

By Michael Watson,  
Co-Founder of Oceanic Ghost Research  
www.oceanicghostresearch.com

## Conducting Baseline Readings on Investigations – Control Techniques and Understanding Natural Variables.

At some investigations, baseline measurements are made prior to the commencement of the proceedings. This is where we take readings, using specific instruments such as EMF meters and thermometers, showing initial or 'normal' conditions. Why is it important to do this? Well, we need to know what typical readings for a location are before the investigation starts so we can readily differentiate anomalous readings during the investigation. It is always important to understand the natural or normal conditions before looking into what may be perceived as 'paranormal'

However, are there problems with this approach? In the interim, how do we know the baseline readings are typical of that location? They might, by pure chance, happen to be the highest or the lowest readings, for the day. Secondly, if we get notably different readings during the investigation, how do we know these aren't just part of a natural daily, hourly or irregular, but normal variation unrelated to paranormal phenomena?

In general, environmental parameters (eg. Temperature, magnetic or radiation) fluctuate all the time. Some variations are conventional (such as temperature changes during the course of a day) while others are less predictable (such as magnetic field or natural electric fields).

To achieve valid baselines, the best practice is to visit the same investigation site frequently and conduct long-term monitoring to find out the natural variables over a day or periodic timescale. Only when you know how parameters vary naturally, can you look for anomalies.

A very useful piece of equipment to document variables over extended periods are data loggers, such as temperature, light, humidity, electromagnetic fields and ionisation (examples). Data loggers can record set data at intervals as little as one second. If data loggers record for the duration of an investigation, say over twelve hour period, then the information on the variables would be more accurate –

**Continuous Baselineing**