

32nd OFEG Meeting

14th May 2014, NIOZ

Attendees:, Juanjo Danobeitia, Colin Day, Henk de Haas, Erica Koning, Klas Lackschewitz, Olivier Lefort, Per Nieuwejaar, Miki Ojeda, Odd-Jarle Pollen, Olivier Quedec, Barbara Tanner, Beth Woodward

Apologies:

1.0 Welcome & introductions

1.1 New members were introduced and welcomed to the group.

2.0 Management issues, including new members

2.1 OL announced that he will be leaving OFEG and OQ taking over as the Ifremer representative. EK proposed that BW take over officially as vice-chair from this meeting and the group agreed. EK also proposed that BW would take over as chair at the next Spring meeting, and this was agreed

3.0 Approval of minutes and matters arising

3.1 Review of the Actions –

There was specific conversation surrounding some actions:

Actions 2.1: BT and OL are yet to send minutes and actions from the 30th OFEG meeting to partners. This is to be completed as a matter of urgency.

Action 3.2.1: Closed, but BW to confirm again to NSF the arrangements for NSF – OFEG barter and the exchange of points (new action)

Action 3.2.2: Rose Dufour was invited, but Bob Houtman declined to attend this meeting due to lack of funds.

Action 4.1.1: Closed. CD also to contact Patrice about his availability for joining trials on Discovery in October 2014.

Action 4.1.4: Closed. BT confirmed that due to the delay from the shipyard the visit of the new Sonne to OFEG partners has now been cancelled. However, BT reported that the Sonne will be available for visits by OFEG partners in Germany in late November/December.

Action 4.1.5: IMR confirmed that as the Fridjof Nansen is currently scheduled by FAO and needs \$10000 per day, then barter doesn't currently fit in the business model, so this vessel will not currently be made available for barter. IMR will continue to monitor the situation and should the Fridjof Nansen arrangements change then it may become available. They will keep OFEG updated with any changes.

3.2 Additional Actions from this meeting:

Action 3.2.1: BW to confirm again to NSF the arrangements for NSF – OFEG barter and the exchange of points

Action 3.2.2: CD to contact Patrice about his availability for joining trials on Discovery in October 2014

Action 3.2.3: CD to also send dates and details of Discovery trials in October to OFEG partners.

Action 3.2.4: BT to send invite to OFEG partners to visit the Sonne in November/December once the dates are known.

4.0 Update of the OFEG activity document and barter balances

- 4.1 JD questioned the updated points for equipment – this was discussed at length at a previous OFEG, and CD circulated a table of new points following this meeting but this has not been fully agreed and uploaded to the website.
- 4.2 PN voiced his concern that the points allocated to certain vessels do not equate fairly to the capability of those vessels, and questioned what the group should do regarding points for new vessels, especially in comparison to more recent added items in the equipment table.
- 4.3 The group agreed that we should think in detail about the parameters that are used to allocate points to new ships and equipment – to be discussed later in AOB/outside the meeting. In initial discussion the group agreed that capability of the vessels was most important.
- 4.4 Equipment Points – The group noted that the list of available equipment for barter is evolving and developing, and so there is a need to re-evaluate what is in the equipment barter pool, and what we should ‘charge’ through barter for use of this equipment.

Action 4.4.1 - All countries need to make clear what equipment is to be made available for barter, and allocate appropriate points as per the protocol agreed and previously circulated, and then send to CD

Action 4.4.2 – CD to collate information on barter equipment from OFEG partners and construct a new table - to be discussed and agreed at next meeting.

Action 4.4.3 – Colin to review the protocol and the table produced to ensure that the protocol includes the ‘general rule’ rather than being specific to individual pieces of equipment. –

- 4.5 In a wider discussion surrounding the use of equipment, and OFEG’s direction to the OFEG-Tech group, All OFEG members were encouraged to think critically about what OFEG-tech should be doing, what we want it to deliver, and what specific ‘tasks’ it should deliver?
- 4.6 CD stated that in procurement of new portable equipment, NERC is ensuring that this equipment is interoperable with OFEG partners as much as possible.

