

Project Name: St. Croix Underwater Range Expansion

Author: Tony Parisi

Organizations/People Involved:

FPO-1: CDR Parisi, Ted Jones, Keith Cooper

UCT ONE:

SEACON

Date: 1986

Project Summary:

FPO-1, in support to the Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIRSYSCOM), installed sixteen hydrophones and two underwater communications systems (UQC) in over 15,000 feet of seawater at the Atlantic Fleet Weapons Training Facility (AFWTF), St. Croix, USVI. The project expanded the AFWTF underwater tracking range and acoustic ship-to-shore communication system, significantly increasing the tracking range capability. It was the first installation of fleet tracking range hardware in this depth of water

The overall program manager for the SOAR Project was Director, Range Instrumentation Division (AIR-630) of the Naval Air Systems Command. The Naval Underwater Systems Center (NUSC) was assigned as the Technical Direction Agent for the project. NUSC managed procurement of installable components and provided technical direction of the installation sites. FPO-1 managed the in-water portion supported by UCT ONE.

SEACON was towed to NAVSTA Roosevelt Roads where it was met by the UCT ONE and FPO-1 team. After mobilization and initial cable loading, SEACON transited to St. Croix for the installation. For each hydrophone, SEACON was positioned over the designated hydrophone position. The hydrophone structure, with an anchor and line attached, was lowered on its cable. When the structure reached the bottom, SEACON transited along the designated track toward the shore landing site. The orientation of the structure during landing and cable lay was monitored with instrumentation secured to the structure. Data were received through the hydrophone cable. Once SEACON was close to shore, it maintained position offshore while the remaining cable was deployed and pulled ashore, with floats attached by UCT ONE. Divers then removed the floats so the cable would settle on the sea bottom. The process was repeated for the remaining fifteen hydrophones and two UQCs. UCT ONE conducted an underwater inspection of the shore end of all the cables. SEACON returned to Roosevelt Road Naval Air Station on several occasions to reload undersea cable.

Once all the hydrophones and UQCs were installed, SEACON and the rest of the team returned to Roosevelt Roads for demobilization. SEACON was then towed back to Fort Lauderdale.

Project Report Link: none