Expedition Log for IODP Expedition 325
Week 2
Great Barrier Reef Environmental Changes

20th February 2010

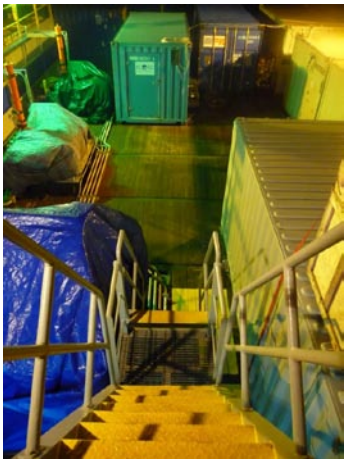
Data Management on the Expedition by Mary Mowat

Along with Colin Graham, I am one of the data managers on the expedition. I work midday to midnight and Colin works the opposite shift. Our job is to look after the IT equipment; servers, database and network required for the expedition and make sure that it's all running smoothly.

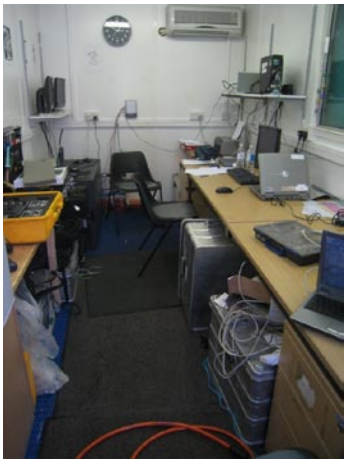
C_Cotterill@ECORD/IODP - Mary gets to grips with a faulty laptop

C_Cotterill@ECORD/IODP - Colin assists with deployment of the camera

All the information collected during the expedition needs to be recorded and stored. We manage some of this information in a database - the Drilling Information System (DIS). Colin and I assist with the data entry and help sort out any problems. We also check that the correct information is being entered. The Database Container is situated on the aft main deck (right at the back of the ship) down the stairs from the other containers and drill floor which are on the mezzanine level.



C_Cotterill@ECORD/IODP – The Database Container

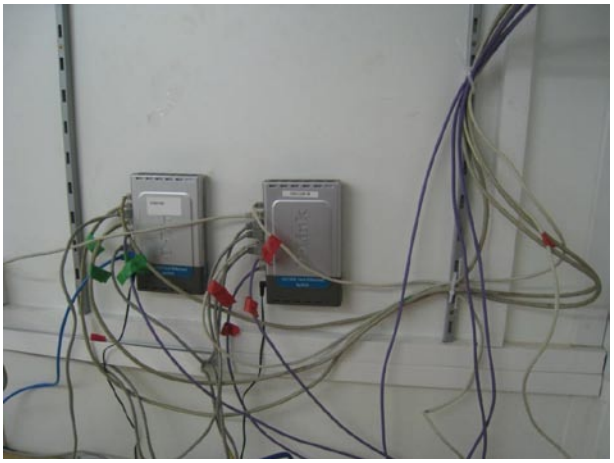


M_Mowat@ECORD/IODP – Inside the Database Container

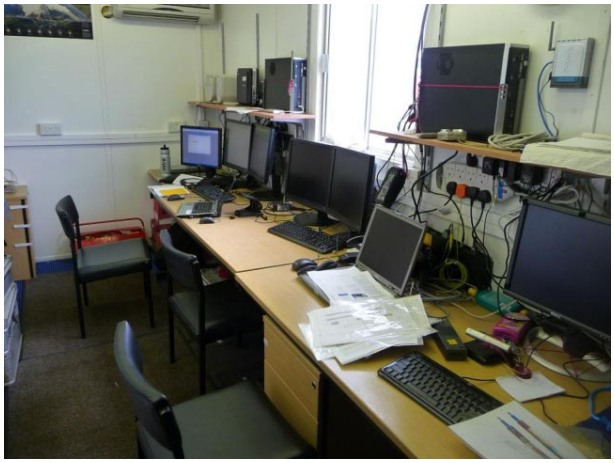
Inside the container, there are two servers (one live and a backup in case it fails) located in a rack at the back. These are linked up to computers in all the other containers. Fortunately the container has air conditioning. The Database Container also doubles up as an Electrical Engineering Workshop so it can be a bit of an obstacle course at times!

M_Mowat@ECORD/IODP – Dave Wallis fixing the down-hole camera cable

We have two networks: a wireless network for internet (although it's not quite superfast broadband speed) and a data network to connect to the servers and database. This means we end up with lots of cables running between the containers.



