

R1/12

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FRV *SCOTIA*

Cruise 1294S

REPORT

30 August - 12 September 1994

Personnel

A W Newton	SSO
M E Medford	HSO
G I Henderson	SO
K J Peach	SO
C J Davis	ASO
D J Tait	ASO

Objective

To undertake a demersal survey of Rockall plateau.

Narrative

Scotia sailed from Aberdeen at 1300 on Tuesday 30 August with the intention of making a direct passage to Rockall. However, a diversion had to be made to Ullapool in order to pick up an item of navigational equipment. *Scotia* arrived at the Rockall plateau at 1400 on Thursday 1 September and immediately started fishing operations. The survey was conducted continuously across the whole of the plateau for the next nine days except for an interruption of six hours due to a SW gale. *Scotia* left Rockall plateau at 1315 on Saturday 10 September and returned to Aberdeen at 0900 on Monday 12 September.

Results

Using the 48' Aberdeen trawl fitted with a 30 mm small mesh cover a total of 45 hauls were made over the whole area of the Rockall and Empress of Britain Banks. The main species caught were haddock, grey gurnards, *Sebastes viviparous* and *Helicolenus dactylopterus*. Table 1 shows a comparison of the youngest year classes of haddock caught during this survey with the catches in previous years. The result shows that the 1991 and 1992 broods were above average strength. The 1993 year class is markedly poorer than the previous two years. The 1994 year class is the best since 1989 but given the uncertain survival rate of young haddock in this isolated fishing area it is not currently possible to assess the impact of this year class on the future commercial fishery.

A W Newton

4 October 1994

Seen in draft: P Ramsay

Table 1
Number of haddock per 10 hours fishing at Rockall

Survey Year	0	Age 1	2
1985	489	51284	214
1986	3577	17309	62196
1987	698	11672	2917
1988	8640	8170	5799
1989	23580	10799	3531
1990	16388	10612	1231
1991	14458	16398	4431
1992	20336	44912	14631
1993	15220	37959	15689
1994	23474	13287	11399

Standard Stations at Rockall (GPS - Sept 1993)

