

**Expedition Log for IODP Expedition 325**  
**Week 6**  
**Great Barrier Reef Environmental Changes**

**25<sup>th</sup> March 2010**

**Staff Scientist Role by Sophie Green**

The Staff Scientist role encompasses a wide range of duties and skills across the board, ranging from answering technical and scientific questions to social and travel arrangements! Carol Cotterill is the Staff Scientist on Expedition 325 and I am here as Trainee Staff Scientist to learn all I can from her.

My involvement in this project started last year when Carol asked if I'd be interested in getting involved as Trainee Staff Scientist. Of course, escaping the UK in winter for the Great Barrier Reef had nothing to do with my decision! Following this, I went to Carol's office to talk through 'a few things'. This turned out to be long lists of things to do and numerous complex spreadsheets. A good hour later I emerged feeling somewhat daunted but also excited to be involved.

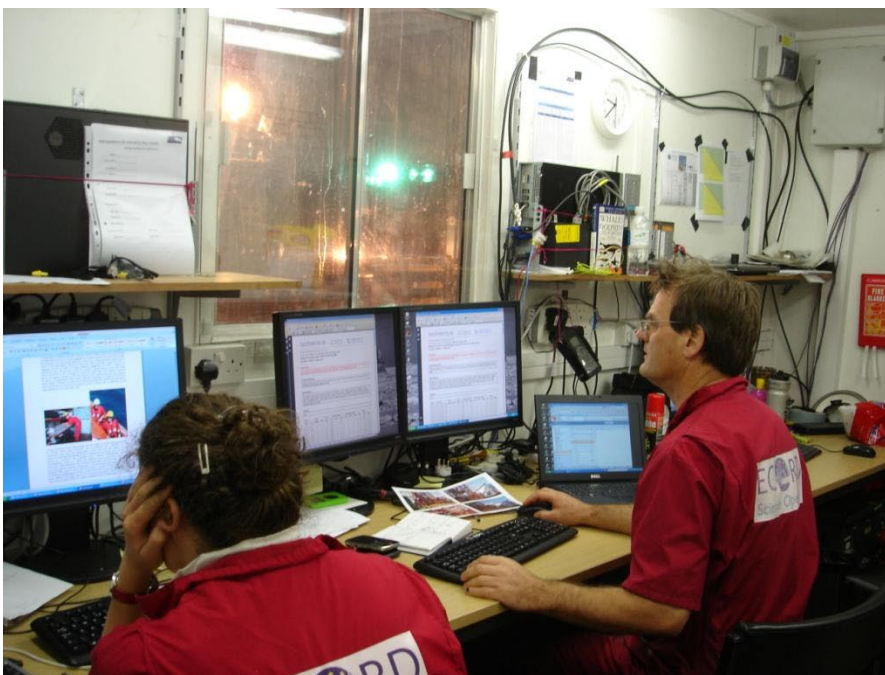
Carol's role involves coordination of the science party prior to, and throughout the offshore and onshore phases of the Expedition, and then making sure that publishing commitments are honoured during the moratorium period in which the science party have sole access to the samples collected. In addition, the Staff Scientist is involved in compiling and submitting the Scientific Prospectus for IODP approval and publication, applying for permits, coordinating visas and travel arrangements as well as scientific planning and outreach, monitoring staffing costs offshore, arranging scientific meetings and discussions whilst offshore....the list is seemingly endless! As our start date approached, the 'things to do' lists grew, seemingly in direct correlation to the time getting shorter, and we were busied ourselves with final arrangements. Eventually, after a few false starts and minor catastrophes, we all made it to Townsville and on to the Greatship Maya.

Once onboard the Staff Scientist continues to play a crucial role in maintaining a link between Scientists and Operations staff to make sure everyone remains informed of what's going on and ensuring the project is on course to meet its scientific aims and objectives, as well as ensuring that all IODP policies relating to minimum measurements are adhered to. Making sure the Scientists are happy seems to raise a surprising variety of questions ranging from technical questions on drilling and sample requests to 'how will I cut my hair on board?' and 'do we have to bring our own toothpaste?' Some questions are easier to answer than others!



Caption: Y\_Yokoyama@ECORD\_IODP: Carol takes the Scientists on a tour of the ESO containers at the start of the Expedition.

The Staff Scientist is also responsible coordinating a range of reports offshore. Daily reports detailing the core recovery rates, technical problems and issues and scientific findings are produced. Weekly reviews are also written and a methodology report of the procedures undertaken during the offshore phase is also being put together. In addition, we produce informal blog entries and more formal Expedition Logbook entries that (hopefully) keep the wider general public informed about what we are doing and life onboard an IODP Expedition.



Caption: D\_Wallis@ECORD\_IODP: Sophie works on the Expedition Logbook while Dave looks a bit alarmed at something he's just read (weather forecast maybe!).



Caption: D\_Potts@ECORD\_IODP: Sophie and Graham master the HD video camera to shot some outreach footage

Aside from this we've tried to keep people happy off shift. At the moment we're attempting to run a Darts competition, although recent weather conditions have conspired against us (throwing sharp objects on a rocking ship is never going to be a good idea!).



Caption:  
M\_Mowat@ECORD\_IODP  
: Alex (ESO core curator)  
and P.K (Bluestone Driller)  
at the Dart board.

On this Expedition Carol and I are also responsible for deploying the CTD instrument to measure a range of parameters including conductivity, temperature and depth. This involves enlisting some volunteers to help

deploy the CTD over the side of the ship using a winch. This is generally undertaken a couple of times on each shift as long as the weather is OK, the ship isn't moving

and there aren't any sharks about! The data collected should give the scientists an idea of the modern day water column conditions at the different sites we have worked at.



Caption:

D\_Potts@ECORD\_IO

DP: Carol during CTD deployment.

Whilst we continue to work offshore, the planning for the Onshore Science Party in Bremen is already underway. Here a larger group of Scientists work on the cores collected, each with specialist knowledge of a

particular discipline. This will take place later in the year and present a whole new array of challenges for the Staff Scientist and ESO Team!