The National Oceanographic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) of America now has two specialised fishery enforcement boats at work along the treacherous Alaskan coast. Used by the National Marine Fisheries Department, these 36 foot and 32 foot RIBs were designed and built by Almar Boats of Tacoma, USA, and are each powered by twin Hamilton HJ241 waterjets.

The two boats are of similar construction and design, although the larger vessel has more powerful Yanmar engines, greater fuel capacity and longer range. Both boats cruise at 30 knots and have a range of over 400 miles (640 km).

The 36 foot NOAA vessel patrols from Kodiak Island southwest of Anchorage, Alaska, while the smaller boat operates out of Sitka near the southern border with Canada. Conditions are demanding in both areas, with cold temperatures and rough seas, so these boats have been designed for safety, stability and reliability in all situations.

Each NOAA boat can comfortably accommodate three crew on a three day patrol. There are three berths, a head and shower, and a diesel stove which also doubles as a heater.

The seven-section tubes are constructed of tough welded polyurethane, with a second laminated 40 ounce layer for protection from the fender strip down to the connection point at the hull. This allows the NOAA boats to safely pull alongside working fishing trawlers to transfer an inspection officer. The twin Hamilton Waterjet set-up provides excellent power, manoeuvrability and control in these situations.

Footnote: Almar Boats has installed more than 1,000 Hamilton waterjets in its vessels.