National Oceanography Centre

Chief Scientist Guidance Notes

2023

National Marine Facilities



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INTRODUCTION

Dear Colleague

CHIEF SCIENTIST GUIDANCE NOTES

These Guidance Notes have been prepared in order to familiarise you, the prospective senior manager in charge of a research cruise on a NERC research vessel, with your management responsibilities when utilising this major and expensive facility.

The ever-tightening legislative framework within which we and all other shipping organisations are now required to work places a considerable administrative overhead on the planning and operation of each and every cruise. The National Marine Facilities (NMF) are aware of this increased workload and have hopefully provided sufficient detail within these Guidance Notes to ensure that you, together with NMF and the National Oceanography Centre, Southampton, conduct our activities at sea safely and professionally.

NMF operated ships, in common with all other merchant vessels, are accredited to the IMO International Safety Management (ISM) Code and the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code. To achieve and retain this accreditation we have to pay great attention to safety management, vessel security and auditing of all our activities - which involves you and your scientific party in documentation, checklists and, very importantly, risk assessments of all potentially hazardous activities. These risk assessments must originate with the individual or group who will carry out the activity. It cannot be avoided, but we will do all we can to assist you through the whole process.

Our objective is to ensure you achieve the best science you can on your research cruise, by safely and efficiently providing all the supporting services needed to operate the research ships.

Should you have any concerns on any aspect of your research cruise, please contact the NMF programme management team (t: + 44 (0)23 8059 6286, e: nmfops@noc.ac.uk) at the National Oceanography Centre, Southampton and we will respond promptly.

Finally, may I wish you every success on your cruise.

Maaten Furlong
Associate Director National Marine Facilities
National Oceanography Centre



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to Chief Scientists (CS) for the planning and execution of a research cruise on a UKRI vessel managed by NMF and articulate the demarcation of responsibility areas for all aspects of the cruise life cycle.

REFERENCES

The following policy statements are applicable to NOC operated NERC vessels, and should be read in conjunction with these guidance notes.

RESPONSIBILITIES

As CS you shall be responsible to the Captain for the safe conduct of all scientific work onboard the vessel, and for the conduct and behaviour of the scientific party onboard.

The Captain has overall responsibility for the safety of the Ship and all personnel embarked, and shall exercise overriding authority should the Ship, personnel, equipment or environment be put at risk.

The Lead Technician (LT) shall be responsibly to the Captain for the safe operation of all National Marine Equipment Pool (NMEP) equipment onboard the vessel, and for the conduct and behaviour of the technical party onboard.

The Project Manager (PM), assigned when the programme is published, is responsible for the coordination and delivery of your cruise, and acts as the main conduit through which all information is passed.

LIABILITIES

If an accident occurs and you as the CS are deemed to have acted reasonably, and within the guidelines set by UKRI, NERC and NOC, then it is likely that UKRI itself would accept responsibility and defend any civil action. This is true whether you are employed by UKRI or not.

If negligence is claimed against an individual however then they could face a personal prosecution. Any proven liability would be their responsibility alone to meet.



Where a UKRI employed person is acting as CS on a commercial charter contract on a UKRI vessel then they are legally the charter's representative and the liabilities arising will be set out in the contract document. That person is required to confirm with NERC Swindon (Contracts Section) that their legal obligations in relation to UKRI/NERC/NOC are properly documented in the contract. NMF are not responsible for undertaking this check.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR EMBARKATION

All members of the scientific party must obtain and present the following certification to the Ship's Purser on joining the vessel:

- STCW Personal Survival Techniques (PST)
- STCW Proficiency in Designated Security Duties (PDSD) (CS only)
- ENG1 medical certificate or equivalent medical recognized by the Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA)
- Signed Transitional Seafarers Agreement (TSEA), original document only (blank copy available from <u>vmt@noc.ac.uk</u>)
- Valid passport with at least 6 months remaining

Failure to present any of these documents may prevent the individual from sailing on the vessel. Any questions regarding the above requirements should be directed to your PM in good time to allow any appropriate alternatives to be arranged if available.



DIPLOMATIC CLEARANCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

DIPLOMATIC CLEARANCE

Notification Form

It is a requirement under United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) that marine research, undertaken within states Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) or not, goes through a formal approval process. Without such approval the work cannot be undertaken. This is done through a diplomatic clearance notification form, via the UK Foreign and Commonwealth and Development Office (UK FCDO), which is used to promulgate the planned vessel work to the Government of the relevant nation state.

