# Construction RV *Wim Wolff*


## Progress report #31: August 2023

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 by the end of the 4th quarter of 2023.

**END IN SIGHT**

The work is still nearing completion, but progress is not going entirely according to schedule. It is now clear that the scheduled launch in early September will have to be postponed until later in the month.


*Front view of the painted RV Wim Wolff.*


*Rear view of the painted RV Wim Wolff.*

The launch is important, because the systems can only be activated and tested in the water. But before that can happen, all of the work below the waterline must be complete, such as the fitting of the propulsion installation and sealing components against corrosion. The main

propulsion is provided by two propellers. Steering is arranged via rudders that have already been installed and aligned. A steering grid in the bow provides extra propulsion power. The steering grid is basically a suction pump mounted in the hull that can provide propulsion in any direction by means of a 360-degree rotating outlet. A tunnel thruster in the bow can provide thrust to port and starboard to facilitate manoeuvring in port, etc.

*The steering grid in the bow, seen from below.*

The steering grid and bow thrusters were installed last month, and the rest of the vessel above and below the water line was sealed against corrosion. With this work completed, the RV *Wim Wolff* is gradually coming to life.

The anchor gear has been installed on the forward deck. In addition to the two forward anchors, the RV *Wim Wolff* is also equipped with a stern anchor. The forward anchors serve as the main anchors, and are connected to the vessel via an anchor chain. The combined weight of the anchor and chain keep the vessel in position when anchored. The stern anchor helps keep the vessel in the desired position when at anchor, and is connected to the vessel with a lighter Dyneema anchor cable.

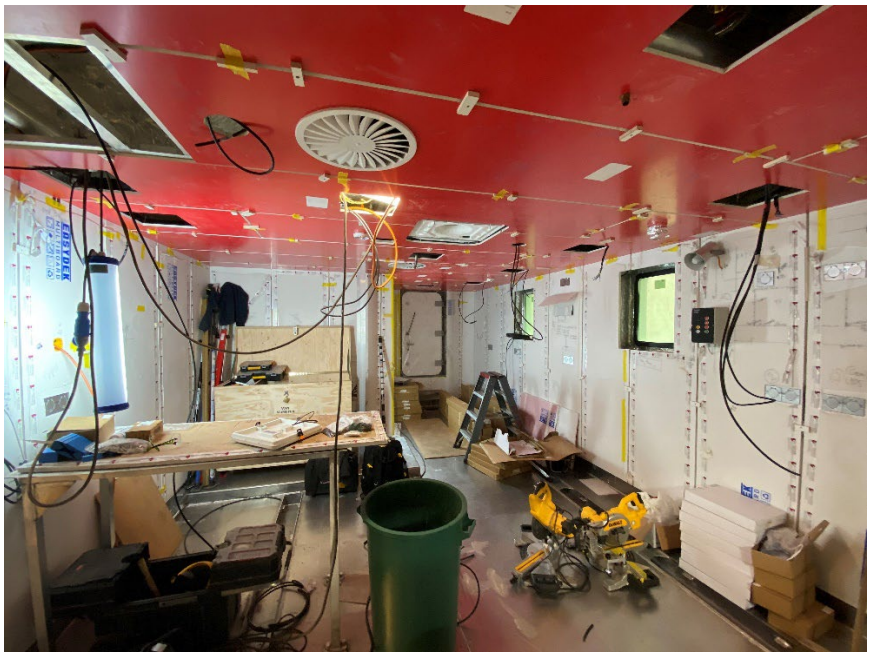
*Front view of the anchor gear, showing the 'bitter ends' under the bits between the anchor lockers.*

The anchor chain is not fixed to the vessel; instead, it is connected with a pin so that the chain can be disconnected from the hull in emergencies. The two bits connected to the ends of the chains, known as 'bitter ends', are visible between the anchor lockers.

Last month, the A-frame and the J-frame were fitted with the blocks and winches needed to reel in the cables.

