

MEDIA RELEASE

Flinders University, ENSTA Bretagne and Naval Group partners on autonomous maritime vehicles

ADELAIDE, AUSTRALIA: Research in the fast emerging field of autonomous maritime vehicles will be significantly boosted under a new international collaboration between Australian and French academic institutions and industry.

A Memorandum of Understanding covering research, development and education has been reached between leading research institutions Flinders University in Australia and French Graduate School of Engineering ENSTA Bretagne, with global shipbuilder Naval Group.

The agreement was signed in Adelaide on 12 February by the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Naval Group, Mr Hervé Guillou, Director of ENSTA Bretagne, Mr Pascal Pinot and President and Vice-Chancellor of Flinders University Professor Colin Stirling at a ceremony attended by the Premier of South Australia, Steven Marshall MP and President, Regional Council of Brittany, Mr Loïc Chesnais-Girard.

Autonomous maritime vehicle research is a key strength at both Flinders and ENSTA Bretagne, and is an increasingly important area for defence and civilian applications. Researchers at Flinders have established a close research relationship with ENSTA Bretagne and the institutions are pleased to be working collaboratively with Naval Group in a move that will further enhance the alliance between France and Australia.

Students from Flinders and ENSTA Bretagne will also benefit from the agreement thanks to a focus on internships and work experience programs for students across both countries. The collaboration opens the pathway for Flinders students to undertake internships in France as well as French students to spend time in Flinders research laboratories.

Flinders University Vice-Chancellor Professor Colin Stirling says “I am delighted that Flinders University continues to strengthen its relationship with ENSTA Bretagne and Naval Group in the vital area of autonomous systems and maritime vehicle research.”

“This relationship will enable our students to benefit from exchange opportunities that will expose them to some of the most advanced research in this area and to create opportunities that will strengthen the relationship between South Australia and the Brittany region of France.”

ENSTA Bretagne’s Director, Pascal Pinot says “There is growing global interest in the emerging field of autonomous marine vehicles and we are pleased to be further building our relationship with Flinders University and Naval Group as a historic partner in developing these exciting technologies.”

“The exchange of research knowledge is a vital element in advancing the evolution and the application of autonomous technologies. France and Australia are modern, progressive and ambitious nations and agreements such as this serve to further strengthen our country-to-country relationship.”

Naval Group’s Chief Technical Officer and Innovation Director Eric Papin says “Flinders University and ENSTA Bretagne are partners of choice when it comes to autonomous systems, which are one of the major challenges of future naval systems.”

“Naval Group is proud to be part of this tripartite effort covering research, development and education; it will allow our team to progress towards smarter naval products.”

In July 2018, Flinders became the first research institution outside of France invited to join CELADON, an association of leading industry and academic institutions (including ENSTA Bretagne) that operates land-based and marine facilities adjacent to the French Naval Academy in Brest, France. The signing of this MoU provides further opportunities to enhance collaboration with the Brittany region.

(ends 13/2/19)

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About Flinders University

Flinders University is a globally focused, locally connected institution that exemplifies teaching, learning and research excellence. 90 per cent of our research is ranked at or above world class by Excellence in Research for Australia. With maritime and defence research centres at our Bedford Park and Tonsley campuses in the heart of South Australia’s technology and manufacturing innovation precinct, we have one of Australia’s fastest growing engineering and computing departments. The Flinders Centre for Maritime Engineering, Control and Imaging (CMECI) has significant experience in the design of underwater vehicles, vehicle autonomy systems, mission planning, navigation in GPS-denied environments, robotics, control systems, signal processing, instrumentation and embedded systems.

About ENSTA Bretagne

ENSTA Bretagne is a French Multidisciplinary Graduate and Post-Graduate Engineering School and Research Institute, under tutelage of the Ministry of the Armed Forces. ENSTA Bretagne aims to produce Engineers capable of mastering the design of complex, industrial systems in an international environment, required by civil industries and the French Defence Procurement Agency (DGA). ENSTA Bretagne is renowned for its specialized courses in Maritime Engineering, IT, Mechanics and Project Management, such as: Naval architecture, Robotics, Autonomous Underwater Vehicles, Hydrography (cat. A), Software & Cyber-security, Embedded Systems & AI, Signal Processing, Pyrotechnics, Modelling and related areas.

www.ensta-bretagne.fr/eu

About Naval Group

Naval Group is a European leader in naval defence. As an international high-tech company, Naval Group uses its extraordinary know-how, unique industrial resources and capacity to arrange innovative strategic partnerships to meet its customers’ requirements. The group designs, builds and supports submarines and surface ships. It also supplies services to shipyards and naval bases. In addition, the group offers a wide range of marine renewable energy solutions. Attentive to corporate social responsibility, Naval Group adheres to the United Nations Global Compact. The group reports revenues of €3.7 billion and has a workforce of 13,429 (data for 2017).