

# *New technique for identification and detection of fishing vessels tested*

A new technique that may permit the detection and identification of fishing vessels over large ocean areas through satellite surveillance was recently tested off the New England coast.

The Coast Guard participated in the experiments conducted jointly by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

A unique imaging radar system aboard a contract aircraft obtained data on the location, activity and size of vessels fishing in selected tracks of the ocean test area over the Georges Bank.

A Coast Guard C-130 aircraft with NASA panoramic photographic equipment on board simultaneously flew predetermined parallel routes with the contract aircraft, but below cloud cover, photographing the same area seen by the radar.

Meanwhile, other Coast Guard aircraft and three cutters located and identified vessels in the same track of ocean. Data obtained by the sensor radar can be confirmed by the photographs and visual sightings.

This radar is similar to sensor equipment to be installed on (SEASAT-A) Sea Satellite scheduled for launching by NASA in 1978.

If these tests prove successful, the satellite radar system will be an invaluable tool for NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service and the Coast Guard in fishing vessel surveillance and law enforcement.

The experiments were staged from the Coast Guard Air Station, Cape Cod, Mass.

Field operations were coordinated and directed on scene by Commander R.H. Overton, commanding officer of the Coast Guard Cutter CHASE out of Boston. W.F. Gandy, NMFS, test conductor, was also aboard the CHASE.

E.G. Woods of the NMFS and John Ivey, NASA, were program managers for the experiment.