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Total authorizes trials of inspection robot on North Sea platform

Written by
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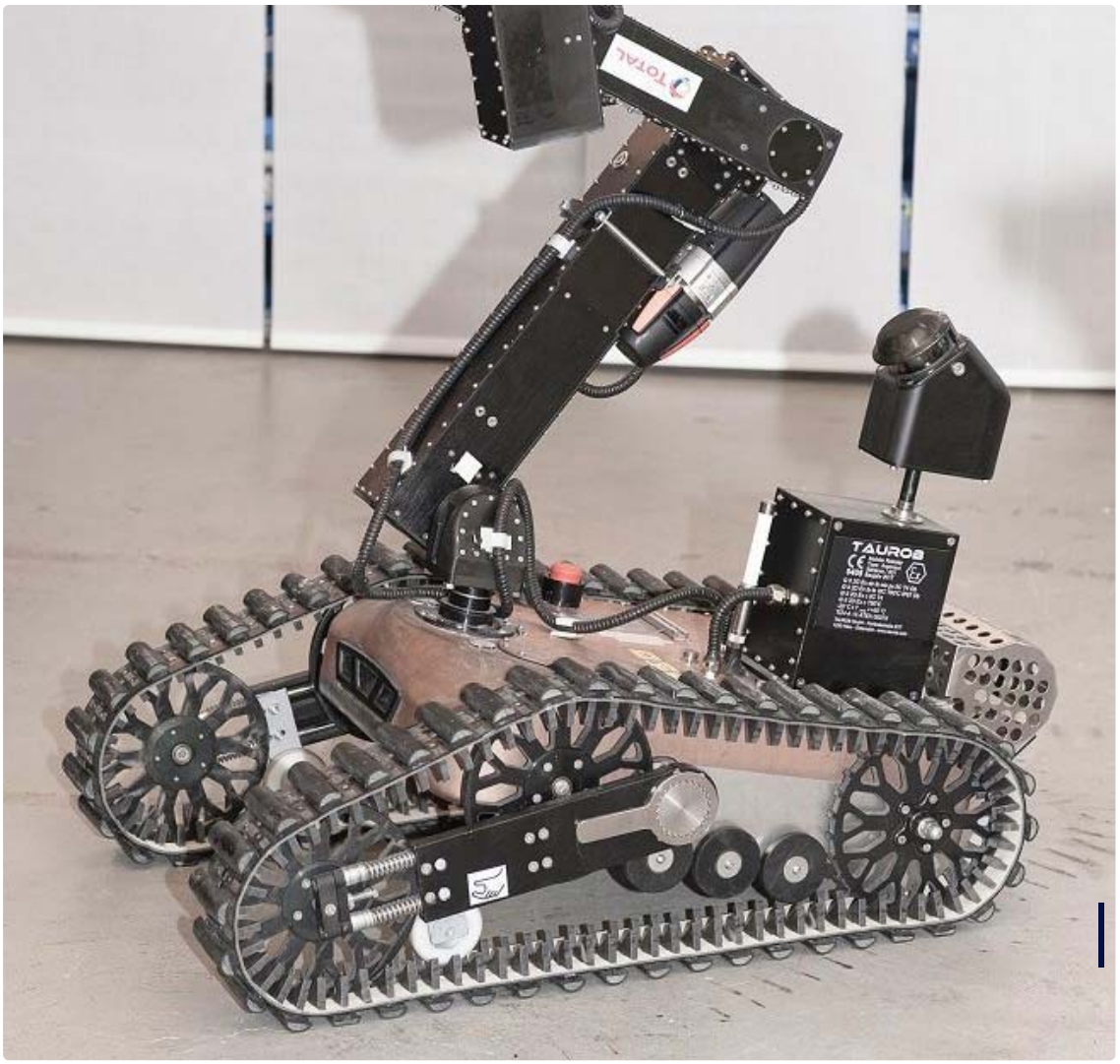

An autonomous ground robot will be deployed for the first time for inspection purposes offshore on Total's Alwyn platform in the UK northern North Sea.

Under the 18-month project, the Oil & Gas Technology Centre, Total E&P, Austria's taurob and Germany's Technische Universitaet Darmstadt (TU Darmstadt) will develop the robot for trials both at Alwyn and onshore at Total's Shetland Gas Plant which receives production from the Laggan-Tormore fields.

TU Darmstadt and taurob collaborated to win Total's ARGOS (Autonomous Robots for Gas and Oil Sites) competition in 2017. This involved developing an autonomous robot that could perform routine tasks and respond to challenges in a simulated oil and gas operational environment.

The robot is ATEX-certified (certified to work in gas environments without risk of ignition), can perform visual inspections, read dials, level gauges and valve positions, navigate through narrow pathways and up/down stairs, measure

temperature and gas concentration, and detect and navigate around obstacles and humans.

According to the Centre, the project will develop two further versions of the ARGOS robot that are more robust and reliable, provide improved functionality and can be operated by workers offshore without the need for onsite robotics specialists.

Jean-Michel Munoz, Next-Generation Conventionals Manager for Total, said: “Surface robotics has the potential to completely change the way we operate and design facilities in the future. Implementing this technology on our sites will bring benefits in terms of operation safety and cost optimization.

“This development of a fully autonomous robot for operator rounds and anomaly detection is the first step in implementing robotics solutions at industrial scale.”

Source: Offshore

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