

In-flight Trials for New ALB

Fugro has announced a new cycle of Airborne Lidar Bathymetry (ALB) system development and commenced flights trials of the Fugro LADS Mk 3 ALB system. The new system has successfully acquired accurate depth and hyperspectral data over test areas in St Vincent and Spencer Gulfs near Adelaide, South Australia.

The new generation Fugro LADS Mk 3 system has been developed from the operationally proven Fugro LADS Mk II and RAN LADS 2 technologies, and is now smaller, lighter and more efficient to operate. The Fugro LADS Mk 3 is designed for operation in a wide range of aircraft and is suitable for small turbo props or rotary wing aircraft alike. The new system continues to offer a high laser power, large aperture receiver and automatic gain controls, enabling superior system performance to collect bathymetry to IHO Order 1a and 1b survey requirements.

The laser rate of the Fugro LADS Mk 3 system has been increased to 1.5kHz and its maximum depth performance extended to 80 metres, subject to environmental conditions. The faster laser rate provides wider and more efficient swath widths up to 430 metres. The system also offers a range of complementary products, such as digital imagery and reflectance data that can be used to classify the seabed.

The Fugro LADS Mk 3 system can be used for a wide range of projects, including nautical charting, pre-seismic surveys, coastal engineering projects such as port development, and environmental surveys for habitat mapping and coastal zone management (CZM). The Fugro LADS Mk 3 system can also be fitted with a hyperspectral sensor (HSI) for simultaneous ALB/HSI data acquisition that enables further habitat mapping and CZM applications to be undertaken.

The Fugro LADS Mk 3 system build was completed in Adelaide at the end of March with ground and airborne trials occurring during April. It is planned that the Fugro LADS Mk 3 system will then be available from May 2011 for shallow water hydrographic surveys that Fugro conduct worldwide.