

New Zealand Navy Increase REMUS AUV Capability

The Royal New Zealand Navy (RNZN) has recently purchased an additional Hydroid Remus 100 AUV. This purchase will bring the fleet to four complete systems. The RNZN purchased two REMUS 100 systems in 2006 and followed up with a third in 2007. Along with the new vehicle, the RNZN has also ordered a number of sensors and upgrades for their existing systems, designed to increase their operational capability.

Since entering service, the vehicles have successfully performed a wide range of military and civilian tasks including location of downed aircraft, police and customs operations and military exercises both within New Zealand and overseas.

These REMUS systems came into the public eye last year, when New Zealand was asked to assist Tonga, in the location of the ferry, "Princess Ashika". On August 19th, the vessel sank in open ocean, with the loss of 68 passengers and 4 crew. Following receipt of distress messages, floating wreckage was found by a Royal New Zealand Air Force Orion P3 Maritime Patrol Aircraft.

The RNZN Remus team was flown to Nuku Alofa and taken to the wreckage area by the Tonga Defence Services. The ship was located and identified, lying in 110 meters of water and images were recorded of the vessel and associated debris field.

We believe this is likely to be the first time that a sunken vessel, has been successfully located in open ocean, through the rapid deployment of an AUV.

The RNZN contract was let to New Zealand Ocean Technology Ltd., (NZOT) Hydroid's representative for New Zealand. NZOT received the Minister of Defence Award of Excellence to Industry 2009, for services associated with Mines Countermeasures, including supply and support of Hydroid's REMUS 100 systems. At the presentation to Managing Director, Ron Tyson, the Minister stated: "He has delivered some world leading technology, NZ tailored solutions at extremely competitive costs".

<https://www.hydro-international.com/content/news/new-zealand-navy-increase-remus-auv-capability>
