TRIPS TO VANUATU, TUVALU AND TONGA UNDER THE WAVE ENERGY PROGRAM

Vanuatu: 10-17 September 1992
Tuvalu: 19-21 September 1992
Tonga: 24 September -3 October 1992

by
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VANUATU WAVE BUOY DEPLOYMENT TRIP  
10-17 September 1992

Arrived Thursday 10th September. Dropped my luggage at the hotel. Went up to the Geology Head Office and met Cedric Mortimer. He briefed me on the mooring preparations. Went down to the drilling depot where the equipment was stored and checked them out for my own interest. I must mention here that Willie had done an excellent job in preparing the mooring equipment.

The next day Willie and I checked out the availability of the patrol boat Tukoro. We were told that the Tukoro would be made ready for us on Monday the 14th September and the sailing time would be 0900 hours. We wanted to load the Wave Buoy and all the mooring gear, but was told by the captain of the Tukoro that the crane was still being assembled after repairs. We then went back to PWD and cancelled the hiab truck which had been arranged to load our wave buoy from the drilling depot to the Naval Jetty, and booked the hiab truck again for early Monday morning. We then pulled out the braided nylon rope from its packing and measured out the length for double check. It was exactly as indicated by the manufacture. We then chopped off 30 m leaving 450 m for the mooring. We then recoiled the complete length in four separate bundles linked together.

At about 0730 hours on Monday the 14th of September Willie and I got the PWD hiab truck and transported the wave rider buoy and the mooring gear to the naval jetty. By 0815 hours all equipment was loaded on board the Tukoro stern deck. We started the hook-up right away and by the time the vessel left the berth, the whole mooring with the wave buoy was completely linked up. I set a course for the GPS and by 1115 hours we were on the location. We circled for about 20 minutes trying to get the echo sounder to give me an indication on the depth, but it never did. So referring to the ship's chart and the location we were at, I decided to start deploying the wave buoy. With all the gear out floating except the anchor we circled a few more minutes till the GPS indicated our correct location and referring back to the chart, which read 480-500 metres depth, I dropped the anchor. We circled the location for about 30 minutes giving the anchorage ample time to settle before taking the final reading of the actual location.

We returned to base at about 1615 hours. Off loaded the remaining gears and stored them at the drillers workshop. Drove up to the Head Office and sent a fax to Egil Olsen and a copy to Jim Eade, relaying the new location of the wave buoy.

On Tuesday the 15th September, I went down to the drillers' workshop and took stock of the remaining mooring items which could come in useful when deploying the directional buoy in early November. In the afternoon Willie and I started preparing anchors for the above. By Wednesday, Willie and I had collected sufficient material for the anchor, so by 3 pm I had time to confirm my flight back to Fiji (Nadi) through Air Pacific.
TUVALU BORROW PIT PROJECT
19-21 September 1992

Arrived Funafuti on the 19th of September. Had a brief discussion with Tapaeko regarding the
dredging operation. Went down to the barge and workboat and inspected the equipment. Later I was
told by Tapaeko that a meeting of the advisory committee had been arranged for Monday at 1030
hours, and my presence would be very helpful.

The meeting started on Monday morning at about 1035 hours with the respective Tuvalu
Ministries representatives involved. Tapaeko chaired the meeting and he introduced Trevor Hansen
(who is the current Deputy Director for Public Works in Tuvalu) who is going to take over the
chairmanship when Tapaeko leaves for Singapore on a study trip late in September. During the
meeting a financial report showed a debit of more than $700.00 dollars. I then told the board that I
have already hand delivered a bank draft of $3,000.00 to Enele Sopoanga of the Ministry for Foreign
Affairs. The board was also advised that Jim Eade would be visiting Tuvalu around the 17- 20
November and would like to meet them during that period. The meeting ended at about 1145 hours.

After the meeting I went over to the travel agents to enquire about the paint and painting
material which I had Graeme to Airfreight from Fiji. A copy of the A.W.B. was there but the items
were yet to come.

In the afternoon I went to the barge which was off loading and instructed some of the crew
to scrub the bottom of the barge and the workboat since they were getting greenish with the marine
growth.

I got back to Tapaeko at the PWD depot and asked him if he could seafreight our empty
mini container back to Fiji on the next available vessel.

The next day I checked out the air compressor and the water pump before boarding the plane
for my return flight back to Fiji.
Arrived at Tongatapu airport at about 2030 hours on the 24th September and was met by Solomone Fifita. During the brief discussion we had, I learnt that the wave buoy was still missing and only the directional buoy had been recovered.