The notification forms are also circulated to the following agencies for information:

- Fisheries Authorities (for avoidance of interference)
- Hydrographic Office (for navigation warnings)
- Ministry of Defence (for military exercise areas)
- Coastguards (for areas of high traffic density)
- Naval authorities
- Subsea cables (for areas of subsea cable installation)

The notification forms must be completed fully and a separate form for each coastal state in whose waters you wish to work, explaining clearly the aims of your research in non-technical language. This should also include details of any waypoints and transects and a clear chart for reference.

It is normal practice for NMF to translate the notification of the form into the working language of the relevant state.



You will receive a copy of the material submitted to the UKFCO. This should be checked to satisfy yourself what has been requested reflects what you intend to do.

Permissions to make a port call are automatically requested by NMF marine operations.

Minimum Notice Required by Foreign States

In this context this means the date of receipt by the foreign state. All foreign states now require a minimum of 6 month's notice, and ideally more where possible. NMF marine operations aim to forward all documentation within two working days of receipt, and the UKFCO require a further five working days to undertake internal checks.

Therefore, all notification forms should be returned to NMF marine operations at least seven months in advance of your cruise.

Responses from Foreign States

The UKFCO normally request our Embassy to run a check on the clearances approximately on month before each cruise. It is normal for the foreign Government to submit a 'Note' giving the response concerning the cruise to the Embassy. This Note is copied to NMF marine operations and subsequently the Captain of the vessel concerned.

Delayed Approval

It is sometimes the case that approval is very late to be issued by the foreign state. NMF and the UKFCO will instigate further chasing action before a cruise if there is no indication of an answer forthcoming. NMF marine operations will immediately transmit in writing any advice received concerning verbal approval of diplomatic clearance. Unless this written approval is received onboard the Captain is not permitted to enter the waters of a foreign state.

Refused or Conditioned Approval

If the response is refusal this must be honoured completely. The Captain will not enter waters for which prior approval is not held. Conditions set by the foreign state, such as embarkation of an observer, or requirement of the ship to make position/intention reports to the foreign authorities, will be arranged by NMF marine operations through the Captain.

Berths for Foreign Observers

Under UNCLOS provisions there is an obligation to offer a foreign state the opportunity of placing an observer onboard for an cruise undertaking work within the countries claimed waters, Where the



possibility of multiple observers occurs, endeavours will be made to minimize the berth problem by requesting a single observer acts for all countries on a neutral basis. This is however at the discretion of each nation state and may not be accepted.

ENVIRONMENTAL PERMITS

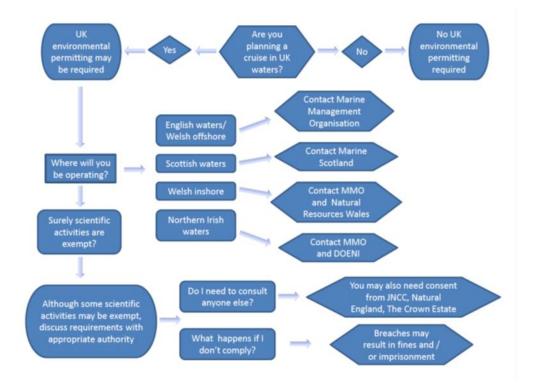
In view of the complexities in determining whether an activity is licensable or exempt, we advise all CS's to make early contact with the appropriate authority. The appropriate authority will depend on where the activity is to be undertaken and so it is vital that you plan in advance what you intend to do and where. The information below gives guidance for activities in UK waters, but you should be aware that different regulations apply outside of the UK.

In areas falling under the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), if having considered the guidance you consider your activities to be exempt, it is possible to submit a <u>Notification of Exempt Activity</u>. In most cases the <u>exemptions</u> have important conditions attached to them. If you are carrying out an exempted activity it is essential you are aware of these conditions and comply with them. Non-exempt activities may not be subject to the full licensing process, but may be eligible for <u>fast tracking</u>.

A licence is not the same as consent. Completing an exemption form does not necessarily fulfil all consenting and licensing requirements. Consent may still be required from <u>other authorities</u>, such as Natural England or Crown Estate.

