

DAR/AIST Ballast Water and Hull Fouling Program



AIST continued to support DAR Ballast Water and Hull Fouling Program minimizing the introduction and spread of AIS into Hawaii from vessels. Ballast water is being managed by Hawaii's Administrative Rules, Chapter 13-76, relating to Non-Indigenous Aquatic Species. Rules have allowed the State to manage ballast water on a local level, by working with the shipping industry to limit the amount and reduce the risk of ballast water discharged in Hawaii's waters. Further verification is in the planning stages with the recently acquired sampling tools including a Ballast Water Assurance Meter which was recently approved by the US Coast Guard as the first tool to accurately check for ballast water exchange.

Hull Fouling, which is responsible for the majority of AIS introductions to Hawaii's waters, is being addressed as a high priority. DAR also continues to work with the Alien Aquatic Organism Task Force (AAOTF) to develop a comprehensive plan for preventing the introduction and dispersal of alien aquatic organisms found on the hulls of vessels. The AAOTF includes representatives from state and federal agencies, shipping industries, the scientific community and non-government organizations. DAR is currently reviewing how others are managing this vector as well as conducting studies, such as an assessment of recreational vessels in Hawaii, to get a better understanding of how to address hull-fouling issues.

The program is conducting AIS inspections using new technologies such as a remotely operated vehicle, a variety of pole cameras, and underwater drop cameras. Inspections are conducted on high-risk events such as unexpected arrivals, vessel groundings or vessels that may carry AIS. DAR is also assisting The Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument with inspections of vessels that enter one of the largest protected marine areas in the world. This program requires that 100% of the vessels (excluding US Coast Guard and Military vessels) entering into monument waters undergo a hull inspection and certification. The Monument has very few non-native species and rigorous inspection of vessel hulls, ballast water, ancillary and scientific gear is done to maintain the biosecurity of this potential World Heritage Site.