



# NOAA's Office of Marine and Aviation Operations

## Providing environmental intelligence for a dynamic world

NOAA's personnel, ships, and aircraft play a critical role in gathering environmental data vital to the nation's economic security, the safety of its citizens, and the understanding, protection, and management of its natural resources. NOAA's fleet of ships and aircraft is managed and operated by the Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO), an office comprising civilians, mariners, and officers of the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps, one of the seven uniformed services of the United States.

NOAA's fleet of 16 research and survey ships ranges from large oceanographic ships capable of exploring and charting the world's deepest oceans to smaller vessels responsible for surveying the shallow bays and inlets of the United States. The fleet supports a wide range of marine activities including fisheries surveys, nautical charting, and ocean and climate studies. However, NOAA's fleet is aging, with half of its vessels scheduled to retire within the next 10-12 years. NOAA's FY 2017 budget request includes funding for a new Regional Survey Vessel to fulfill the mission requirements of some of the retiring vessels, including support for fishery surveys critical to species management, habitat and hydrographic surveys, and disaster response.

NOAA's nine specialized aircraft provide a wide range of airborne capabilities. Our Lockheed WP-3D "Hurricane Hunter" aircraft are equipped with a variety of scientific instrumentation, radars, and recording systems for both *in situ* and remote sensing measurements of the atmosphere and the Earth. Together with NOAA's Gulfstream IV-SP hurricane surveillance jet, these aircraft greatly improve our physical understanding of hurricanes and enhance the accuracy of tropical cyclone forecasts. NOAA's light aircraft also play a vital role in monitoring our environment. Our King Air, Commander, and Twin Otter aircraft support marine mammal population studies, shoreline change assessments, oil spill investigations, and water resource/snowpack surveys for spring flood forecasts.



NOAA hurricane hunter WP-3D Orion and Gulfstream IV aircraft in flight



NOAA Ships Fairweather and Rainier underway in Alaska

NOAA continues its efforts to build a civilian and NOAA Corps officer workforce that is uniquely qualified to support NOAA's mission, as well as build partnerships with other federal agencies. For example, NOAA Corps officers are currently assigned to work in the Department of Defense, National Science Foundation, and the U.S. Senate among others where they lend their expertise and service. NOAA also continues to strengthen its partnership with the U.S. Coast Guard. The basic NOAA Corps officer training class is held at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, where newly commissioned officers train alongside Coast Guard officer candidates, developing skills and professional relationships that will benefit both services long into the future.



For more information, please visit: [www.noaa.gov](http://www.noaa.gov), [www.oma.noaa.gov](http://www.oma.noaa.gov), and [www.noaacorps.noaa.gov](http://www.noaacorps.noaa.gov)