Action 4.5.1 – in OFEG tech – add a session for the group to think about the specifications for interoperability – CD to lead

5.0 Update on OFEG cruise programmes in 2014 and 2015

- 5.1 The partners gave an update on their current programmes:

Key Points:

IMR

- IMR had to reduce days in their cruise programme for G.O. Sars due to restrictions in funding.
- G.O.Sars plans to spend c.16 weeks in Antarctica in 15/16.
- Hakon Mosby – an older vessel, which is why the cruise programme has more gaps than might be expected, this vessel will soon be decommissioned, but clear plans are not yet known.
- Johan Hjort – IMR are currently upgrading in an effort to make it more multifunctional and flexible.
- IMR current cruise programme progressing largely as planned.

Geomar

- Meteor – mainly physical oceanography cruises in the tropical Atlantic.
- Meteor – barter cruise planned with NERC, and the cruise planning cruise has gone ahead recently with good preparation and planning noted on both sides.
- Meteor current cruise programme planned until September 2015.
- Merian – currently the programme is open from November 2014 until March 2015 as there are no German science proposals to fill the schedule.
- KL noted that the demand for science cruises in Germany has decreased – the procedure for application has changed, and through the new procedure only 5% of proposals are funded, and universities do not have the money to finance the cruise costs. Often cruises are funded, but no money is available for the post-cruise research (analysis etc) that is necessary.
- Poseidon – 2014 cruise programme quite full, and in 2015 the programme is currently planned until October.
- Poseidon is available for barter in north sea/north Atlantic in Oct – December 2015 - IMR expressed an interest in potentially using some of this time. (*KL and PN to keep in touch about this*)
- Alkor – programme full

BMBF

- Old Sonne is in operation until August 2014.
- Current plans for Sonne decommissioning are unknown.
- New Sonne is planned to have its first science cruise in December 2014, and prior to this will visit several areas in Germany – OFEG members will be invited at some point during this period to view the Sonne.
- Sonne has full year of planned science in 2015, including two-ship exercise in the Pacific with the James Cook (February 2015), and the programme is currently confirmed until April 2016

NERC

- James Cook – just completed a very successful barter between CSIC and NERC on the– (*Juanjo/Colin to draft news story for website*)
- Discovery is still in trials that are still needed to ensure that the systems are working and that the ship can deliver science cruises effectively.
- The Discovery science programme is planned to resume fully in October 2014.
- James Cook has a full programme for 2014/15, including work in the North Atlantic, Mid-Atlantic and East Pacific.
- Early indications for the 15/16 programme indicate a highly complex set of cruises on the NERC vessels.
- CD discussed use of Manzanillo as a port, and potentially that OFEG should jointly speak to the port/agents about further use in the future.

- JCR is in mid-life refit May to September 2015, and will resume science after this time.

CSIC

- Saramiento de Gamboa – currently the 2014 programme includes cruises from March – October
- CSIC have been approached by the Ecuador Government to do c.3 months seismic work off Galapagos. This is currently unconfirmed but this could clash with requirements for CSIC's support of the NERC cruise in February 2015 (PS Hobbs).
- 2015 – only MCS cruises, currently planned from July – September

NIOZ

- EK highlighted the restrictions that NIOZ are also experiencing in terms of budget
- Pelagia have two charters confirmed in 2014 and 2015, and are currently programmed until mid-May 2015.

Ifemer

- Noted that they have experienced serious shark attacks on their multi-channel streamers (5 separate attacks) in the Caribbean
- Pourquoi Pas and L'Atalante have full programmes in 2014.

5.2 The group had a wider discussion surrounding the highlighted issues in funding across OFEG partners. PN asked whether as OFEG we wish to have a joint reponse/take forward the issue of finding shiptime funding from the EU and other routes. OL cautioned that the group needs to be in agreement about a joint position before this is taken forward.

5.3 The group agreed that there was a wider problem of shiptime funding at EU level that needs to be discussed, and a potential OFEG position could be scoped. However, this was postponed for a future meeting.

Action 5.1.1: KL and PN to keep in contact and explore the possibilities for barter on Poseidon.

Action 5.1.2: CD to coordinate a future meeting of relevant OFEG partners and the relevant partners in Manzanillo.

Action 5.3.1: EK to add a discussion on EU funding to the agenda of the next meeting.