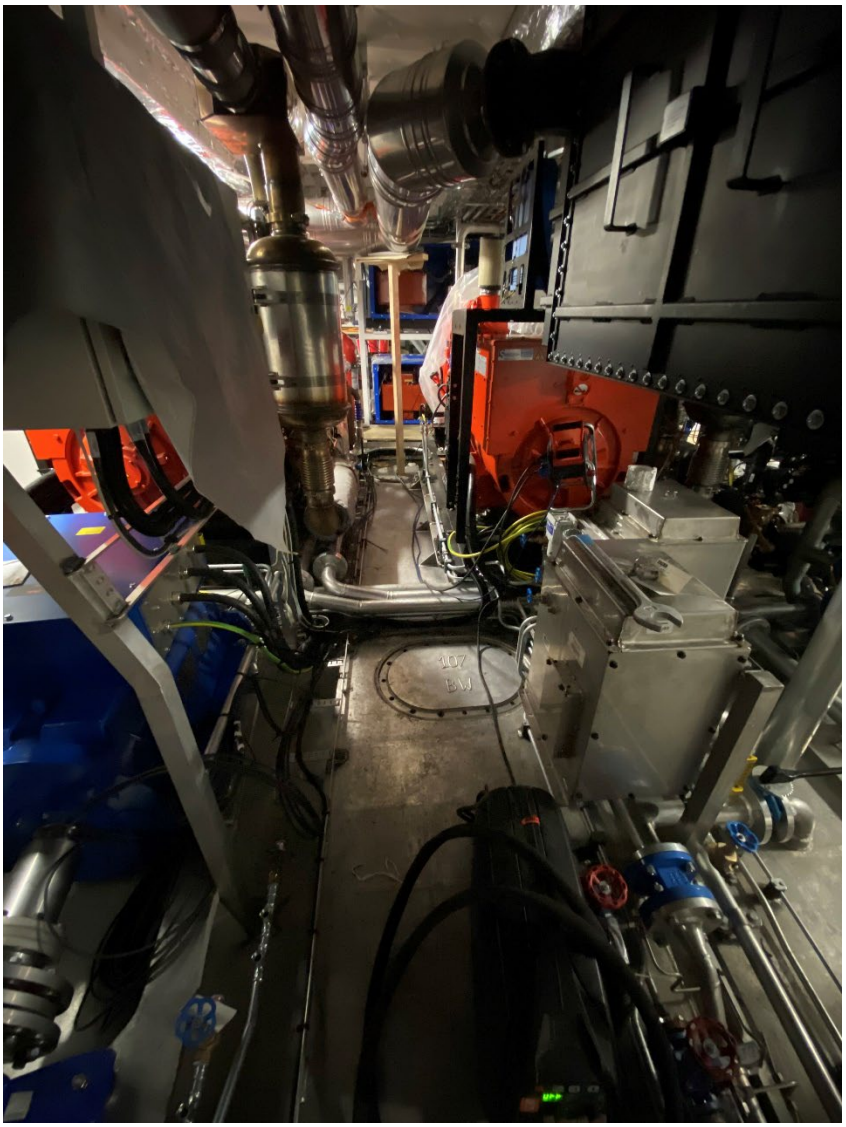
*Top view of the CTD winch, which is connected to the starboard J-frame, but can also serve the A-frame.*

The shipyard is still hard at work on the labs, engine room and cabins below deck. The decks and overheads have been installed in the dry lab, but work is a bit behind schedule in the wet lab. Here, only the bulkheads and overheads have been installed. All of the equipment has been installed in the engine room, and now only the various systems need to be connected and activated. Most of the carpentry for the cabins has been completed.



*The wet lab with a temporary 'look' due to the red protective film on the overhead panels.*

*The completed cabin carpentry, with the protective film still attached to the surfaces.*



*The fully equipped engine room, waiting for the order to start the ignition.*

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