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PANTHER WINS OVER PERSIAN GULF

Abu Dhabi-based, CCC (Underwater Engineering), reports significant savings in operational costs since deploying their new Saab Seaeye Panther XT Plus ROV in the shallow waters of the upper Persian Gulf.

“Its ten-thruster power easily overcomes the four-knot currents,” says CCC’s ROV Manager, Tavis Letherby, “and having two powerful Schilling manipulators to hand is a combination that stands out from everything else.”

He finds that 90 per cent of the tasks normally undertaken by CCC’s 150 HP hydraulic work-class ROVs is now possible with the Panther, bringing major savings in costs and logistics.

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CCC’s ROV Manager, Tavis Letherby



He quotes the ease of moving a 14 ton system rather than one weighing 60 tons; or having a faster 12 hour set up, rather than taking four days; and providing just 150 kVA of power generation instead of 500 kVA. Adding that spares and repairs are also cheaper.

“Being able to use smaller ships in support of a smaller system is a big advantage in the upper Gulf,” says Letherby, who points out that big vessels are not as viable in the shallow waters of the region as in other parts of the world.

Its hyper-saline waters also make the electric vehicles better suited to the Gulf when compared with an hydraulic ROV that can have problems keeping oil cool.

What particularly wins over his clients, says Letherby, is the unique combination of 10 powerful thrusters and twin Schilling manipulators, which means the ROV can hold station in strong cross currents whilst working at complex or robust tasks.

“In the Panther, we get a vehicle that has 50 per cent more power than any other ROV of its type, can swim 30 per cent faster – and has a manipulator package with the dexterity of a human arm, yet the muscle power of an hydraulic work ROV.”

He quotes one client saving 10 hours of barge time and other costs in their pipe laying operations by using the Panther XT Plus, rather than an hydraulic work ROV to release a Head of Pipe Anchorage made fast to a platform leg. Typically an hydraulic work vehicle would be launched to cut through and sacrifice a 75mm wire pendant. The cost-saving alternative was to secure the anchorage with disposable six-inch rope that could be cut with a knife – a task normally needing a diver’s dexterity (and lengthy dive time whilst working in 60 metres) but made possible with the humanoid deftness of the Panther’s powerful manipulator that can slice through the rope in a moment.

The design of the new Panther XT Plus draws upon the success of the Panther light work ROV concept with an added power boost and re-designed front end that can accommodate a greater range of tools and sensors including the larger and heavier manipulator arms.

For working to a tight deadline or in difficult conditions, the 10 thrusters in hand brings an added bonus to CCC operators by offering a reassuringly high level of redundancy.

CCC’s 1000 metre-rated Panther XT Plus comes with an electronics pod for additional sensors, four cameras including a Kongsberg compact zoom model, and a Tritech Super SeaKing sonar, together with the Schilling manipulators and a tether management system.

Saab Seaeye is the world’s largest manufacturer and market leader in electric ROV systems, and provider of autonomous and hybrid underwater vehicles. Markets include offshore energy, defence forces, marine science and hydro-engineering.

CCC (Underwater Engineering) S.A.C., established in 1976, is a leading provider of offshore construction and subsea services to the oil and gas industry in the Middle East and Indian regions.

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