

To: Deputy Director David Sohier
U.S. Department of State
Office of Oceans and Polar Affairs,
Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs.
Washington, D.C.

Greetings Deputy Director Sohier,

This month WHOI's research vessel Atlantis will be undergoing Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) certifying dives for our human occupied submarine DSV Alvin. I'm writing to you and your office to ask if you can forward our intentions formally onto the Chilean embassy as a courtesy notification of our activities. No science sampling will be taking place while we are underway for this work.

Our plan for the DSV Alvin engineering test dive series, scheduled for 25 January, 2015 to 29 January, 2015, is the following. The Alvin Operations Group and NAVSEA plan to dive DSV Alvin in an area approximately 60 nautical miles off of the coast of Chile, on a series of up to three dives intended to test and certify the submersible to its designed maximum depth. All three dives are planned as sea-trial engineering test dives intended to demonstrate the vehicle's capabilities to dive to the maximum design depth of 4,500 meters.

The first dive will be an engineering test dive to a depth of approximately 3800m in preparation for the deeper follow on dives. Dive two and three will be scheduled to take the submersible to the maximum design depth of 4500m. No additional dives are planned for this period.

No scientific operations are planned for this series and no sampling will occur during the three dives or time at sea.

DSV Alvin will be operated off of the submersible's support ship, the research vessel Atlantis, with operations out of Arica, Chile for this dive series.

Please let me know if you have any additional questions regarding our engineering test dive series.

Eric Benway



Marine Operations Coordinator
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution