

## Tug Towing Drilling Rig Having Engine Problems

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Jay Barrett/KMXT

Problems continue for Shell Oil's mobile drilling rigs in Alaska waters. The tug towing the Kulluk, which left Dutch Harbor last Friday, is having engine trouble in 20-foot seas about 50 miles south of Kodiak Island.

Coast Guard spokesman David Mosley in Anchorage says the tug Aiviq began experiencing engine problems late last night, but has enough power to maintain its position. Mosley said the vessels were 48-hours from any landfall, had they gone adrift.

The Kodiak-based cutter Alex Haley arrived on scene early this morning and is standing by to assist if the situation deteriorates.

Two tugs, the Guardsman and the Nanuk, are on their way from Seward, and should arrive early this afternoon.

Engine troubles haven't been the only issue on this voyage. Earlier Thursday the tow line between the Aiviq and Kulluk snapped in rough seas, but Mosley says the crew was able to re-establish the tow.

The other drill rig Shell leased this year has also had problems this summer. On its way to Seattle, the Noble Discoverer was held by the Coast Guard in Seward until last week because of safety and pollution control issues. The hold was released on December 19th, but the rig is still in Seward as of Thursday.