



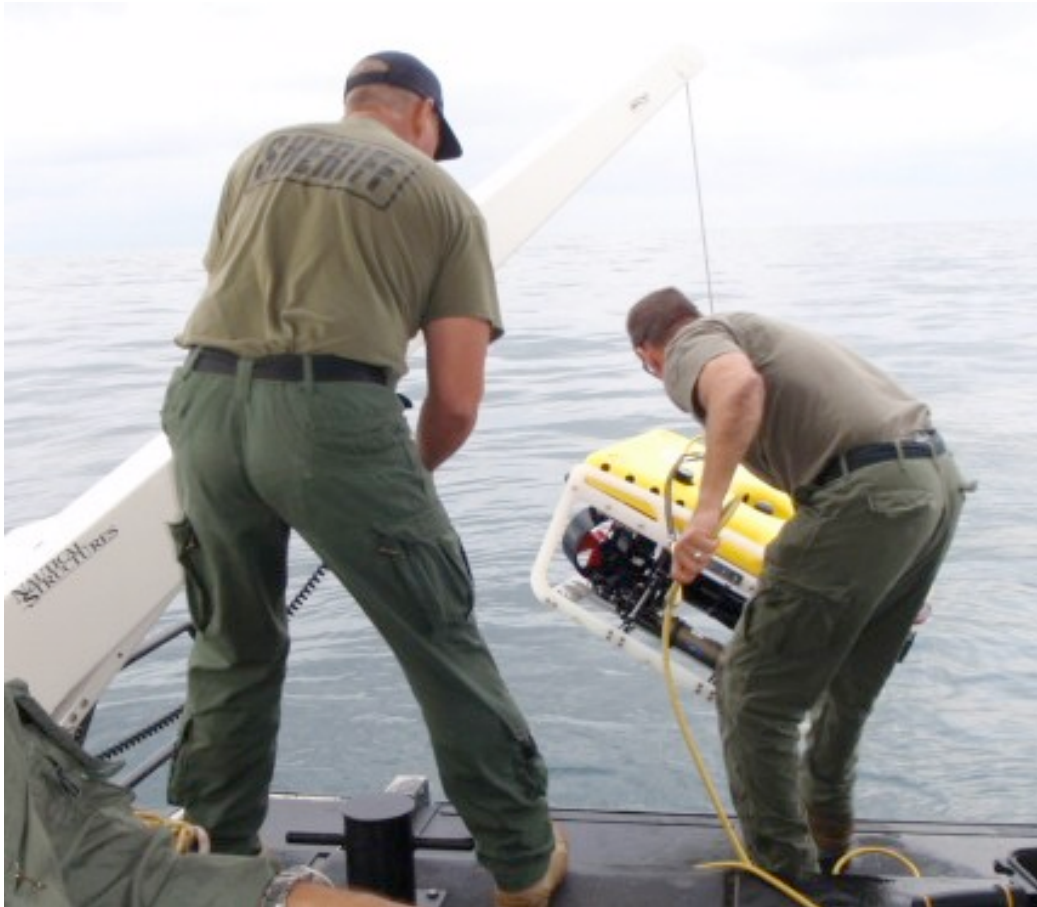
**SAAB**

## **PLANE CRASH TO BE INVESTIGATED BY ROV**

**Los Angeles Sheriff's Department is first in America to get deep-swimming remotely operated vehicle.**

When an experimental plane crashed into the ocean off Catalina Island near Los Angeles killing the occupants, search and recovery proved impossible. The depth of water and strength of currents made conditions too dangerous for divers.

Now the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department (LASD) is to get a deep-swimming remotely operated vehicle (ROV) ready for such investigations.



**Deputies at LASD have successfully used their existing Falcon for rapid deployment during inshore operations.**

This makes them the first law enforcement agency in the US to own a 1000 metre rated remotely operated vehicle.

The ROV chosen is the Falcon DR from Saab Seaeye, picked by the LASD as 'the

best of all compact ROVs’.

‘Our inspection and recovery capability will be significantly extended,’ says Deputy Stephen Doucette of the LASD’s Special Enforcement Bureau – Emergency Services Detail. ‘We will now be able to reach larger areas offshore and around Los Angeles, and undertake Homeland Security operations.’

It will aid the recovery of previously unrecoverable boats and aircraft, including inspecting the Catalina site, and will be deployed from a new 55 foot vessel specially designed and built for the purpose.

Most important for Deputy Doucette is that diver safety is enhanced by using an ROV. ‘It means we no longer have to place a diver in hazardous environments, unless absolutely necessary.’

He explains that the ROV operator can pinpoint what the diver cannot see by using the Falcon’s onboard camera and high intensity lights, and direct the diver to the location of interest, saving dive time and hazardous searches.

The ROV can also keep a watchful eye over the diver as he works, further adding to diver safety.

Saving dive time is another major benefit, says Deputy Doucette. ‘By using an ROV we can keep divers for essential tasks only – and when divers are used, their tools and equipment can be transported back and forth by the ROV, saving valuable dive time.’

The Falcon DR is the second Falcon bought by the department, the first being a 300 metre rated model already in use for rapid deployment during in-shore search and recovery operations.

The LASD picked the Saab Seaeye Falcon range as superior to other compact ROVs, with its proven reliability in hostile underwater environments and an ability to hold steady in strong cross currents whilst filming or undertaking delicate manipulative tasks.

Rapid role-change during operations is a particular benefit for them. Its intelligent electronics system offers a ‘plug and go’ simplicity that allows up to 128 devices to be added and changed easily – essential during Homeland Security missions.



**Tools and survey kit can easily be added to the Falcon DR and changed for different missions.**

For instance, an explosives detection system is a role made available to the Falcon that was developed in collaboration with the LASD Arson/Explosives Detail

and Symphotic TII Corporation together with Roper Resources of Canada.

'It offers the LASD an underwater capability that greatly enhances public safety, and is an asset to law enforcement,' says Chris Roper, Director of Sales for Symphotic the North American distributor for Saab Seaeye. He is delighted that LASD has selected the Falcon for their search and rescue operations and looks forward to placing the system with other law enforcement organisations throughout North America.

Symphotic TII Corporation provides instruments for discovery, detection, and determination for applications underwater and in hazardous environments. Other specialist systems fitted to the Falcon DR include an Imagenex side-sonar system and a Linkquest tracking device, along with standard fit items such as a manipulator arm.

The specially designed LASD 55 foot vessel that will retain and deploy the ROV has a winch and control cabin for housing the ROV's control consol. The other Falcon ROV will be held at the department's headquarters.

As with the existing Falcon's operation two LASD deputies control the ROV onboard: one pilots the ROV using a joystick whilst observing a flat panel display that relays images from the onboard camera in high-resolution colour video, along with checking critical environmental data; the second deputy monitors and manipulates GPS tracing information and the ROV's onboard scanning sonar, together with the manipulator arm.

The successful deployment of the Falcon ROV system and its expansion into a deep swimming capability, has positioned the LASD as America's leader in law enforcement underwater search and recovery operations.

Saab Seaeye is the world's largest manufacturer of electric ROVs, used in the oil and gas industry, defence forces, search and rescue, marine science and hydro engineering. Its parent company, Saab Underwater Systems, is itself a world leader in sensor systems, precision engagement systems, and remotely operated and autonomous underwater vehicles.

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