M_Mowat@ECORD/IODP – Network cables and switches



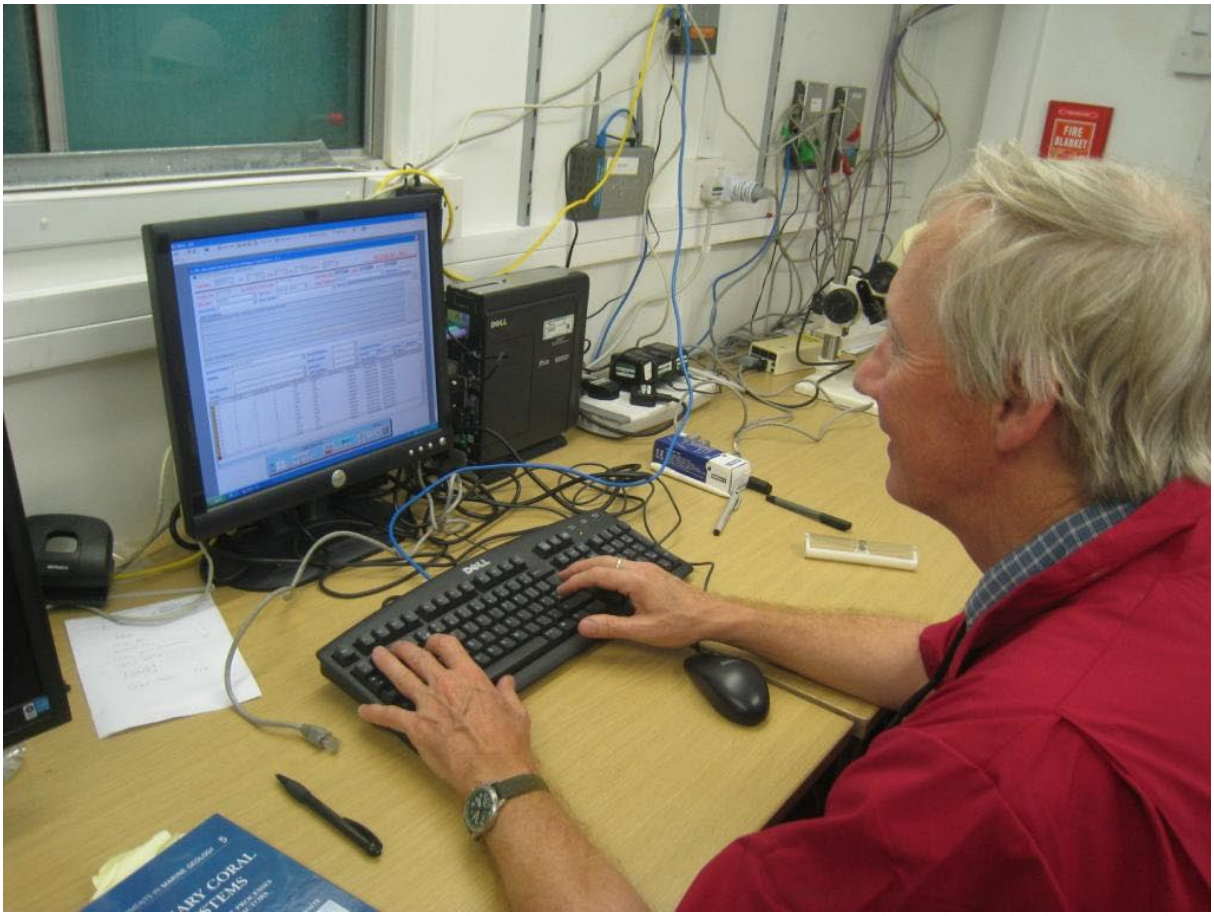
C_Cotterill@ECORD/IODP – The ESO Office Container has many computers

Once a core has been recovered on deck, it is curated by one of the core curators, Alex or Christian, in the Curation Container. They enter information relating to the core run and the length of core material recovered into the DIS. If any samples are taken from the core such as pieces of coral for dating or water samples for chemical analysis, this information is also entered in the DIS.

After the core has been curated, it is then passed to the sedimentologists and coral specialists who examine and describe it.

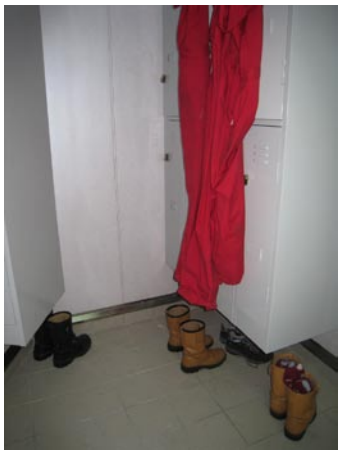
M_Mowat@ECORD/IODP – Juan-Carlos Braga describing some coral

Once they have described the core, they enter this information into the DIS.



M_Mowat@ECORD/IODP – Graham Lott entering a core section description into the DIS

Life onboard the Greatship Maya (which is a brand new ship) is not too bad. When we go off shift we ditch our working gear in the lockers before heading upstairs.



M_Mowat@ECORD/IODP – The girls' locker room (probably not quite as smelly as the boys')

The food is good and varied and there is good cake. But Colin would really like some ice cream!! Please!

M_Mowat@ECORD/IODP – Good cake

There's a lounge where we can watch movies and there's also a gym onboard with a running machine, two exercise bikes, a rowing machine and some weights. The ceiling is quite low for some of the taller people if using the running machine on an incline!

M_Mowat@ECORD/IODP – To work off the cake

Currently, there’s not too much to see from the ship apart from the occasional minke whale or sunset/sunrise.

M_Koelling@ECORD/IODP – Sunrise