6.0 Feedback on recent and planned barter cruises (incl. any clearance issues)

6.1 There was no feedback on recent barter cruises.

6.2 CD highlighted that NERC have continued issues with Dip Clear in Spanish waters – change of port calls is a difficulty, as well as within 6 months. JD advised that if UK speak to him/CSIC ahead of time then they may be able to speak to the appropriate people in Spain working in DipClear and facilitate a smoother process.

6.3 KL highlighted a high level of difficulty with Greece/Turkey Dip Clear; this concern was shared by the group.

6.4 Ifremer has highlighted that there are some local laws that have been applied in Italy, around the area that the Costa Concordia accident happened. Despite clearance from Rome, they were prevented from working in this area due to local jurisdictions, and forewarned the group to be aware of this.

6.5 Brazil – Ifremer have had major problems with Geophysics cruises in this area, and, CD also raised the same concern with seabed sampling in this area.

7.0 Bartering technicians within OFEG

- 7.1 CD recapped the issues that have been discussed regarding exchanging technicians formally in OFEG. He highlighted that technician exchange has been done on a local level on an *ad hoc* basis (NERC-NIOZ and NERC-CSIC)
- 7.2 KL noted that he felt this can only work on the local basis as there are so many research vessels and so many cruises happening that it can be difficult to offer technicians more generally to OFEG for barter.
- 7.3 PN questioned what activities the technicians were involved with when countries are not filling their programmes, and whether this meant that there was availability. JD noted that even with less cruise activity the technicians are still employed, so this might mean that there is availability that the group is not currently utilising.
- 7.4 CD proposed a way in which this situation could be managed; providers with availability should email the OFEG group with details of the technicians (perhaps including their CV), and dates that they are available. Additionally, should OFEG technicians be looking for contract work on top of their normal employ, then they should be able to make their details available to the OFEG group. The group agreed that this should remain a live option, but that no formalised action was necessary.

Action 7.4.1: Any partner with spare capacity and/or is looking for a technician then they should email the OFEG group.

Action 7.4.2: CD to ensure that these principles are highlighted at the next OFEG-Tech so that technicians are aware that this is an option.

8.0 OFEG members: ship issues, fleet and major equipment changes

- 8.1 IMR: PN shared details about the new ROV from the Norwegian Marine Robotics Facility
- 8.2 IMR: New ice going research vessel Kronprins Haakon- due to be delivered in late 2016/early 2017, with ice tests planned for spring 2017 – it is envisioned that this vessel would be included in the barter system.
- 8.3 IMR: New Fridjof Nansen, delivery planned in spring 2016
- 8.4 BT -BMBF: will build new Polarstern, Poseidon, Meteor, and the ministry have requested information on the demand for shiptime, this investigation will be done by 'Econom', and OFEG partners may be asked directly from this company regarding demand for shiptime across OFEG partners.
- 8.5 CD – NERC have invested over £3mill equipment capital into the NMEP including cables, deck winches, moorings hardware, Gliders, Remus 600 AUV, scanfish, Piston coring system and investment into the NERC-CSIC collaboration.
- 8.6 BW- NERC have confirmed that the capital funding is available from the UK Government to build a new polar vessel to replace the JCR. Planning is still at a very early stage.
- 8.7 NIOZ highlighted that they plan to procure both a shallow water multibeam, and EM2040CD
- 8.8 Ifremer expressed an interest to begin seismic work between Ifremer, CSIC, and NERC, and perhaps start by swapping technicians to understand how each partner is working and share experience of seismic operations, what seismic

operations environmental policies are in place, and how each organisation deals with Marine Mammal Concerns.

- 8.9 There was a wide-reaching discussion around the EIAs adopted by each country, and whether there was the potential to collate information from each partner and come up with some commonalities with the potential to producing an 'international standard'.

