Introducing Debrief-Lite

from the RN's Maritime Warfare Centre

July 2019

Background

The ***Debrief*** application was created in 1995 at the Royal Navy's Maritime Warfare Centre (MWC).

The application grew over the years to include a range of tactical maritime analysis capabilities, and is now the workhorse that powers many deep analysis tasks.

But, the full version of ***Debrief*** brings a learning curve, leaving it unsuited to ad-hoc analysis tasking or for use by untrained users.

In late 2018 the MWC engaged DeepBlueC.com to develop ***Debrief-Lite***, a slimline application targeted at infrequent analysts, internal and external to the organisation. In 2019 the body of candidate users has grown, both within the RN and internationally.

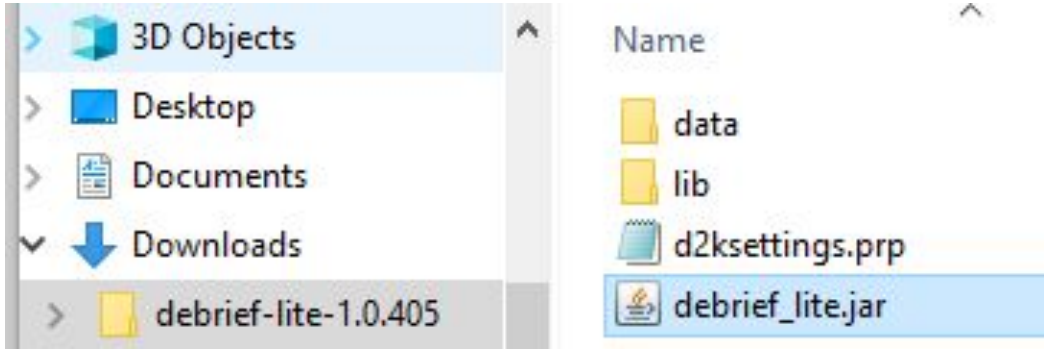
Installing Debrief-Lite

It is most likely that analysts will encounter Debrief-Lite already installed on their PCs/laptops. But, if Debrief-Lite has been obtained independently, the following steps are required:

1. Install Java on the device (64-bit Java Version 8.0 or later is recommended). Find Java here: https://adoptopenjdk.net/

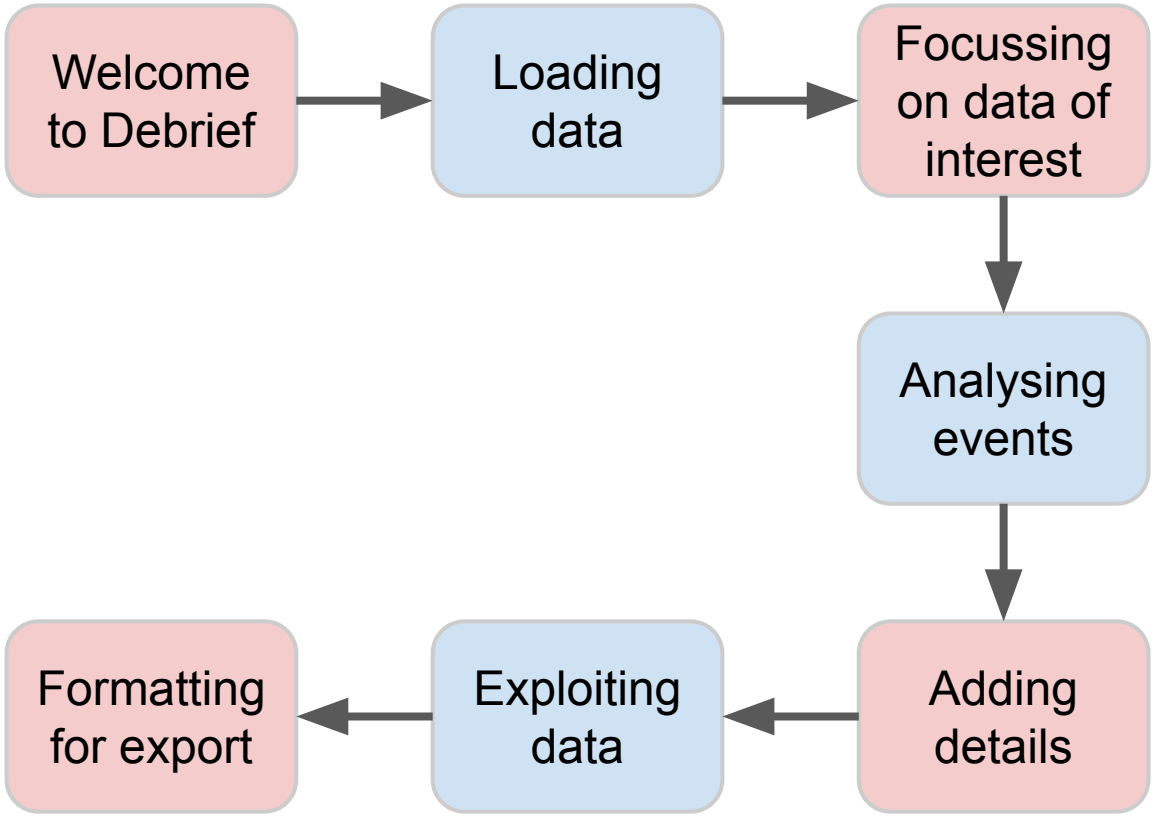
2. Unzip the Debrief-Lite zip file into a suitable location