Friday morning the 25th I set down with Solomone, Ofa and Api to discuss the wave buoy situation. I was told that two searches at the location and around that area were unsuccessful. I then requested to have a boat hired so I could go out and satisfy my doubts that the wave buoy could still be somewhere out there floating, but we were not successful. We then got hold of a map, and judging from the last location faxed over by Egil, the buoy was very close to shore, and the only alternative was to search along the shore line with a binoculars. In the afternoon we received a call from one of the privately owned fishing boats who informed us that his boat was available on Saturday, provided the captain and crew were willing to sail her after discharging their catch.

Early Saturday morning, Api, Ofa and I were down the fisheries wharf. We found the particular fishing boat and approached the captain for a possible searching trip. The captain told us that his crew were out fishing from Monday to Friday and were looking forward to a weekend of rest and him also, but he assured us that he would check out the location we have him on his Monday trip back to the fishing grounds as he would be steaming pass that location, and if he sighted the buoy, he would recover it for us. On Monday morning I made arrangements with E.M. Jones shipping manager for the seafreight of our mini container with the directional buoy to Vila, Vanuatu. The shipping agents then sent a fork lift so I could remove one of the containers from Queen Salote school and transfer it to the wharf for loading in our directional buoy and related mooring gears. While the agents were transporting the empty container to the wharf, I went down to the harbour master's depot where the directional buoy was, removed the tophatch, disconnected the wires attached to it and the two cylinders inside, unhooked the two cylinders from their mounting and removed them from the buoy's housing. Took the two cylinders back to the Energy Planning office, and packed them up nicely for airfreight to OCEANOR NORWAY. I took the package down to DHL as requested by Egil and was told by the courier to complete some forms which complied with airline regulations, as to the content of the goods being airfreighted. I got back to the Energy office and completed all necessary documents. Got Jim Eade to pay for the freight and gave him the receipt.

After lunch, I requested transport to take me down to the west coast where I could use a pair of binoculars to assist me in the search for the missing wave buoy. With the help of the GPS I
managed to reach the approximate location where the wave buoy last transmitted. Ofa and I made a thorough search of the coast line and the beaches and out to sea, but it was fruitless. We got back to the office at about 1815 hours.

On Tuesday morning I picked up the Air Way Bill from DHL. Draft out a fax message with the AWB number included and faxed it to Egil in Norway. In the mean time I tried to contact Solomone in Fiji for an order number for E.M. Jones to ship the mini container to Vila, Vanuatu. Later I got out the rubber cable from the energy's store room. Inspected it for cuts or damage and took it down to the wharf for packing. After lunch I again requested for a transport to drive Ofa, Api and I again to the west coast of the island for another search of the missing weave buoy. We returned to the office at about 1815 hours with no results.

On Wednesday morning I tried again to reach Solomone, still no response, so I went to Jim Eade and asked him if he could request SOPAC in Suva to fax over an LPO to E.M. Jones for the sea freight of our mini container to Vila. Jim Eade then instructed Umar to get Angela on the phone and quickly fax over an LPO with the required details to the administration office of Sione Tongilava's Ministry. I than took a copy of that fax message to E.M. Jones shipping manager who immediately gave me the go ahead to pack the directional buoy and all related equipment. With the help of the shipping agents' fork lift, and some of their labour, I managed to fit the buoy together with its supporting frame into the mini container. Returned to the Energy office and drafted out a Proforma Invoice for shipping the above and dropped it at E.M. Jones. At about three o'clock in the afternoon, Ofa, Api and I were again back along the coast, searching for the wave buoy. We returned at about 1745 hours without any luck.

On Thursday morning I picked up the lock and key from Phil Woodward. Went down to the wharf where the container was. Open it up again and double checked the items and locked it up. Returned to the office and followed up on the faxed LPO from Fiji. I went up to the fax room and was told that the room was locked and that Mr Tongilava had the keys. I caught up with him at the wharf ready to board a launch for Pangaimotu. I asked him for the keys and was told that he left the keys at home. He then invited me along. I spent the rest of the afternoon at Pangaimotu and took part in the Volley Ball team for SOPAC. We finally won the coconut cup from the TAG Team.

On Friday morning I got hold of the faxed LPO from Angela and hand delivered it to the shipping manager at E.M. Jones. I got back to the office and was told by Api that the fishing boat which we were going to hire last Saturday had picked up the floating rope and the subsurface buoy, but they didn't see any wave buoy. I later went over to the Air Pacific office and confirmed my flight back to Fiji on Saturday morning.