Action 8.4.1: All to respond to requests for information regarding demand for shiptime from the Econom Group on behalf of BMBF

Action 8.8.1: All partners to exchange last EIA for a Geophysics cruise so we can all review what each partner is doing – send to CD to collate

Action 8.8.2: Geophysics policies and EIAs to be put on the next agenda, led by CD

9.0 Development of ROVs and AUVs in OFEG and future collaboration, and discussion on OFEG-Tech

- 9.1 CD introduced this item with a view to the group exploring whether there is an opportunity to collaborate more in this area. CD noted that in the past we have discussed the difficulties, technicians, cost, interoperability, integration between partners. Moreover, we had a workshop held in Kiel attended by 20+ people at OFEG Tech, and we proposed to have another meeting in the future. CD asked the group whether they felt there was anything further OFEG should do, whether we should develop this in any particular direction, or if OFEG should put particular initiatives in place.
- 9.2 BT felt that the exchange of information is most important in ensure that we can work together most effectively, and KL suggested that there should be a point of discussion at OFEGTech each meeting to discuss and exchange information.
- 9.3 CD cautioned that OFEGTech is only one day, and largely exists to make links between technical staff from each country, and time is limited in a one day meeting to discuss things in more detail.
- 9.4 The group noted that capability and numbers of ROVs, AUVs and gliders is increasing across OFEG and explored the possibility of having a dedicated AUV/ROV meeting either separate or as a theme for OFEG Tech. The group agreed that we should be doing more in this sphere.
- 9.5 The group questioned whether OFEGTech should be organised with Inmartech, and concluded that on this occasion this might not be successful, but perhaps when the next meeting is in Norway then this could work

Action 9.4.1: CD to ensure that there is a dedicated session at OFEGTech on ROVs and AUVs, and look at the potential of extending the length of the meeting to 1.5 or 2 days to accommodate this.

10.0 OFEG website

- 10.1 EK acknowledged the work that has been done since the last Meeting, and the stories that had been added to the website. However, the group agreed that the news needs to be kept up to date regularly, and that all members should ensure that the links to their webpages and cruise programmes are correct and working.

Action 10.1.1: BT will send an update on New Sonne as soon as it is available

Action 10.1.2: CD/KL to draft a news story on barter cruise on Meteor

Action 10.1.3: CD/JD to draft a new story for the OFEG website on the recent barter on the James Cook

Action 10.1.4: EK to provide some NIOZ news

Action 10.1.5: JD/MO to update the links to CSIC ships

11.0 TOBI

11.1 CD stated that NERC increasingly wish to retire TOBI, but acknowledged that it might be useful if it weren't retired, and if could be maintained for use between the OFEG group. TOBI would continue to be hosted in the UK, but NERC would need some agreed mechanism for supporting it if the OFEG partners so wished.

11.2 The group noted that there are only three side scan sonars left in OFEG, but that AUVs may take over the need for TOBI. However, they questioned whether we were currently at this point in time.

11.3 CD proposed to keep Tobi operational for another year, and then should no requests for its use be received either through the UK system or barter then NERC will retire TOBI after this time.

12.0 Any Other Business

12.1 Contact details

Action 12.1.1: BT to send new contact details to EK

12.2 Update of ship points

Action 12.2.1: BW to speak to Mike Webb regarding how the original ship points were calculated.

Action 12.2.2: BW to report back to group regarding the ship points and facilitate further discussion

12.3 Barter Opportunities

Action 12.3.1: BW to circulate the barter bids document (as updated in the meeting)

12.4 Date of the Next Meeting

Action 12.4.1: OQ/EK to propose a date for the next meeting and circulate to members for agreement

12.5 MLC 2006

12.5.1 OL requested information for how barter partners are dealing with MLC 2006 in each country. OL has met with French administration to explain that if scientists are seafarers then they need training, medical, contracts etc..., but discussed that it is difficult to impose this on all scientists. This affects all OFEG countries apart from UK who have defined a status of 'transitional seafarer'. OL stated that France is now awaiting the proposition that they would propose that French scientists are not seafarers. OL passed thanks to the group for their help in this matter.

12.6 Update on Eurocean website/database

12.6.1 OL reported that through Eurofleets they have addressed the issues with the Eurocean database: Eurocean is not up to date and/or the data contained therein is not sufficient currently. Through discussion with Eurocean to refine database,

they have now established that there is also a new portal called 'Sissira'(from an Eranet). Sissira does not link to Eurocean, and the data is mined off the internet.

12.6.2 OL reported that it has been agreed that the two portals should have a common database. This will be done by refining information in the Eurocean database; this proposal will be presented at ERVO and will require operators then to update this information.

12.6.3 However, OL noted that it is still necessary for this information to be validated, and he asked whether OFEG can ensure that their data can be updated and validated? Noting, e.g. for the UK this would include all UK registered vessels, not just NERC ships.