3. Double-click on **`Debrief-Lite.jar`**



A walk-through Debrief features

Here's how we're going to break down Debrief-Lite functionality



Welcome to Debrief

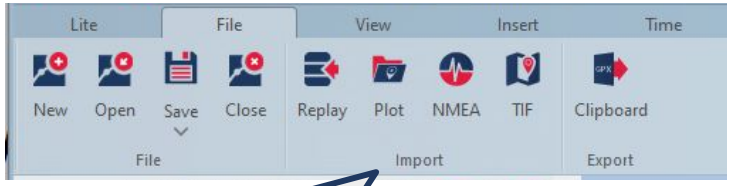
1. You'll use these 5 ribbon tabs to get data in and out of Debrief, and to control what you're viewing

2. Here is the **Main Plot**, which will form the focus of your analysis

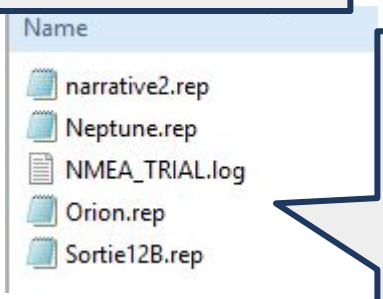
3. To the left of the **Main Plot** is the **Outline**, which is used to organise the loaded data

