Introduction to the Prawler Mooring Transcription

Another really innovative mooring that was put out there is called the Prawler mooring done by a group from the Pacific Marine Environmental Lab. What you're looking at here is the surface part of it. There's a meteorological instrumentation on board on the surface. Below that though is what's really innovative. There's a thing called a Prawler, which is a device that crawls using the motion of the waves. On the surface mooring it crawls up and down the line.

So you get profiles of temperature and salinity, probably 6 or 8 profiles a day through a very simple system of crawling up and down the wire. We're getting really interesting data from this. It's nice to have such an innovative mooring deployed close to the other moorings. It gives it some idea that we're trying to compare the performances of this flux mooring and this Prawler mooring.

Interestingly enough, this picture here gives you an idea of really how risky it can be to put instrumentation out in the ocean. As soon as you put instrumentation out in the ocean it's getting acted upon by biological fouling, and mechanical stress, and incredibly corrosive seawater. The bottom figure is what we were expecting. This symbol here shows where the anchor is. The mooring itself is sort of going around the anchor circling at about a couple hundred meters.

At some point on this other mooring the cable or mooring connection broke. We're not sure where it actually happened, but this second mooring is adrift; it's moving out all by itself, in the North Atlantic—no longer connected to the bottom. It's the kind of risks that you take when you put this innovative instrumentation out there—something like this might happen. It's probably not surprising that this was the case. As you can see now it's drifting about 85 km south of where it was put in. When they go out on the next cruise in March they are going to be spending some time chasing it down and pulling it back on board.