

Minimum skills for deck crew handling PODs

Responsible staff must be:

1. aware of the instructions on closing the lid and how far to tighten it, and must have practised this at least 5 times.
2. aware of need for vigilance in inserting batteries correctly, and avoiding any water transfer to the interior of the POD after the lid is unscrewed.
3. aware of the need to press the save file button only when the POD is recovered
4. able to run the FPOD app and show and hide the menu
5. able to read the data from the SD card giving it a valid site name
6. able to display the FP1 files generated
7. able to run the Analysis of each FP1 file
8. able to capture a screengrab of the Analysis page of the menu
9. able to use the List files utility to produce a list that can be pasted into a spreadsheet
10. able to view the operational settings and paste them into a spreadsheet
11. able to check the voltage on supposedly new batteries, or on used batteries if the POD did not run for as long as expected.

A short, simple function test to run immediately prior to deployment:

- Start the POD.
- Put it in an upright position for at least 2 minutes
- Tap the hydrophone housing with a finger in a regular time pattern e.g. a quick series of 5, then 3, then 1 tap with a gap of 2 - 5 seconds between each series,
- Wait 1 minute.
- Stop the POD, read the data.
- View the amplitude of clicks in the FP1 file at 50ms resolution. The series of taps should be clearly visible.
- The SD card should be erased, and the POD can be restarted with this card when required.

There is no simple test of sensitivity, but this rarely changes. Checking how consistent the data from a real deployment is with prior deployments is the best approach.