Construction RV *Wim Wolff*

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The RV *Wim Wolff* is a new shipbuilding project for the Dutch national research fleet. The fleet is owned and operated by the National Marine Facilities (NMF), a department of the Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research (NIOZ). The NMF fleet consists of three vessels capable of conducting research from the shallow coastal waters out into the open ocean.

The RV *Wim Wolff* is intended to replace the Wadden Sea research vessel RV *Navicula*, and with its shallow draught of 1 meter it is specifically designed for overnight voyages for research in the Wadden Sea, the Zealand delta or the coastal zone.

With a permanent crew of four, the RV *Wim Wolff* will offer state-of-the-art facilities for a maximum of 12 passengers, and is equipped with onboard dry and wet lab facilities. The vessel also has room for two customised lab containers on the working deck.

The RV *Wim Wolff* will be built by Thecla Bodewes Shipyards (TBSY) in Harlingen, and is scheduled for delivery in the 2nd quarter of 2023.

Finishing work

In the final construction facility, builders are hard at work putting the final touches on the RV *Wim Wolff*. Several sub-contractors will be working on the same cabins at the same time during the finishing phase, which requires good coordination and collaboration by all parties involved.

The hull

The ladderway to board the RV *Wim Wollf* has been moved from the aft to the port side in order to install shock-absorbing fenders on the transom and starboard side of the hull near the J-frame. A preservative treatment has also been applied to the fairlead for the stern anchor. A fender will also be installed here at a later date.

The hull at the TBSY final construction facility, showing the ladderway moved to the port side. The aft section is starting to take on its final form.

A specialist firm has begun aligning the drive shafts and the thrusters. Where the components once needed to be accurately measured by hand, today shipbuilders make extensive use of lasers for this precision work, with extremely small tolerances.

One of the two stern tubes, with the propeller tunnel in the foreground ready to be lifted into position.

Before synthetic panels can be installed on the aft deck to provide a durable and rough protective layer, the aluminium deck will have to be treated with a protective coating.

Considering the size of the aft deck, and therefore the work involved, builders have already started measuring and installing the synthetic deck panels.

That means the planks will have to be removed later in order to apply the protective coating to the aluminium deck. The planks therefore need to be carefully marked with a unique number.

The protective synthetic panels on the aft deck are installed and secured between aluminium strips.

Interior

Now that the main power cables have been installed, the main distribution box and propulsion panel have been lifted on board and placed in the engine room. A temporary opening in the work deck was made to facilitate this work.

The propulsion panel is where all of the cables from the energy supply, such as the generators and batteries, come together before connecting to the distribution panels and the rest of the vessel's electrical components.

Now that the two panels have been brought on board, work can begin on connecting the cables.

Bringing the main distribution box aboard ship. ©FH

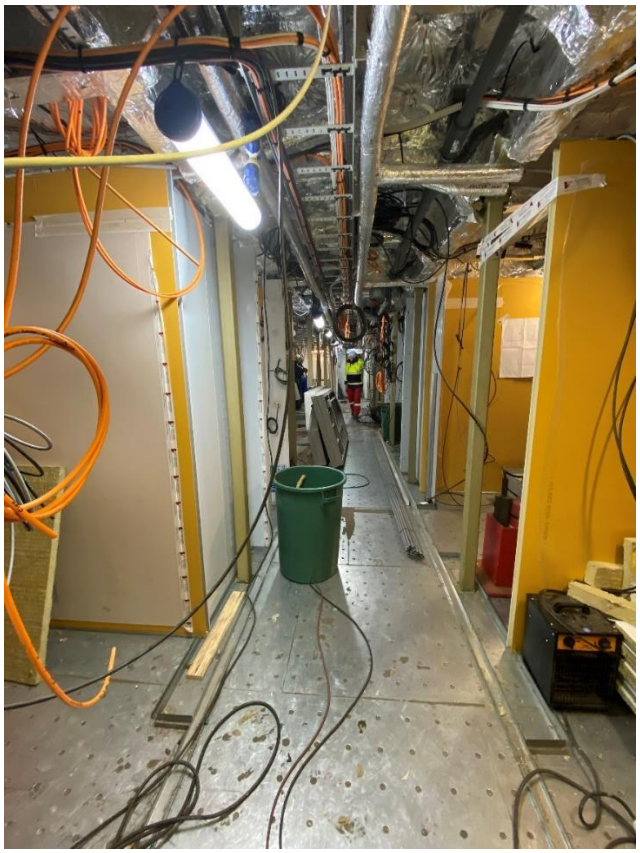
A brownish-orange floor covering made of cork and rubber has been installed over the entire main deck to dampen noise and vibrations. The finished deck will be installed on top of this layer.

The interior builder has begun installing the partition bulkheads on top of this noise- and vibration dampening layer. These bulkheads will have the same colour scheme as the other two new NIOZ vessels, the RV *Adriaen Coenen* and the RV *Anna Weber-van Bosse.*

The messroom, with the noise- and vibration dampening deck cover. The first partition bulkheads have already been installed. ©FH

One deck below, in the crew and passenger cabins, builders have installed a false deck to provide noise insulation and a stable surface for the interior builder to install the partition bulkheads for the individual accommodations.

Some of the partition bulkheads have already been installed, and the contours of the individual cabins are starting to emerge.



The first partition bulkheads for the crew and passenger cabins have been installed on the false deck below decks. ©FH

In the engine room, builders are laying out the piping systems and the auxiliary machines, in addition to installing the cables and connecting them to the distribution panels.

For more information, please visit: http://www.NewResearchFleet.nl