4. Below and to the right of the Main Plot are the (currently) collapsed **Graph** and **Narrative** panels.

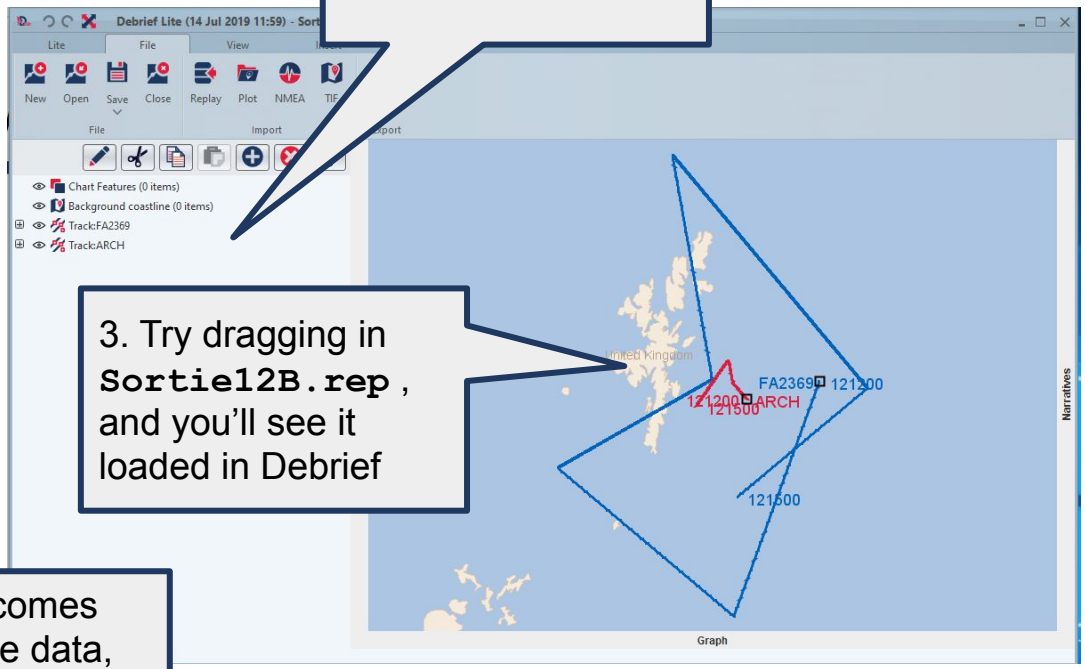
Loading data



1. Debrief-Lite can load a range of data-types, as shown in the import tab. Click on an icon to open the file dialog, or drag a suitable file into Debrief



2. The app also comes with some sample data, in the sub-folder titled **`data/tracks.`** Here's what they look like in Windows Explorer:



4. Note the two new tracks shown in the Outline tab.

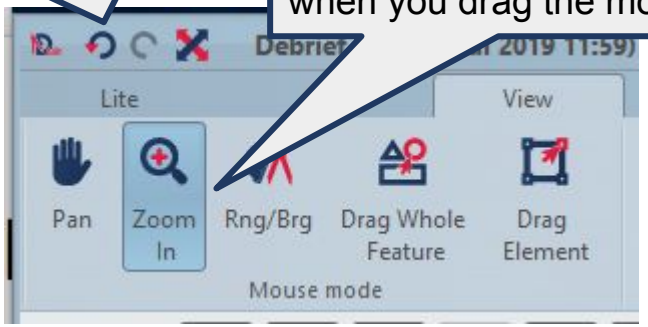
3. Try dragging in **`Sortie12B.rep`**, and you'll see it loaded in Debrief

Focussing on data of interest

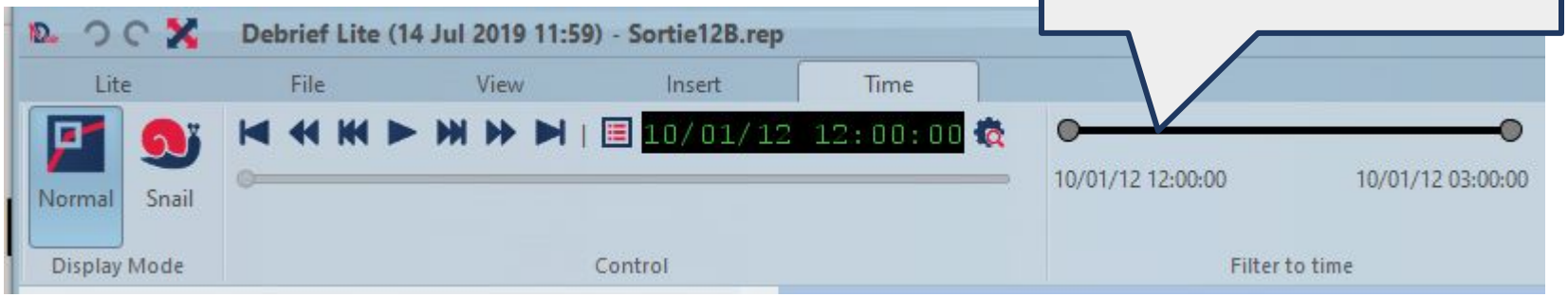
1. Click on the ***eye*** icon in the **Outline** to switch tracks (or layers) on and off

