NOAA Awards $95.4M Contract for Upgrades, Maintenance on NOAA's Oscar Dyson

NOAA Ship Oscar Dyson working in the Bering Sea in Alaska. Credit: NOAA Marine and Aviation Operations/CDR Carl Rhodes
From Keeley Belva, NOAA, June 18, 2025

NOAA has awarded $95,408,666 to JAG Alaska, Inc. from Seward, Alaska, to complete expanded upgrades and maintenance on NOAA Ship Oscar Dyson. Following the 2026 field season, the ship will go into a year-long maintenance period.

NOAA is working to maximize the service life of each of its vessels through long-term maintenance planning and tracking. The goal of this forward-looking maintenance is to provide up-to-date, dependable vessels for NOAA's scientists and science partners. NOAA anticipates that the *Oscar Dyson* will be available for service in time for the 2028 field season.

“These upgrades will help the ship continue to meet the needs of the nation in primarily Alaskan and Arctic waters well into the future,” said NOAA Corps Rear Adm. Chad Cary, director of the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps and NOAA Marine and Aviation Operations. “Modernizing the shipboard technology will improve the Dyson’s fuel efficiency and operational safety, while ensuring that future research performed by the Dyson continues to be second to none.”

NOAA Ship *Oscar Dyson* was commissioned in 2005 and plays a major role in collecting data that is used to manage Alaska pollock—one of the world’s largest commercial fisheries. Replacing the propulsion system with variable speed, Tier 4 generators, quiet air conditioning motors and cutting-edge technology will equip the *Dyson* to continue supporting future NOAA science missions. The comprehensive maintenance will also replace pumps, fans, cranes, fire detection system and radars, as well as increase the number of single-person staterooms.

NOAA has begun modifying other ships in its fleet to backfill the *Dyson* during the maintenance period. NOAA Ship *Bell M. Shimada* will be outfitted with polar life rafts, rescue boat heaters and other adaptations necessary for work in Alaska waters. These adjustments will help to ensure that the collection of science and data in Alaska, as supported by the *Dyson,* will continue seamlessly.

“Great news coming out of Alaska today. Supporting small shipyards in the state is vital to our blue economy, and I am excited to see these extensive upgrades to NOAA Ship *Oscar Dyson* happening right in our own backyard,” said Alaska Senator Lisa Murkowski. “The mid-life renovation of this critical research vessel will allow for the collection of accurate data that will inform Alaska’s fisheries – all while putting Alaskans to work. I appreciate NOAA’s investment in Alaska and our fisheries, and look forward to seeing the *Oscar Dyson* back out at sea.”

“I want to thank Secretary Lutnick and Acting NOAA Administrator Laura Grimm for prioritizing the completion of the contract to maintain NOAA Ship *Oscar Dyson*. Homeported in Kodiak, this research vessel plays a vital role in conducting surveys of fish, mammals and other invertebrates and helps support robust and sustainable fisheries,” said Alaska Senator Dan Sullivan. “Even better, I am glad to see one of our great Alaskan shipyards will be conducting the repairs, keeping the ship close to home so that it can swiftly return to its important work once the maintenance is finished.”

NOAA Marine and Aviation Operations operates a fleet of 15 hydrographic survey, oceanographic research and fisheries survey vessels. NOAA ships operate in the U.S. and around the world. The ships are run by a combination of NOAA commissioned officers and civilian professional mariners.