

Autonomous Launch and Recovery System Demonstrated



Planet Ocean Ltd & ASV Ltd, UK, recently demonstrated autonomous launch and recovery of multiple AUVs from an ASV as the closing part of their two-year Innovate UK project. The demonstration was in front of invited guests and project partners including Planet Ocean, National Oceanography Centre, ASV Ltd, University of Southampton and funders Innovate UK and Dstl. The event took

place in July 2017 in the Solent, UK.

Two extremely capable low cost AUVs were developed along with the launch and recovery systems which can be installed on almost any floating asset. The technology has also contributed to a University of Southampton project which has been air launching ecoSUB- μ AUVs from their SPOTTER Unmanned Air Vehicle.

ecoSUB- μ Autonomous Underwater Vehicles were launched autonomously from three launch tubes mounted on the stern of an ASV C-Worker-5 Unmanned Surface Vessel. Missions can be sent to the AUVs whilst in their launch tubes via the C-Worker communications after which the system can operate autonomously. The C-Worker can then act as a communications hub downloading high resolution data from the ecoSUB for storage or onward transmission through high bandwidth channels before collecting the AUVs using a specially designed recovery system modelled on a Jason's cradle.

This combination of platforms means that ecoSUB can be delivered quickly to the area of interest and deployed without the need for direct human intervention. The launch system developed by ASV can be scaled up; the C-Worker-7 can accommodate 60 ecoSUB- μ ASVs.

<https://www.hydro-international.com/content/news/autonomous-launch-and-recovery-demonstrated>
