

14.3 Bathysnap deployments

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D285



This gear is a time-lapse camera mooring consisting of an Oceancam 6000s camera and flash, fibreglass mounting frame, release unit and associated weight and buoyancy package. Two of these moorings were planned to be deployed, one each at the two benthic study areas of M5 and M6.

Prior to deployment two release units were wire tested satisfactorily and both cameras were checked. Unfortunately one camera was found to be faulty. After many e-mail consultations with SOC and much cursing a loose grub screw allowing the feed spool to slip was discovered and rectified. However the problems did not end. The camera then locked up, continuing to try to take photos even without power! Eventually the problem cleared and the camera appeared to function normally on the bench.

At the time of the planned first deployment at M5 the camera that had been causing problems was plugged into the flash and did nothing. Even a faulty camera should indicate that it is not functioning correctly. This camera will be returned to the UK for further investigation and a replacement has been requested for Port Elizabeth for deployment on the following cruise. The second camera was fitted to the frame and was successfully deployed. It will take pictures every eight hours for a year and be recovered around Christmas 2005.

Station number	15509 M5
Position	48° 59.81'S 51° 28.67'E
Depth	4202m (uncorrected)
Release unit	Mors S/N 283

D286

Following problems with one camera on D285 a spare unit was flown out to Port Elizabeth for deployment at M6. Unfortunately this unit had recently undergone repairs and had not been pressure tested, nor were any of the working components compatible with any of those from the broken unit. To avoid pressure testing at sea the camera housing from the broken unit was modified to take the new camera. This also obviated the need to splice a new wiring harness.

After some teething troubles a working system was established on the bench with scrap film. However, during loading of the new film the problematic latches again sprang off and consequently the clutches took a lot of rejigging to get the camera to operate successfully. Eventually a working system was established and left running on deck for several days prior to deployment. It will take pictures every eight hours for a year and be recovered around Christmas 2005.

Station number	15583 M6
Position	46° 00.59'S 56° 07.37'E
Depth	4264m (uncorrected)
Release unit	Mors S/N 386