDonald	SO
C P Whitworth	SO
P L Clark	ASO (12-24 March)
W Leiper	Craftsman

Objective

Demersal trawling survey of the grounds off the north and west coasts of Scotland.

Narrative

"Scotia" sailed from Aberdeen at 1400 on 4 March. Trawling started the following morning off the north coast of Scotland, and continued in that area until 7 March when poor weather conditions forced "Scotia" into the Minch. With severe gales forecast for the next few days a decision to work southwards completing the inshore stations was taken. The weather improved on the 10 March allowing work off the north west of Ireland and Stanton Banks before docking at Stornoway on 12 March.

"Scotia" sailed at 0900 on 13 March and completed two hauls in the North Minch before heading for the stations south of Barra Head. The stations on the western edge of the survey area were completed before strong winds interrupted work on the morning of 17 March. The opportunity was taken to repeat the stations in the sheltered waters of the North Minch. On the 20 March work resumed on the stations north of the Butt of Lewis and continued towards the Shetland area. The survey area was completed on the afternoon of 23 March and "Scotia" sailed for Aberdeen, docking at 0800 the following day.

Results

Of the 47 stations in the survey area, 45 were completed successfully with five being repeated. Gear damage prevented the completion of two stations. However a suitable tow was found for one of the stations and should be used in future surveys.

Heavy ground gear with 47 metre sweeps was used throughout the trip. Alterations made to the ground gear rig at the start of the trip seemed to be successful, in that the level of gear damage was less than in previous surveys. The gear section was notified of the revised specifications for ground gear 'C'.

The Scanmar system was used to monitor headline height, wing spread and distance covered during each haul.

Catches of I-group haddock were significantly higher and more widely distributed than in the previous two years (Fig. 1).

Catches of I-group whiting were also higher than in recent surveys, with the highest catch rates being from stations in the Minch and Clyde (Fig. 2).

Sprat catches were generally low, with the highest being 2326 per hour from 47E6.

Catch rates of herring varied up to 115 baskets with the biggest hauls coming from the Stanton Banks and St Kilda areas.

Various frozen and live samples were taken back for work in the Laboratory and for use by the Royal Museum of Scotland.

#### Otoliths taken

Cod	Haddock	Whiting	Saithe	Herring	Sprat
391	1458	1066	150	1851	385

Otoliths were also taken for pout and mackerel. All cod, haddock, whiting and saithe otoliths were read at sea.

Haul summary, length frequency and age/length data were punched at sea and stored on floppy disk using a BBC computer.