Exemption, licensing and consent requirements also differ between UK nations, therefore early contact with the appropriate authorities is advised.





Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species and Wild Fauna Flora (CITES) licences are issued to individual scientists, not to the science project. This process is not facilitated or controlled by NMF. It is relevant when a collected sample that is CITES controlled is shipped to or from our vessels. The import/export paperwork will be required to provide details of the CITES licence under which the movement is being covered.

MARINE MAMMAL OBSERVERS

For certain activities it is necessary to complete observation watches for the presence of marine mammals, and where the capability exists, scaled equipment start protocols (soft start) to build to full signal strength may be required. Some measures are required by law by the nation state, others are considered best practice and will be implemented by NMF as a matter of course. Marine mammal observation watches are required as standard for seismic operations and use of hydroacoustic suite onboard, but may also be required for other equipment, including third party equipment.

Any marine mammal mitigation measures required beyond those listed in the NMF MMO acoustics procedure will be directed by the Marine Environment Impact Assessment (MEIP), and the licence/diplomatic clearance conditions of the nation state.

Certain activities such as seismic operations require marine mammal observers (MMOs) to undergo formal training. The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) maintains a <u>list of approved</u> training providers.



NMF will not routinely provide MMOs therefore it is your responsibility to ensure sufficient qualified personnel are allocated from the scientific party. You are recommended to discuss the MMO requirements for your cruise with your PM early to ensure any training courses needed can be completed in good time. The JNCC <u>marine mammal recording forms</u> can be found on the JNCC website.



HEALTH AND SAFETY

INTRODUCTION

Full information concerning the details of all safety equipment provided onboard the ship is contained in the Safety Management System (SMS), and the ship's safety training manual. The SMS is an online database that can be accessed at sea and ashore by NMF staff, and multiple copies of the safety training manual are available onboard. Details of safety requirements can also be found in the "Welcome Aboard" brochures in each cabin.

As the person in charge of the scientific party onboard you are responsible for ensuring that all members of the scientific party are aware of their legal obligations and requirements regarding safety.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Ships Officers will deliver a formal period of pre-sailing safety familiarisation and briefing for all scientific staff. This is a mandatory requirement under the International Safety Management code (ISM) and will be recorded.

All personnel must, as the highest priority, familiarise themselves with the ships emergency signal and procedures, be aware of their muster point and appointed lifeboat station. Emergency drills and exercises will routinely be carried out onboard, with a lifeboat drill required within the first 24 hours. These are mandatory according to the ISM code and necessary to assure everyone's safety, but best endeavours will be made to schedule them around the scientific activities.

PERSONAL SAFETY EQUIPMENT

An approved lifejacket is supplied in the cabinet at the lifeboat muster stations on the Discovery and in cabins on James Cook. The ship supplies additional specialised equipment such as safety harnesses and lifejackets fort certain deck work activities. A demonstration of the proper use of lifejackets will be given during the safety familiarisation onboard, and as required for any specialised safety equipment.

Provision of protective headgear, footwear and appropriate working apparel for the scientific party is the responsibility of each individual in the party.



SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

The ships safety officer is the Chief Engineer, assisted by the Chief Officer. The marine and technical staff embarked are there to assist you and the scientific party in undertaking their work in a safe and effective manner.

As CS you will be co-opted on the ships safety committee for the period you are embarked. This forum, chaired by the Captain, has a mandate under the Merchant Shipping Act, to discuss and formally report on all aspects of occupational health and safety onboard.

You are required to maintain an overview of all scientific operations and agree with the Captain the responsibilities for safe use of over side equipment. This responsibility begins at the earliest planning stage. Particularly with new tasks, or in unfamiliar circumstances, every stage of the proposed work must be thought through and prepared for, and everyone concerned must understand what is expected. This includes the writing of risk assessments (RAs), safe operating procedures (SOPs) and COSHH assessments.

Discussion of any new or unfamiliar aspects of the scientific programme with the Captain should be prioritised at the earliest opportunity, so as far as possible any potential problems can be anticipated and mitigated in good time. During the cruise you should bring to the Captains attention and changes in circumstance, conditions or requirements that may effect the safety of operations, equipment and personnel onboard, so appropriate changes to precautions and procedures can be made.

