

This paper not to be cited without prior reference to the author

International Council for the
Exploration of the Sea

C.M.1966/N:18
Hydrographical Committee

Report on the second meeting of the IOC
Working Group on Ocean Data Stations,
UNESCO, Paris, 28.Febr.-3.March 1966

By

J. Eggvin

Fiskeridirektoratets Havforskningsinstitutt, Bergen

The meeting of the IOC Working Group on Ocean Data Stations took place in Paris 28. February - 3. March 1966, with Dr. R.W. Richardson in the chair. Participants attended from Federal Republic of Germany, France, Netherlands, Norway, United Kingdom, U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. and from IMCO, WMO, IOC and ICES.

It was recommended that the booklet Fixed Oceanographic Stations of the World, published by UNESCO in 1963, according to the recommendation of the Working Group at its first meeting, should be revised. In addition to the second edition a loose leaf system was recommended with periodic issues of amendment sheets when new stations are established.

The Working Group noted that during the passed year the number of off-shore reference stations visited on an opportunity basis had increased considerably. A further increase in the number of such stations was highly desirable. The Group further recommended that member-states should try to arrange more frequent visits to such stations whenever ships' movements permitted. Also other types of ocean data stations must be established in great numbers, especially offshore reference stations that can be visited regularly, as this will be of great value for the synoptic oceanography. The secretariat was requested to call this matter to the attention of the bureau, so that it could be referred to appropriate international organisations.

The Working Group recognized that it would be economically desirable to set up networks for joint collection of meteorologic and oceanographic data. It will be necessary to discuss this between relevant IOC and WMO groups together with other common problems, such as use of data-collecting platforms at sea, communication channels and dissemination of information.

The Working Group recommended that an approach should be made to the World Meteorological Organisation requesting them when revising the ship reporting code to consider the interests of the oceanographers concerning the data and to formulate additional codes for data relating to phenomena of sea surface and the shallow layers of the ocean.

"The Working Group, recognizing that one of the most important uses to which data from Ocean Data Stations (and other sources) are put is the preparation of synoptic oceanographic charts, recommends that the Secretariat prepare a list of national establishments and institutions regularly issuing synoptic charts for oceanographic forecasting and other purposes, including details of their production and availability by facsimile broadcasts and other means, and recommends that this information be disseminated to member states through the quarterly newsletter International Marine Science."

The Working Group recognized that the possibility exist that the Ocean Weather ships in the North Atlantic might be discontinued. As these are one of the most important long term ocean data collecting facilities,

the Working Group considered that automatic buoys should be placed at some of these stations for comparison purposes in order to provide continuing data if the ships should be withdrawn. The Working Group recommended that meteorologists and oceanographers in the different member states should come together when formulating their national position with regard to this problem.

Concerning internationally-shared ocean data stations, it was recommended that each such station when established should be allocated to one particular nation or regional organisation, who would then be responsible for coordinating the collection of oceanographic data at that station. In that way one would insure continuity of the series and the standardization of data collected. It was suggested that ICES might be the appropriate body to take the responsibility for the oceanographic activities in its area of the 5 internationally-shared ocean weather stations, A, I, J, K and M.

In the United Kingdom plans had been worked out for anchoring platforms in the North Atlantic to provide communications and navigational support to supersonic aircraft. If this plan should be realized, the platforms would be very suitable both for oceanographic and meteorological observations.

The Working Group recognized that if a network of ocean data stations shall function, it is necessary to get allocated adequate radio frequency in the high frequency bands. At the Aeronautical Extraordinary Administrative Radio Conference scheduled to be held in Geneva during March 1966 a proposal to this effect will be put forward by the Federal Republic of Germany, supported by Denmark, Norway and Sweden: one 3.5 kc/s band in each of several wider bands allocated at the Aeronautical Mobile Service (R) should be released as the first step in order to obtain the frequency bands required for oceanographic purposes.