

This is interesting. It should start some discussion of scenarios that were disproved decades ago.

Sadly, there aren't enough pictures - mostly from what would today be considered crappy camera equipment. Folks have been trying to get the Navy to allow a unmanned vehicle to visit the site and photograph extensively. The Navy has refused, supposedly because it's a grave site. Of course, nearly every shipwreck is a grave site. Of course, there is a reactor down there and the last visit showed zero radioactive contamination.

Summary Analysis of SCORPION Acoustic Data-Bruce Rule

Date: Thu Jan 7, 2010 9:39 pm ((PST))

Having completed the analysis of all available SCORPION acoustic data, the following summary is provided. Post as useful.

When the US nuclear submarine SCORPION was lost in the East Central Atlantic on May 22, 1968, the event produced a series of acoustic signals that were detected by seafloor sensors on both sides of the Atlantic.

The US Air Force Technical Applications Center (AFTAC) determined the point of origin of these SCORPION signals by comparing the detection times at three sensor sites. The derived position was where the SCORPION wreckage was subsequently discovered at a depth of 3,380m (11,100 ft). The Chief of Naval Operations message date-time-group 311840Z May 1968 acknowledged the AFTAC contribution.

The first reanalysis of the SCORPION acoustic data in 40-years identified the following new information in 2008:

- The initiating events responsible for the loss of SCORPION were two small explosions that occurred one-half second apart at 18:20:44Z on 22 May 1968 and were contained within the submarine's pressure-hull. The source of these explosions, which are estimated to have been equal to the explosion of not more than 10 kg (22 lbs) of TNT each, cannot be determined from analysis of the acoustic data.
- These explosive events prevented the crew from maintaining depth control. SCORPION slowly sank to 1530-feet at which depth the pressure-hull and all internal bulkheads collapsed at 18:42:34Z on May 22, 1968 in one-tenth of a second with a force equal to the explosion of 6,000 kg (13,200 lbs) of TNT.
- This energy was produced by the essentially instantaneous conversion of potential energy in the form of 680 psi pressure on the entire SCORPION hull to kinetic energy, the motion of the intruding water-ram which entered the pressure-hull at supersonic velocity.
- During the 111.6-second period when it was conjectured in 1968 that SCORPION had reversed course to deactivate a torpedo that had become active in its launch tube, the horizontal position of the submarine changed less than 100-feet. This time-of-detection based analysis refutes the course reversal/active torpedo theory.
- During the 200-second period following pressure-hull collapse, 17 additional acoustic events were detected. These events were produced by more pressure-resistant structures that survived within the wreckage to collapse at greater depth. Six of these events were produced by the collapse of the SCORPION torpedo-tubes near the following depths: 3370-, 3750-, 3810-, 3950-, 4510- and 4570-feet.

There were no explosions from a torpedo or any other source external to the SCORPION pressure-hull. SCORPION was lost because of an onboard problem (the two internal explosions) the crew could not overcome.

There was no involvement by Soviet forces as conjectured in some popular accounts of the loss of SCORPION. There were no acoustic detections of a torpedo as would have occurred had a Soviet weapon operated at 40-knots as postulated by one popular account.

The technical documents upon which the above conclusions are based, which total nearly 50-pages, were provided to the Chief of Naval Operations (OPNAV N87), the Commander Submarine Force, the Office of Naval Intelligence and the Naval Historical Center (NHC). Freedom of Information Act requests for this unclassified information should be sent to the NHC, specifically the originator's letters of 14 Mar, 3 Apr and 28 Oct 2009.