

RONMAC Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
Antigua, Guatemala
Monday, May 14 2001

Attending the meeting were representatives from CRRH (Max Campos, Alejandro Gutierrez, Jim Navarro), NOAA/NOS (Douglas Martin, Thomas Landon) and the OAS (Lee Chapin, Sasha Beth Gottlieb).

1. Review of RONMAC Activities to date

Five stations have been installed:

- Acajutla, El Salvador
- Puerto Quetzal, Guatemala
- Puerto Cortes, Honduras
- Corinto, Nicaragua
- Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua

Spare parts, calibration equipment, and one functional test system have been shipped to CRRH. Lee Chapin also has one functional test system. The remainder of the equipment is still at Vitel, Inc. in Chantilly, Virginia. Some stations are still having difficulties. These are being investigated and remedied. RONMAC has 16 sets of gages/met sensors plus spare parts. Jim Navarro and Lee Chapin will distribute the eight sets of PCs transferred from NOAA to OAS as they visit the stations this summer.

2. Remaining Installation Schedule

El Salvador

- A station will be installed at La Union (Gulf of Fonseca); installation schedule will depend on completion of port reconstruction.
- A station will be installed for the NWS project in the Rio Lempa. It would be beneficial for Luis Hernandez to participate in the NWS installation. RONMAC Project will request his attendance from the director of the IGN.
- The Port Authorities (CEP) should be included in the installations.
- RONMAC should collaborate with Jorge Cabrera, the SICA staff person coordinating the Rio Lempa project for SICA/USAID.

Guatemala

- A station will be installed in Santo Tomas de Castilla (Caribbean Coast). The ports authority has indicated that this installation would be beneficial for them.

Honduras

- The Isla del Cisne (Swan Island) is being considered an installation. The Honduran government will be consulted regarding this installation. Tom Landon will send copies of any historical data to CRRH and OAS.

Nicaragua

- Initially, there are no plans for an additional installation in Nicaragua, although there is some consideration being paid to Bluefields.

3. Establishment of the Data Quality Control Laboratory (LABCODAT)

A ground station and calibration station will be installed at the Universidad Nacional in Costa Rica by the end of August. This will be in the newly-established Data Quality Control Laboratory (LABCODAT). Calibration equipment has been sent from Vitel to Costa Rica. Additional equipment (a satellite dish) will be sent down in the next two weeks. An antenna mount needs to be installed. Two people will be responsible for the data (Jim Navarro and Daniel Ballestro). Additionally, students from the School of Informatics will assist with the data. Tom Landon will check with NWS on the format for sampling precipitation data.

There will be a handing over ceremony in Costa Rica to commemorate the installation of the ground station and the inauguration of the LABCODAT. Included in the ceremony should be the Dra. Sonia Marta Mora, Presidente, Universidad Nacional.

Jim Navarro will be accompanying Lee Chapin to Trinidad in June for training on the installation of a ground station. This training will be provided by Lee Chapin and technicians from Vitel, the station manufacturer.

4. Planned Capacity Building Activities

a. NOAA Training in US

The NOAA training in the US will be for a limited and select group of people. At this point, participants considered are Jim Navarro and Luis Hernandez. NOAA is providing RONMAC with flexibility to determine the format and participants in this training.

b. Technical Workshop

Decisions regarding the next technical workshop will be made following the completion of this workshop.

5. Budget Plans for RONMAC Stations Maintenance to present to National Counterparts

Lee Chapin and Jim Navarro will provide Max Campos with this information. He will discuss this with the national counterparts.

6. MOU with CRRH regarding Sustainability Activities

Max Campos and Sasha Gottlieb reviewed the MOU and will implement changes.

7. Future of RONMAC

a. Expansion of the Network (increased density in participating countries and expansion to new countries)

Panama – The Smithsonian Institution has purchased gauges and needs assistance and expertise regarding installation, maintenance, and data.

b. Other Proposals?

- CRRH has submitted a proposal to the European Union that would provide support for RONMAC and assist in making it a self-sufficient operation.
- CRRH has submitted a proposal to the Tawianese Government to produce fundamental data sets for the region and for data recuperation. The per-country allocation is expected to be US\$70K per country.
- Climate change funds are being managed by UNDP (Bo Ling).

- GOOS-IOCaribe has already considered a GOOS-type proposal. Alejandro Gutierrez will provide us with a copy of this proposal.

8. Other Issues

Real-time data

Questions were raised regarding RONMAC liability on information being transmitted real-time. Sasha Gottlieb will speak with the OAS Legal Department to determine appropriate course of action. OAS and NOAA will remove any links to station data from web-sites until further notice.

Regional Standardization of Data

There is a concern that there is no regional standardization of data. Max Campos and Jim Navarro will communicate with each country to determine the standards being used.