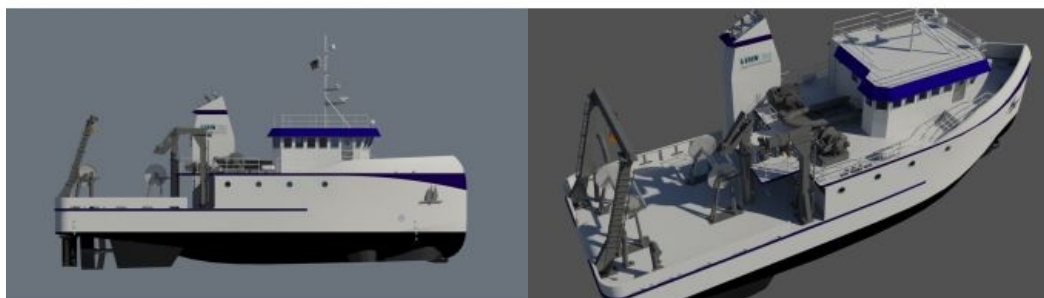


New Research Vessel for Virginia Institute of Marine Science



Virginia Institute of Marine Science of Gloucester Point, VA, USA, awarded a contract to [Meridien Maritime Reparat](#) of [Matane](#) to construct a 93-foot research vessel. [JMS Naval Architects](#) designed the research vessel to replace VIMS's current vessel, the R/V *Bay Eagle*. The new vessel will be capable of conducting fisheries assessments of greater capacity, in deeper waters and with a larger science

complement than the *Bay Eagle*.

The primary mission of the Institute's fleet is to provide inshore and offshore work platforms for the support of fisheries related oceanographic research projects. In addition, the new vessel will greatly expand VIMS's capability to perform general oceanographic research in the Chesapeake Bay and the mid-Atlantic near coastal waters. The research vessel offers capability in a small package that is also economic to build and operate.

Offshore Surveys

JMS designed the vessel to operate as an uninspected research vessel with an ABS Loadline. The design offers flexibility in science outfitting allowing for high utilisation and affordable operating day rates. The vessel is easily adaptable to evolving scientific research areas such as offshore oil & gas exploration surveys, wind energy development surveys, environmental impact studies, and the servicing of ocean observing systems.

Main propulsion is provided by a pair of 660 BHP tier III diesel engines coupled to a two-in/one-out marine gear driving a controllable pitch propeller shrouded within a nozzle. This arrangement will provide the capability to operate the vessel efficiently on a single propulsion engine when on station or during slow speed transits. A high performance rudder package and 250 HP omnidirectional flush mounted grid bow thruster provide excellent manoeuvrability. The vessel's capabilities are further enhanced by a dynamic positioning system for station keeping.

Oceanographic Payload and Deck Space

Oceanographic outfitting includes large wet and dry labs which have been designed for maximum flexibility to accommodate the many types of science that the vessel is expected to conduct. The 1,000 square foot main working deck allows for a 20 long ton science payload and provides a significant working platform for conducting fishing operations, over-the-side sampling and coring activities. There is also ample room and services to install a 20 foot science van for specialised science missions. The new research vessel will take advantage of the latest technology through an extensive array of acoustic instrumentation for the gathering and processing of data in support of fisheries research, oceanography and geophysical sciences.

The aft deck is fitted with a stern A-Frame with an 8,000lb safe working load for over the stern lifting operations and a side mounted J-Frame with an 4,000lb safe working load for conducting CTD operations. The principal fishing arrangement consists of a pair of trawl net reels and a pair of trawl winches with 4,000lb linear pull with 355 fathoms of 3/8" wire to support small mesh (200 mm net) bottom trawl surveys inshore and nearshore waters. An electric CTD (Conductivity, Temperature, and Depth) winch with 2,000m of 0.322" wire will also be fitted for operation from the side mounted J-Frame. There is also a knuckle boom deck crane with a 2,240lbs capacity at a 33 foot reach to support load handling operations.