2. After you've edited something (such as changing its visibility) the Undo/Redo buttons become available for use.

3. Toggle between the mouse modes on the ***View*** menu - they control what happens when you drag the mouse



4. Focus on a smaller period of the sortie by dragging the ***Filter to time*** controls.

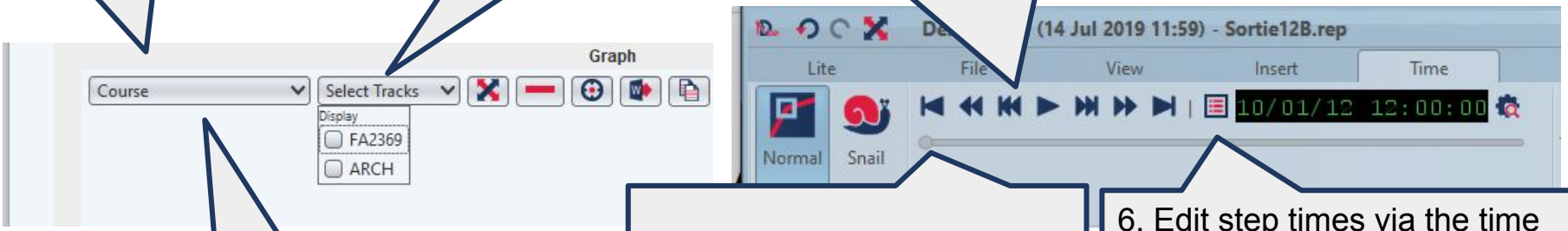


Analysing events - 1

1. To view a graph of the sortie, start by double-clicking on the ***Graph*** bar.

2. Once it's open, indicate which tracks you want to view

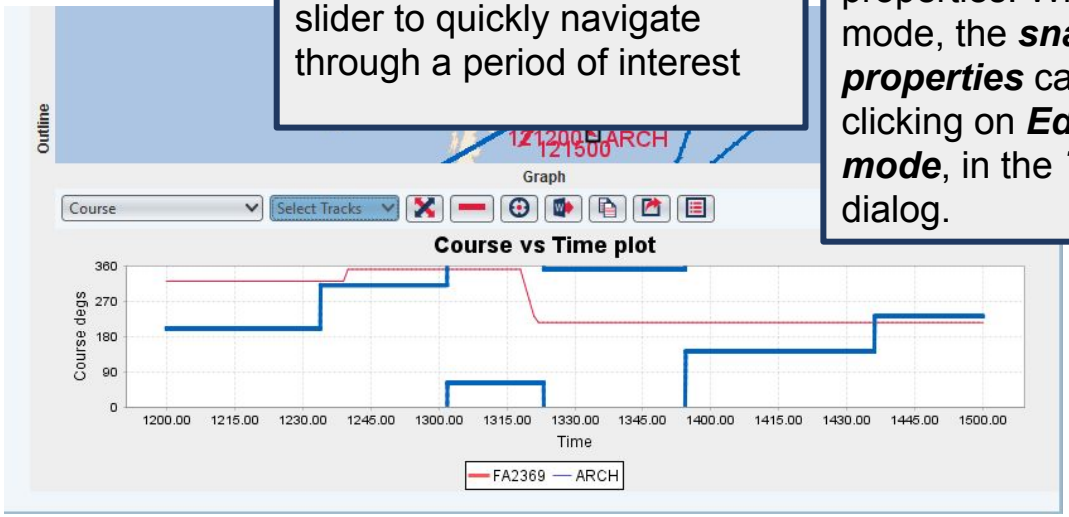
4. Use the VCR-style controls on the ***Time*** tab to move through the sortie - you can also switch between the two ***Display Modes*** to help focus.



5. Alternatively, drag the time slider to quickly navigate through a period of interest

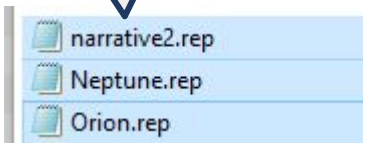
6. Edit step times via the time properties. When in ***Snail*** mode, the ***snail trail properties*** can be edited by clicking on ***Edit Display mode***, in the ***Time Properties*** dialog.

3. Next, indicate what you want to view. Note: for calculated datasets, you may have to go back into the ***Tracks*** drop-down, to indicate which track the calculations are relative to.



