

# Press release



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29 June 2007

**JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT IT WAS SAFE TO GO BACK INTO THE WATER...**

**There are unmanned vehicles about!**

**EUROPEAN AUTONOMOUS VEHICLE CHALLENGE  
PRESS DAY 13<sup>th</sup> JULY 2007**

The finishing touches to a number of highly sophisticated underwater vehicles are underway for the 2007 Student Autonomous Underwater Challenge Europe (SAUC-E). The event, which is unique to the UK, will challenge university teams from all over Europe to design and build the ultimate Autonomous Underwater Vehicle (AUV). The vehicle must be capable of carrying out a number of specified underwater missions during the competition which will take place at the Ocean Basin Tank at Haslar in Gosport on 12-15 July.

The University of Girona, Spain won the very first competition of its kind in 2006 and following their success, 8 other university teams will be battling to become their successors. There is a very strong contingency from France this year, with two teams from the other side of the channel entered\*. From the UK, teams are entered from Cambridge University, Southampton, Heriot-Watt, Bath, Leicester and Glasgow.

Designed to inspire innovation and to foster ties between academia, industry and the Ministry of Defence (MOD), the event will encourage the next generation of scientists and engineers to think about underwater technology and its future possibilities.

The event is organised by the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) and the project organiser Phil Brown from Naval Systems, Dstl said, "SAUC-E 2006 gave the students a real insight into what systems engineering is all about. Unmanned vehicles or robot vehicles are attracting a lot of interest within the military for land, sea and air operations. Real autonomy for these vehicles remains a largely unresolved problem and the MOD wants to encourage innovation in this area."

The challenge is sponsored by the MOD's Research Acquisition Organisation (RAO) and Dstl. Following the success of the 2006 event, SAUC-E has been granted further funding and the RAO and DGA (part of the French MOD) are working together to develop the event.

For more information, please visit [www.dstl.gov.uk/news\\_events/competitions/sauce/index.php](http://www.dstl.gov.uk/news_events/competitions/sauce/index.php). If you would like to attend, registration forms are also available on the website.

The press day will take place on the 13<sup>th</sup> July 2007, if you have any queries please contact Hannah Fletcher in the Communications Team at Dstl on 01252 455994/07788 564624.

**-Ends-**

**For more information, photographs or a copy of the official event DVD, please contact:**

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**Notes to Editors:**

**Dstl**

The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) is a centre of scientific excellence for the Ministry of Defence (MOD). Its 3,500 strong workforce includes some of the nation's most talented and creative scientists with the brief to ensure that the UK Armed Forces and Government are supported in-house by the very best impartial scientific and technological advice. Dstl's unique position at the heart of the MOD means that its advice is trusted by governments, academia, industry and international partners. It offers timely and accurate advice at all levels of military planning and operations, both overseas and on the home front. For more information please visit [www.dstl.gov.uk](http://www.dstl.gov.uk).

Dstl takes a proactive approach to encourage and develop young people's interest in science. As part of this approach, Dstl works in partnership with the education community to inspire teachers and students alike, by feeding their curiosity and challenging young minds. Dstl works throughout the many stages of the education system, from primary through to professional Chartership, and we aim to ensure students, teachers, schools, universities and colleges are supported and encouraged to achieve their best in science and technology.

**Student Autonomous Underwater Challenge Europe (SAUC-E)**

The challenge, aimed at teams of University students, was to design and build an autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV) and then undertake a specified in-water "mission" with the vehicle. The competition is sponsored by Ministry of Defence's (MOD) Research Acquisition Organisation (RAO) Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl), and DGA (part of the French MOD). For more information about the event, please visit [www.dstl.gov.uk/news\\_events/competitions/sauce/index.php](http://www.dstl.gov.uk/news_events/competitions/sauce/index.php)

\*The two French teams are:

- Informatique Signaux et Systemes de Sophia Antipolis
- Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Ingénieurs des Etudes des Techniques d'Armement

**Press Day**

The Press Day will be Friday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2007 at:

Ocean Basin Tank  
Haslar  
Gosport

1030hrs – 1100hrs Arrival, registration and coffee

1100hrs – 1230hrs Overview briefing and tour of the AUVs in action

1230hrs – 1430hrs Lunch and close

Travel details will be sent out at a later date to those who have registered to attend.