12.6.4 PN stated that they should instead give better filters to the database rather than revalidating the data. The group did not agree to validating all country data.

12.6.5 EK asked about invoicing of Eurocean fee – PN reported that it will be invoiced on an adhoc basis dependent on what work has been delivered.

13.0 Actions ongoing

ACTIONS	DETAIL	RESPONSIBLE	DUE DATE
Action 2.1	BT and OL to send minutes and/or actions from 30 th OFEG meeting to partners before 31 st December 2013	BT/OL	ASAP
Action 3.2.3	BW to circulate the list of NSF ships available for barter.	BW	By next meeting
Action 10.4.2	All to keep website up to date by providing News stories regularly.	All	Ongoing

14.0 Summary of actions from the 31st OFEG Meeting

ACTIONS	DETAIL	RESPONSIBLE	DUE DATE
Action 3.2.1	Confirm again to NSF the arrangements for NSF – OFEG barter and the exchange of points	BW	Next OFEG Meeting
Action 3.2.2	Contact Patrice about his availability for joining trials on Discovery in October 2014	CD	1 st September 2014
Action 3.2.3	Send dates and details of Discovery trials in October to OFEG partners.	CD	1 st September 2014

Action 3.2.4	Send invite to OFEG partners to visit the Sonne in November/December once the dates are known.	BT	ASAP
Action 4.4.1	Make clear what equipment is to be made available for barter, and allocate appropriate points as per the protocol agreed and previously circulated, and then send to CD	All	1 st August 2014
Action 4.4.2	Collate information on barter equipment from OFEG partners and construct a new table - to be discussed and agreed at next meeting.	CD	1 st August 2014
Action 4.4.3	Review the protocol and the table produced to ensure that the protocol includes the 'general rule' rather than being specific to individual pieces of equipment.	CD	1 st September 2014
Action 4.5.1	OFEG tech – add a session for the group to think about the specifications for interoperability	CD	Next OFEG Tech
Action 5.1.1	KL and PN to keep in contact and explore the possibilities for barter on Poseidon.	KL/PN	Ongoing
Action 5.1.2	Coordinate a future meeting of relevant OFEG partners and the relevant partners in Manzanillo.	CD	Prior to next OFEG
Action 5.3.1	Add a discussion on EU funding to the agenda of the next meeting.	EK	Next OFEG Meeting
Action 7.4.1	Any partner with spare capacity and/or is looking for a technician then they should email the OFEG group.	All	Ongoing
Action 7.4.2	Ensure that these principles of technician availability and contracting are highlighted at the next OFEG-Tech	CD	Next OFEG Tech
Action 8.4.1	Respond to requests for information regarding demand for shiptime from the Econom Group on behalf of BMBF	All	As needed
Action 8.8.1	Partners to exchange last EIA for a Geophysics cruise so we can all review what each partner is doing – send to CD to collate	All	15 th September 2014
Action 8.8.2	Geophysics policies and EIAs to be put on the next agenda (to be led by CD)	EK	Next OFEG Meeting

Action 9.4.1	Ensure that there is a dedicated session at OFEGTech on ROVs and AUVs, and look at the potential of extending the length of the meeting to 1.5 or 2 days to accommodate this.	CD	Next OFEG Tech
Action 10.1.1	BT will send an update on New Sonne as soon as it is available	BT	ASAP
Action 10.1.2	CD/KL to draft a news story on barter cruise on Meteor	CD/KL	ASAP
Action 10.1.3	CD/JD to draft a new story for the OFEG website on the recent barter on the James Cook	CD/JD	ASAP
Action 10.1.4	EK to provide some NIOZ news	EK	ASAP
Action 10.1.5	JD/MO to update the links to CSIC ships	JD/MO	ASAP
Action 12.1.1	BT to send new contact details to EK	BT	ASAP
Action 12.2.1	Speak to Mike Webb regarding how the original ship points were calculated.	BW	Next OFEG Meeting
Action 12.2.2	BW to report back to group regarding the ship points and facilitate further discussion	BW	Next OFEG Meeting
Action 12.3.1	Circulate the barter bids document (as updated in the meeting)	BW	ASAP
Action 12.4.1	OQ/EK to propose a date for the next meeting and circulate to members for agreement	OQ/EK	ASAP