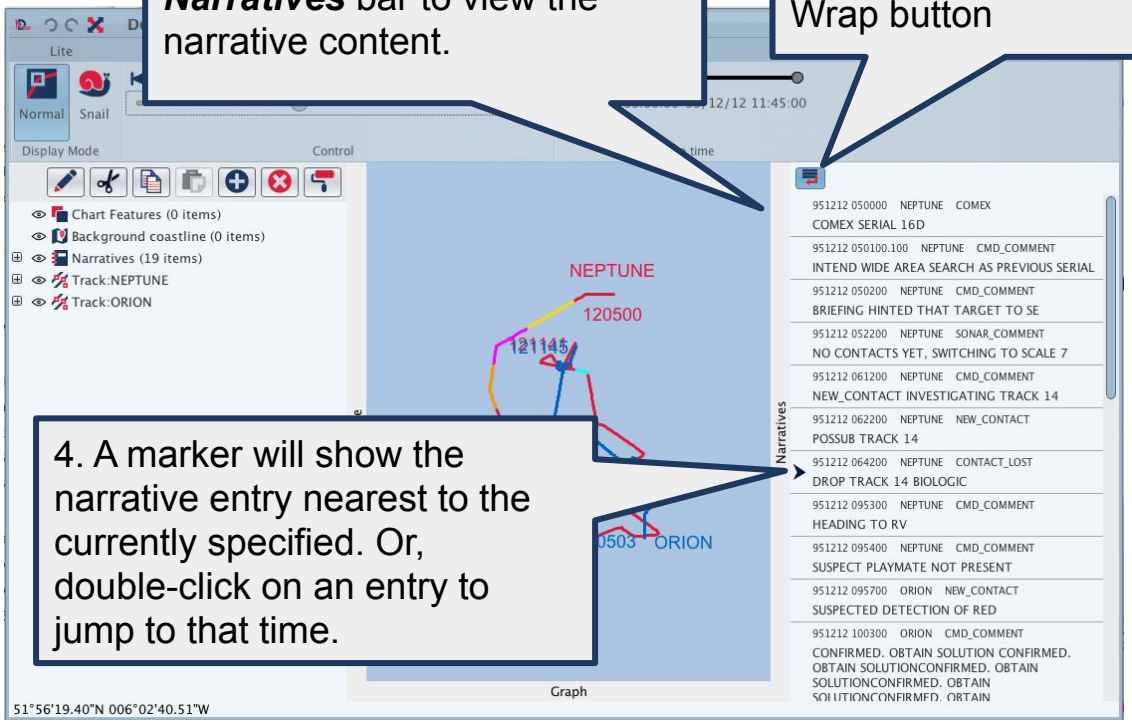
Analysing events - 2

1. In addition to viewing graphs of data, you can also view narrative content. In the sample data folder are two tracks, with supporting narrative.



2. Double-click on the ***Narratives*** bar to view the narrative content.

3. Control how much data you can see by toggling the Word Wrap button

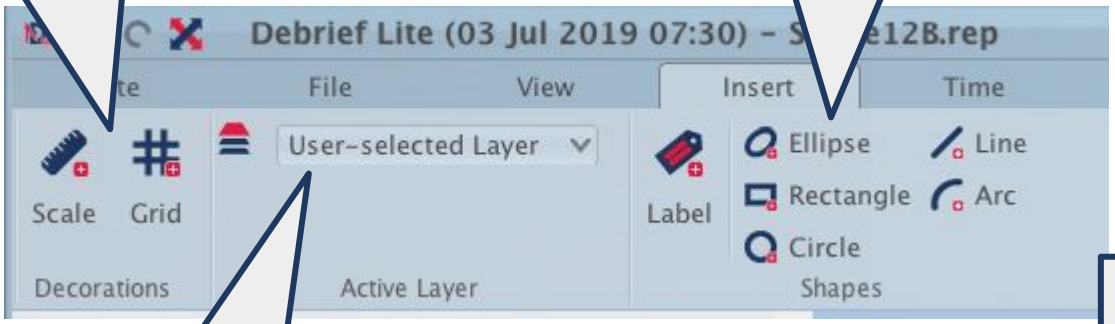


4. A marker will show the narrative entry nearest to the currently specified. Or, double-click on an entry to jump to that time.