Deployment and recovery work is generally the most hazardous part of any operation, and it is essential the weather and sea conditions are assessed before commencing. This includes assessing forecasts for expected conditions at the point of planned recovery. Planned evolutions will be discussed between yourself, the Captain, the LT and the Chief Petty Officer Science (CPOS), however the Captain will make the final decision to proceed or not.

For all load-bearing applications, shackles, rings and wire terminations must be proof tested and certified and appropriate for the load to be borne. Copies of any test certificates must be presented to the Chief Officer prior to usage.

SCIENTIFIC WORKSHOPS

Both vessels have dedicated scientific workshops onboard. Use of the scientific workshop and the machinery within it is strictly managed by the LT.

NEAR MISS AND ACCIDENT REPORTING

Any accident, near miss, dangerous occurrence or observation should be reported, no matter how trivial. What may appear to be a minor or innocuous event at the time may have wider ramifications



than immediately obvious. Hazcom forms can be found throughout the vessels to do so, along with reporting via any of the Officers onboard. Copies of accident reports will be passed to the employers of individuals involved.

HOURS OF WORK AND REST

The maximum working hours for any individual shall not normally exceed an average of 12 of and 24 hour period, or 84 hours during any rolling seven day period. The statutory hours of rest minimum for all seafarers, including embarked scientists, are 10 hours of rest in any 24 hour period and 77 hours in any rolling seven day period, The 10 hours of rest in any 24 hour period may be divided into no more than two periods; one of which should be at least six hours long, and the interval in between should not exceed 14 hours.

It is recognised that occasions arise where it might be appropriate to exceed a standard working period of 12 hours. Staff may undertake duties arising under certain circumstances, but the minimum hours of rest must still be met in these circumstances with compensatory rest.

SCHEDULE OF DUTIES

A schedule of duties must be produced and posted setting out the hours of work and rest periods for all working onboard. It is your responsibility to produce the schedule of duties for all members of the scientific party.

RECORDING HOURS OF REST

Every individual must record their hours of rest onboard using the onboard ISF watchkeeper system. As CS you must monitor the scientific parties hours of rest during the cruise, and ensure their records are correctly recorded. These records may be requested as part of a Port State or Flag State inspection of the vessel, and failure to comply with the hours of rest recording requirements may cause action to be taken against Captain and NMF, and prevent the ship from sailing.

WATCHKEEPING

Personnel may or not be required to work within a watchkeeping system whilst onboard, and this is normally determined by the scientific programme. Although it is not always possible to predict such requirements in advance, the workload should be discussed at the cruise planning meeting, and subsequently as appropriate in meetings ashore and onboard.

The marine personnel watchkeeping times normally follow the schedule below, with ships routines such as meal times set to this schedule that will not be altered. Different watchkeeping routines should take in to account these timings.

0001 - 0400, 0400 - 0800, 0800 - 1200, 1200 - 1600, 1600 - 2000, 2000 - 2359



DANGEROUS GOODS AND HAZARDOUS ITEMS

The handling and transport of dangerous goods are covered by international law. One month prior to mobilisation you will be required to inform the PM of your intended equipment manifest and shipping arrangements to and from the vessel. <u>Government guidance</u> alongside the NOC transport of dangerous goods procedure will be used to advise any specific requirements for your cruise.

RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS

If there is a radionuclide component to your research, you will be asked to nominate a suitably qualified and experienced member of the scientific party to take charge of the safe storage, use and disposal of radioactive substances whilst onboard.



CRUISE PLANNING PROCESS

PLANNING TIMELINE

PM assigned for your cruise and initial contact
and discussions
Online access to the Marine Facilities Planning
Portal (MFP) if not already held
Applications for clearance to work delivered to
NMF marine operations office
Detailed cruise planning with your PM using the MFP
System questionnaire meeting with your PM
confirming the NMEP and ships fitted
equipment required.
Formal cruise planning meeting held for
technical discussions on cruise details and
agreement on resources and support. The
provisional cruise agreement signed by yourself
and your PM
Port agent appointed
You (CS) to send RA and COSHH
assessments, scientific party equipment lists to
your PM
Final cruise agreement signed by yourself and
your PM
You (CS) to complete the list of scientific party
participants on the MFP and cabin allocation
İsit
Scientific party attends the vessel to mobilise
the equipment. Mobilisation managed by your
PM.
Scientific party joins the vessel
Safety briefing and familiarisation onboard

