

Summary of cruise AX080414 between Cape Town and Newark

AX080414 was conducted aboard the Maersk Vilnius. I boarded the ship in Cape Town on the 28th of April 2014. Gus McKay did the installation and testing of the equipment in Durban prior to my boarding. After leaving Cape Town the drops for the AX080414 began on the 29th of April until the 20th of May 2014 when 200m depth was reached.

There were very few problems encountered on this trip with only minor difficulties at certain points. One of the problems that arose was when significant rainfall, thunderstorms or wind occurred readings were affected. This could possibly be a result of high humidity, as it was noticed during a high rainfall event close to the equator. Additionally, the MK21 had to be swapped out twice during the voyage as after continuous use it would fail once to twice per day. However no significant damage had taken place to the MK21. Furthermore days that had irregular readings were: 05/08/14, 05/11-12/14 and 05/20/14. As noted above this was due to weather. In total 512 XBT's were deployed as well as 6 profiling drifters.

The Maersk Vilnius 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

Oceanographer