K A Coull

15 June 1987

Seen in draft: N E McInnes

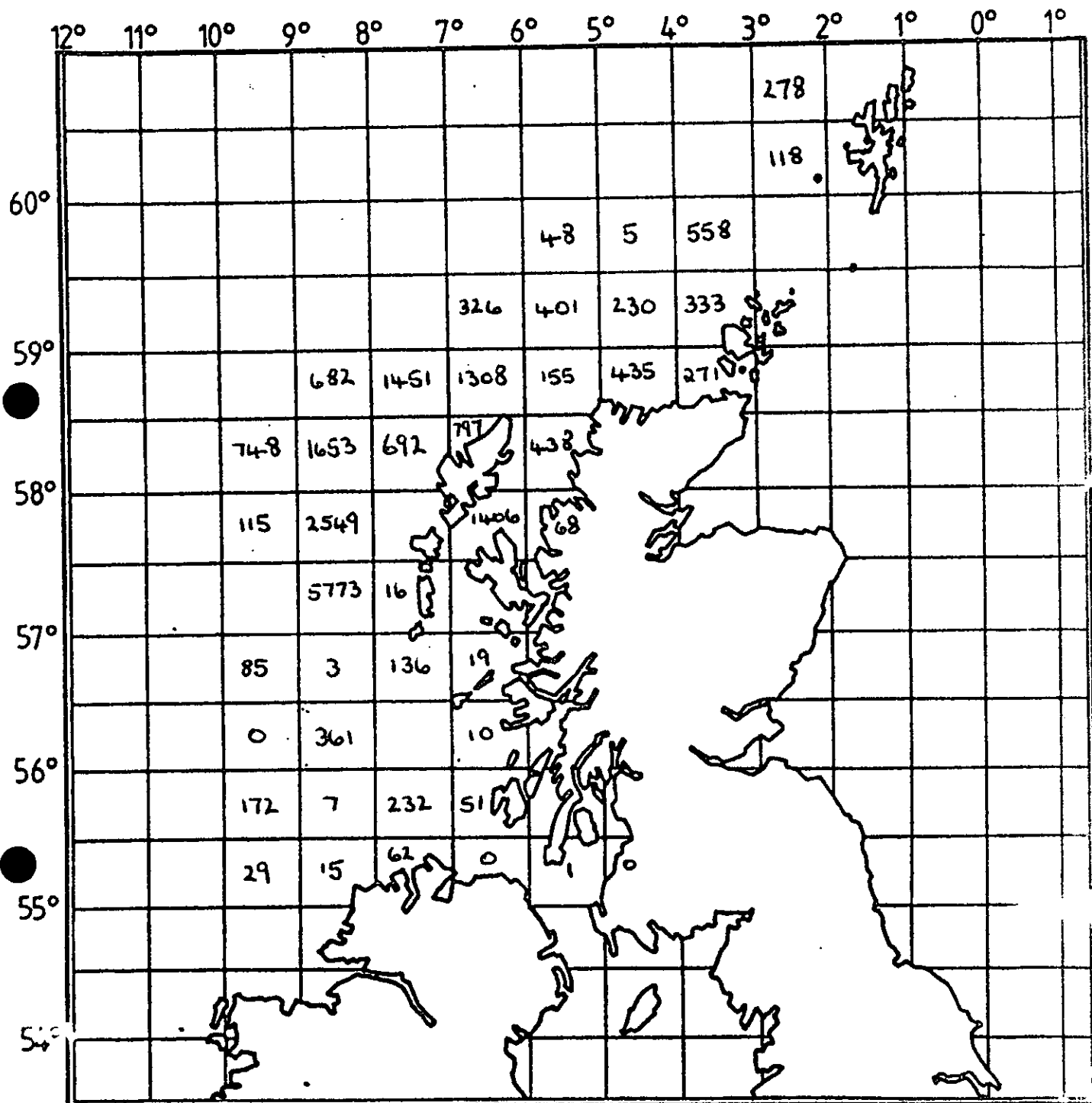


FIG 1

Haddock I-group      ave nos/hr

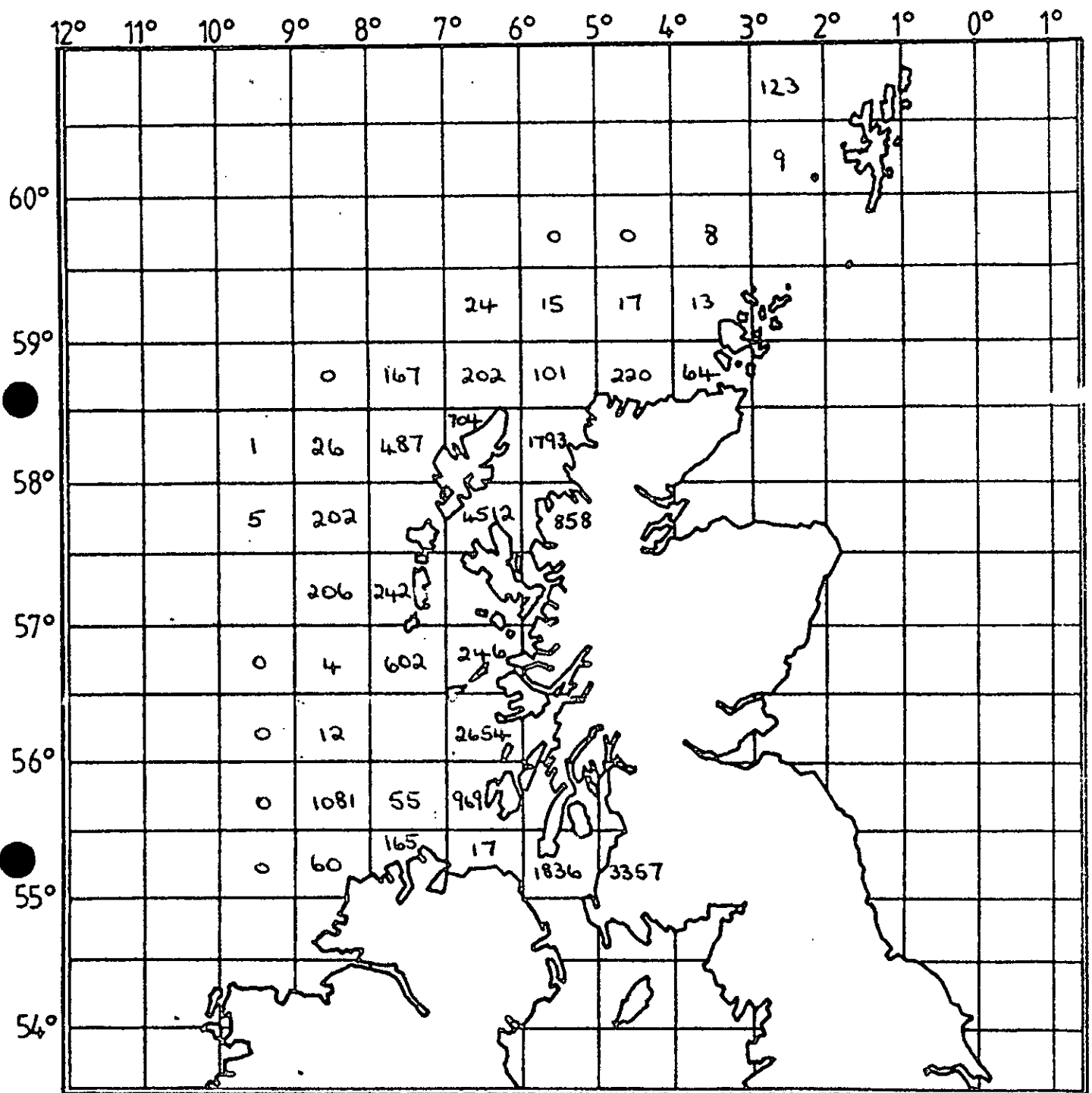


FIG 2

Whiting I-group      ave nos/hr

Scotia 4Mar - 24 Mar Cruise 3/87