DOCUMENTATION

The following documentation will be sent to you shortly after the cruise officer has been accepted:

- Blank notification forms for diplomatic clearance application(s)
- Scientific research cruise participants handbook



The following documentation must be completed and returned to your PM:

- RAs for all scientific activities onboard, and any associated SOPs.
- Detailed list of chemicals and hazardous goods
- COSHH assessments for any hazardous materials onboard
- Detailed scientific party equipment manifest (user supplied equipment)
- Final list of scientific party participants
- Cabin allocation list

USER SUPPLIED EQUIPMENT

For operational, security and customs reasons, it is necessary to have the comprehensive list of your equipment onboard, with particular reference to the weight and dimensions, and hazardous classifications.

To meet merchant shipping legislation, all lifting points must be clearly marked and tested with evidence of such testing available to the ship and will not be loaded onboard without it. The provision of any test certificates and any special handling or stowage needs should be discussed at the cruise planning meeting or directly with your PM.

INSURANCE

NERC is a non-insuring body, however it does insure the ships for hull and machinery, it's staff and the equipment they carry.

Should non-NERC employees require personal insurance for the period they are onboard and the transit to and from the vessel, they should make their own arrangements as deemed appropriate by their employer. All those embarking are advised to check they possess adequate personal insurance cover, and that their employer recognises this liability of their insurance.

For user supplied equipment, the owners should satisfy themselves that their employer as sufficient insurance in place to cover the transit to and from the vessel and use onboard.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

You are responsible for the travel arrangements for all members of the scientific party to and from the sailing/docking destination(s), however those details should be passed to the NMF marine operations team in good time to allow arrangements for transfer to/from the vessel to be made. The agent should only have one point of contact for travel, NMF marine operations, to avoid confusion.

The costs associated with travel requirements for non-NMF staff rests with yourself and the cruise budget. One night's hotel accommodation ashore for the scientific party is normally accounted for as part of the cruise costing.



Other than joining and leaving the vessel, interim transport will be the responsibility of the individual unless, at the Captains discretion, the local security situation requires other arrangements to be made.

Any costs incurred beyond those already agreed in the cruise planning process may not be presented for several months if the Agency disbursement account is complex.

Non-UK scientists must ensure their immigration documents permit multiple entries and exits from the UK if they are joining or leaving a ship. For foreign ports, liaise with NMF marine operations who will seek guidance from the agent.

ACCOMMODATION ONBOARD

You will be allocated a single cabin with a day room to use as an office. All other scientific staff will be accommodated in single berth cabins. It has proven beneficial to the efficiency and continuity of the service provision to ensure certain cabins are assigned to NMF technical staff exclusively.

Both vessels have 54 berths; 22 assigned for crew and the remaining 32 for the scientific and technical parties. The number of technical party berths required is entirely dependent upon the technical requirements of your cruise, however on average eight berths are required (six technicians plus two trainees), therefore nominally 24 scientific party berths are available.

It will be for yourself and your PM to agree technical and scientific staff numbers and berths and assign cabins accordingly.

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Public engagement using the range of mediums available is actively encouraged. Early in the planning process it is advised to discuss your cruise communications plan with the NOC communications team. They will be able to assist in both the planning and execution of cruise public engagement, but also provide guidance on lines to take if there are any sensitivities around the cruise location or conduct to be considered.



CRUISE CONDUCT

JOINING A SHIP

It is usually the case that the scientific party will join the ship the day prior to sailing. Until this time you should make arrangements for your party to be accommodated ashore. The reason for this is to permit the ships staff to prepare the hotel facilities properly. There will usually be opportunity for scientific staff to attend the ship prior to actually joining to facilitate their equipment preparation, and arrangements for this should be made vie your PM.

All your staff will find an explanatory 'Welcome Aboard' booklet in their cabin explaining safety, meal routines, domestic facilities and scientific support services. You are recommended to encourage your team to familiarise themselves with this information.

MOBILISATION

The programme will include several days for mobilisation and demobilisation at the beginning and end of your cruise. At the cruise planning meeting the requirements for these periods will have been discussed and a provisional plan agreed that will be refined as the cruise approaches.