Adding details

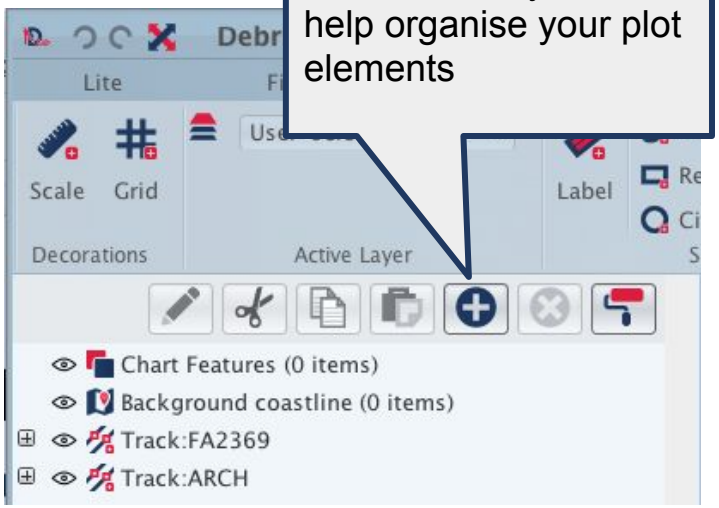
1. Adding a ***Scale*** or ***Grid*** can help you appreciate distance on the plot

2. Adding ***Shapes*** can add useful context when you're reporting on a serial



3. Either select the target layer for shapes to be dropped in, or indicate to Debrief-Lite that wish to choose the layer each time

