**Summary of cruise AX080713 between Cape Town and Newark**

AX080713 was conducted aboard the Maersk Visby. I boarded the ship in Cape Town on the 9th of July 2013. The installation and testing of the equipment were done by Gus McKay prior to my boarding, in Durban. After leaving Cape Town the drops for the AX080513 began on the 10th of July until the 31th of July 2013 when 200m depth was reached.

In total 530 XBT’s were deployed. There were a variety of issues on this trip. Firstly either the launcher or cat5 failed or both and thus both were swapped out. From the 19th issues plagued profiles. There were gaps of 2 hours or more at times. From the 19th to the 22nd there were continuous bad drops. After changing the MK21 on the 21st the issues decreased for a day and then the auto-launcher was swapped out on the 22nd. On the 26th there were 7 hours of bad drops where the cat5 was swapped out. Then from the 29th there were continuous incorrect profiles, which were never truly sorted out, as after making a new cat5 cable there was nothing else to do since the auto-launcher, MK21 and auto-launcher box had all been swapped out. Therefore there are periods throughout the 29th and 30th were there are continuous incorrect profiles. I was unfortunately unable to do anything else to fix these issues.

The Maersk Visby is an ideal ship for XBT deployments as it maintains a steady speed and the point of release is near to the waterline resulting in only a few faulty drops due to the launching position. The distance from the cabin to the launcher and antenna is not far, thus making installation simpler.

The Captain and crew were exceptionally hospitable during the voyage. As well as the crew always being eager to assist during the voyage.

A.Blair

University of Cape Town

Oceanographer