Approximately two weeks prior to sailing a port programme will be produced and circulated, along with the final cruise agreement. It will give a detailed plan for the activities required throughout the mobilisation period for scientific, technical and marine evolutions.

The most appropriate method of delivery and loading of user supplied equipment will be discussed and agreed during the cruise planning process.

A detailed deck plan will be produced by your PM and agreed by the Captain before publication to ensure there is adequate space and ship stability considerations have been assessed.

Once all equipment is loaded you will be asked to sign a declaration that the equipment lists supplied are a 'true and representative record of the equipment loaded, to the extent that any omissions shall not prejudice the safety of the vessel nor those onboard and shall not have the potential to pollute the environment.



BRIEFING THE CAPTAIN AND TEAM

You will be required to brief the Captain at the earliest convenient opportunity regarding your cruise intentions, working requirements, tracks, diplomatic clearances and environmental licences, and the required employment of the marine and technical staff onboard. Of particular importance is the confirmation of your first scientific station or starting point of a line or transect, ideally before the start of the mobilisation, to allow the Bridge Officers to plan the navigation. The Captain must produce a passage plan prior to departing the embarkation port under the ISM code.

You may also be asked to provide a short explanatory talk to the crew and technical team about the work you intend to do. The more the onboard team know about your aims and objectives of your research, the more proactively they will be able to assist.

DEMOBILISATION

All your own equipment should be packed, with each package individually marked and ready for unloading before the ship arrives at the final port, as the turnaround time for the proceeding cruise or passage is likely to be short. For any packages being shipped from the vessel you should ensure the dispatch address is clearly shown and each case has a typed list of contents inside it, with a copy available for customs. This must show:

- Item weight in kgs
- Item value in sterling,
- Item country of origin

All return shipping requests should be passed to the LT, who will liaise with the Purser and ships agent as required. Any shipment costs may be recharged to the cruise project.

When shipping freight to the UK arrangements must be made for the entire journey otherwise goods will be delayed at the point of entry to the UK. Where you may be unavailable after your cruise for holiday etc, you should ensure someone from your parent institute is aware of the freight arrangements. If NMF facilities are used to ship your equipment the same requirements still apply. As with delivery and loading of equipment, please discuss your return freight needs with your PM.

You may wish to request some of user suppled equipment is carried as cargo for periods before and after your cruise. This should be discussed with your PM during the cruise planning process. NMF reserve the right to make a charge for the carriage of unaccompanied user suppled equipment as cargo.

If you require any temperature-controlled shipping, you should discuss this with your PM during the cruise planning process.



POST CRUISE REQUIREMENTS

NERC SWINDON REQUIREMENTS

A copy of your full cruise report should be sent to the addresses below as soon as possible after the cruise. Failure to do so may affect allocation of future ship time.

Marine Planning Office
Natural Environment Research Council
Polaris House
North Star Avenue
Swindon
Wiltshire
SN2 1EU

Director of Science Programmes
Polaris House
North Star Avenue
Swindon
Wiltshire
SN2 1EU

NMF REQUIREMENTS

You are required to complete a Post Cruise Assessment (PCA) on the MFP at the end of each cruise, ideally following a discussion and debrief onboard to ensure all appropriate comments are included. These forms are reviewed in detail within NMF and during the Cruise Programme Review Group (CPRG), forming an essential part of NMFs continuous improvement, and formally, assurance NMF is delivering on the service it is commissioned to offer. A response will be sent to you with advice on any corrective actions taken or explanations required from the points you raise.



UK FCDO REQUIREMENTS

Cruise reports will by default be sent to the UKFCDO by NMF. Dependent on the terms of any diplomatic clearances for your cruise, you may also be required to submit a copy of your cruise report and data collected to a foreign state.

CRUISE DATA

British Oceanographic Data Centre (BODC) require a cruise summary report form plus a track chart and cruise report as soon as possible after your cruise is completed, and subsequently the cruise data disk and documentation for data banking. These should be sent to:

British Oceanographic Data Centre
Proudman Oceanographic Library
Joseph Proudman building
6 Brownlow Street,
Liverpool
L3 5DA



National Oceanography Centre, European Way, Southampton, SO14 3ZH United Kingdom +44 (0)23 8059 6666

Joseph Proudman Building, 6 Brownlow Street, Liverpool, L3 5DA United Kingdom +44 (0)151 795 4800

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