4. Add new layers to help organise your plot elements

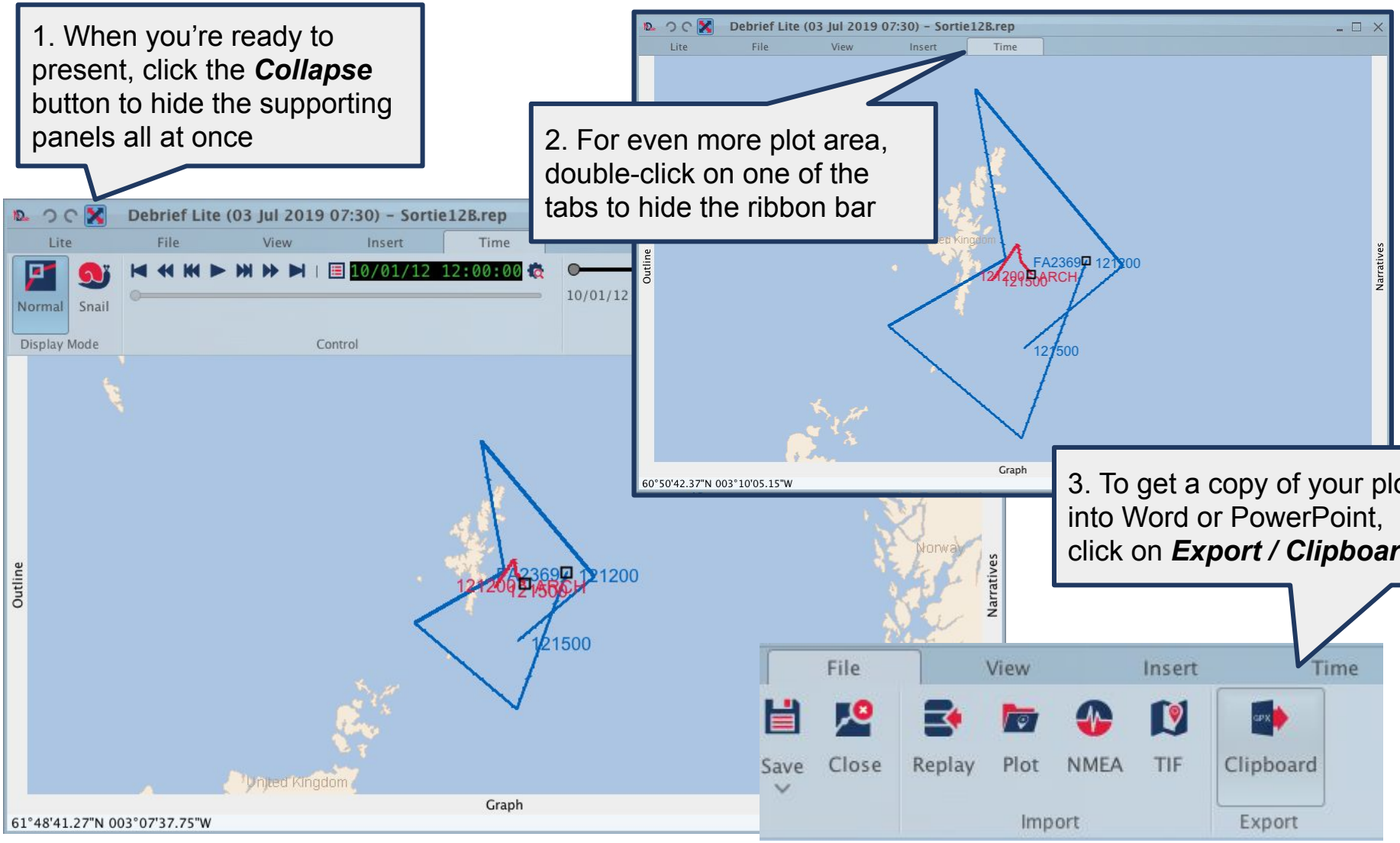


Exploiting data

1. When you're ready to present, click the ***Collapse*** button to hide the supporting panels all at once

2. For even more plot area, double-click on one of the tabs to hide the ribbon bar

3. To get a copy of your plot into Word or PowerPoint, click on ***Export / Clipboard***.

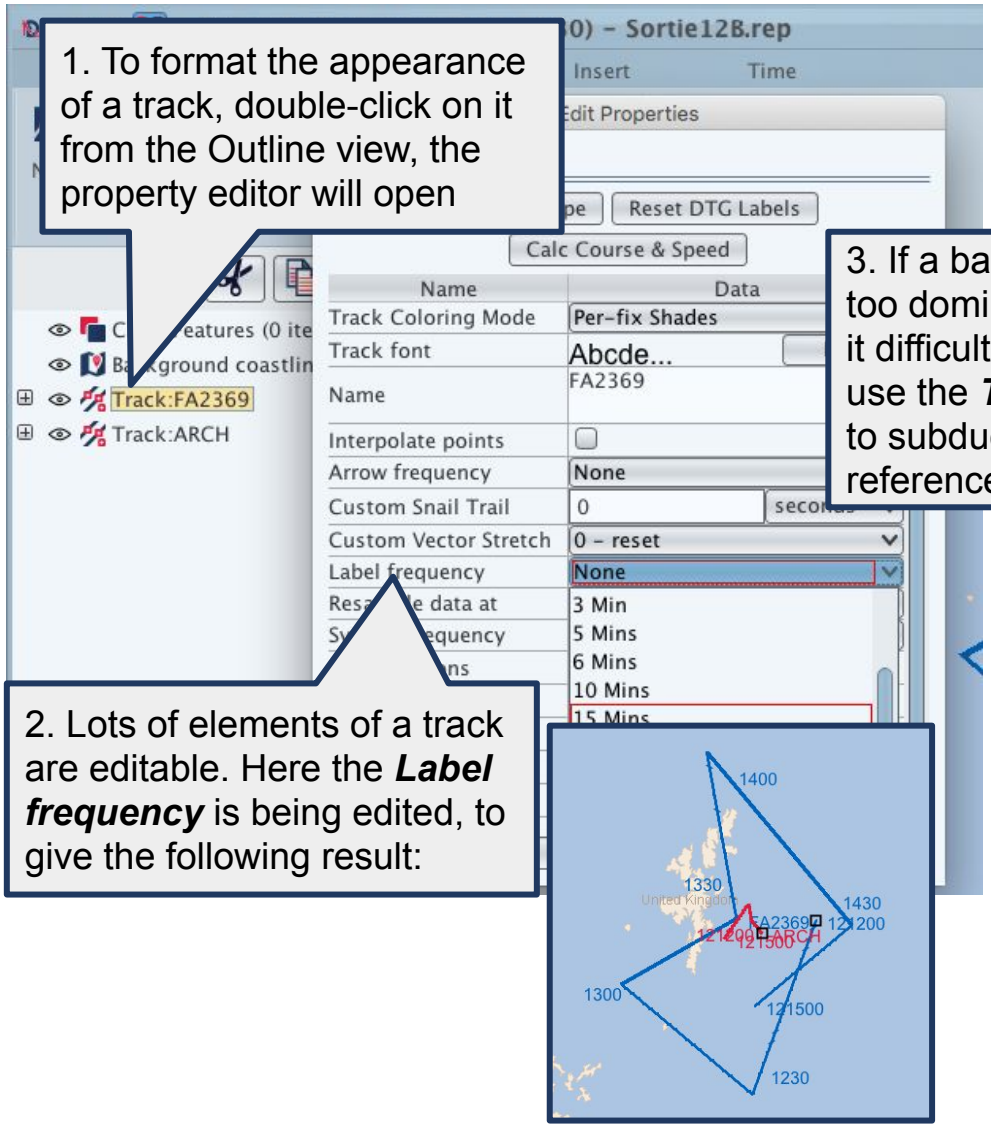


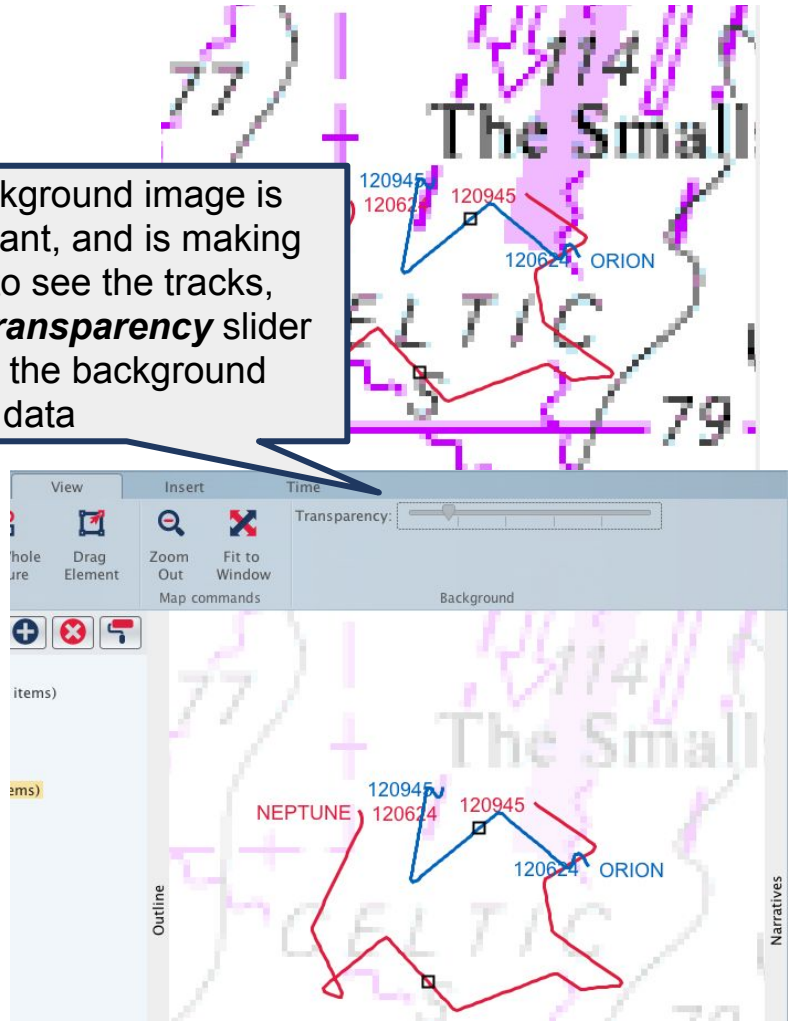
Formatting for export

1. To format the appearance of a track, double-click on it from the Outline view, the property editor will open

2. Lots of elements of a track are editable. Here the ***Label frequency*** is being edited, to give the following result:

3. If a background image is too dominant, and is making it difficult to see the tracks, use the ***Transparency*** slider to subdue the background reference data





Tips

Performance

1. High volume tracks (either very frequent or covering a long period) can be slow in Debrief. If your analysis permits, you can resample a track from it's property editor.
2. Alternatively, filter the data to a shorter time period, to keep it manageable.
3. If a large track is making Snail trail performance poor, reduce the snail trail length