

Contradictory



Welcome to this third edition of the Unmanned Systems special of *Hydro International*. It's the most successful so far. Many manufacturers are showcasing their products in the issue and to be honest, it was actually quite easy to collect an array of articles for this special to keep you up to date with all the developments in this fast growing sector of our industry. It all sounds quite contradictory. Wasn't the offshore industry in a slump? And aren't large companies laying people off by the hundreds, if not thousands? Yes, that might all be true. But maybe the community around the building and deployment of Unmanned Systems at sea is showing opportunities that could serve as an example. I would like to point out our overview article Autonomous Underwater Vehicles on page 12 by Ioseba Tena, a regular author for *Hydro International*, who shares an overview of the

market in 2016: where are we and where are we going? Ioseba Tena makes an interesting remark, namely that he holds the low oil price responsible for the growth in this part of the market. The low oil price is probably the most talked about issue at board meetings, conferences and tradeshow and other opportunities including two or more hydrographers. The dip in the oil price has seen a reduction of work in the offshore sector, and oil companies and suppliers in the chain are looking for more cost efficient ways to operate leading to an increase in the use of AUVs, just because of their level of technical and operational maturity at a very competitive price. Tena identifies a second trend: smaller vehicles with bigger impact. It is exactly this that makes it deployment easier and again, cheaper. Big systems are there as well. They might very well serve the needs of companies needing to survey large areas and sometimes even replace vessel and crew – and of course in that sense – although big, may save costs in the end. On the edge of traditional hydrography much research is being conducted on habitat mapping, marine renewables and fisheries, to name but a few. AUV technology is very much a part of the scope of the researchers in these fields. Indeed, it's really not very bad for the AUV sector in this year of suffering to traditional hydrography. Hopefully the manufacture and deployment of all these systems, old and new, small and big, close and far away, can serve as a contradictory development to the general mood in our sector. I hope you enjoy reading this special, that it inspires you and that it helps your business!

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