

30 June 2009

Commander
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Admiral Donnelly:

COMSUBLANT message 271946Z May 68 provided the position reported by the USS SCORPION at 220001Z May 1968, and the course (290) and SOA (18-knots) for the remainder of the transit from the 220001Z position to the WESTLANT SUBLANE.

As previously discussed, two low-order explosive events contained within the SCORPION pressure-hull occurred at 18:20:44Z on 22 May when, at 18-knots, SCORPION should have been 330 nm, bearing 290 from the 220001Z position.

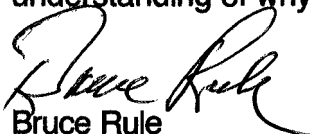
The SCORPION wreck-site lies 297 nm, bearing 290 from the 220001Z position or 33 nm behind the 18-knot PIM for the 18:20:44Z time of the internal explosions.

If the "box" extended 50 nm ahead and 100 nm behind the PIM, then SCORPION was well within that box. This circumstance suggests the condition that resulted in the loss of SCORPION was the immediate result of the internal explosive events and not the result of an extended duration, evolving situation of which the internal explosions were the culminating events. A major casualty that occurred at transit depth and resulted in the loss of propulsion and electrical power is consistent with the failure of SCORPION to transmit subsequent to the 18:20:44Z time of the internal explosive events.

Analysis of the original Canary Island (CI) time-versus-frequency lofargram for the two-hour period prior to the 18:20:44Z time of the internal explosive events failed to identify any SCORPION-associated acoustic signals from main propulsion, electrical system or transient acoustic sources.

The CI magnetic tape analyzed to identify the new information previously provided on the SCORPION loss started at 1858Z on 22 May, 90-seconds before detection of pressure-hull collapse. If the CI magnetic tape for the several hour period prior to 1858Z can be recovered and conserved prior to processing, it can be analyzed to provide better sensitivity to low-level signals than the original lofargram display. This is particularly important relative to the internal explosive events, the characteristics of which are now known only from analysis of the original CI paper helicorder grams which provide the time of detection but no frequency information. Such frequency information could identify where within the SCORPION pressure-hull the explosions occurred.

The recovery and reprocessing by ONI of this now unlocated CI tape will require OPNAV N87 be directed by higher-authority to take the required initiative. Your interest in and assertive action relative to this initiative has the potential to further advance our understanding of why SCORPION was lost 41-years ago.


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