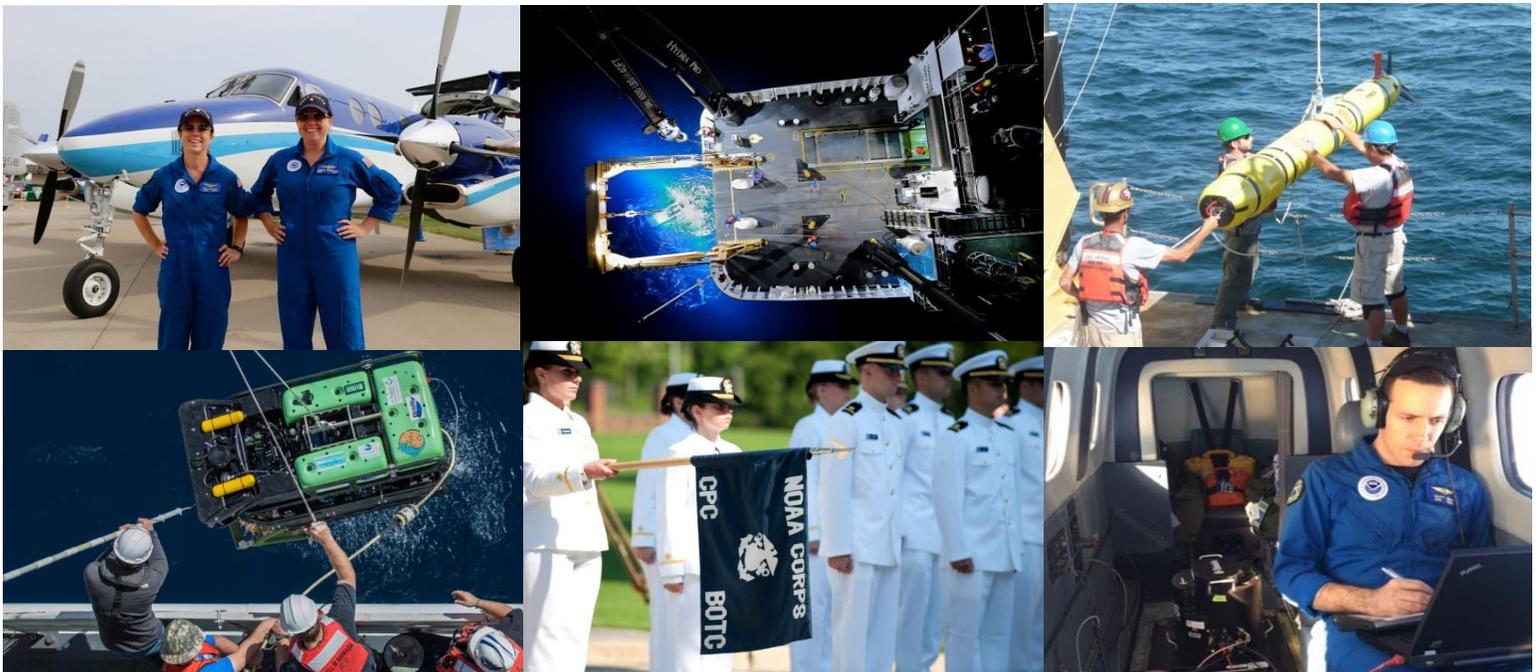




# FY 2017 Budget Request Highlights

The FY 2017 President's Budget Request for OMAO is \$289,298,000. This request will allow NOAA to make investments to maintain and expand the NOAA fleet in support of more robust stock assessments, faster updates to nautical charts, and improved ocean sensing and monitoring. Highlights include:

- **Regional Survey Vessel (RSV) Construction (-\$56.0M):** NOAA's request of \$24 million will supplement the FY 2016 funding of \$80 million for acquisition of one Research Survey Vessel. The RSV will support fishery surveys critical to species management, habitat and hydrographic surveys, and disaster response. Specific RSV design and capabilities will be optimally designed based on NOAA prioritized at-sea data collection requirements and regionally-driven specifications. Without this investment to retain current mission capacity and expertise, the NOAA fleet will decline by 50 percent from 16 to 8 active ships between FY 2017 and FY 2028.
- **Alternative Crewing (+\$2.0M):** The requested increase of \$2.0M will expand the rotational staffing program for licensed engineering officers on approximately twelve NOAA ships. The goal of this program is to allow consistent scheduled time-off, and reduce the attrition of NOAA's licensed Engineering Officers to 10 percent or less. The alternate staffing models will also reduce lost Days at Sea due to staffing shortfalls, and increase the quantity of preventive maintenance with fully staffed engineering departments.
- **Progressive Lifecycle Maintenance Program (+ \$5.0M):** The requested increase of \$5.0M will stabilize and improve the material condition of our ships and result in a fleet maintained at a higher state of readiness, extend service life, and avoid mechanical, structural, and mission equipment obsolescence.
- **Days at Sea:** The total request of \$184.4M supports 3,375 OMAO funded Days at Sea, with a ship utilization rate of about 90 percent, to support critical *in situ* collection of oceanic, hydrographic, and fisheries data.
- **Aviation Operations:** The total request of \$32.9M supports 3,947 OMAO-funded flight hours of critical real time observations.



## NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

For more information, please visit: <http://www.noaa.gov/budget>