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**New project sees first autonomous robot deployed at North Sea platform**

Total, The Oil & Gas Technology Centre and taurob in partnership with Technische Universitaet Darmstadt in Germany are executing a project that can accommodate robots with humans on the North Sea platform.

The project will take up to 18 months to develop and trial a mobile robot for autonomous operational inspection of facilities on offshore Abwyn platform and Total’s onshore Shetland Gas Plant.

The trial is specified to be the first time an autonomous ground robot will be used on an operational oil and gas installation.

The project is designed to start a revolution in robotics offshore by improving safety, enhancing productivity and reducing costs.

The Technology Centre, along with Total, is developing the robot in Germany with Austrian manufacturer, taurob and TU Darmstadt, who won Total’s autonomous robots for gas and oil sites (ARGOS) challenge in 2017.

"Total believes that robots have the potential to play an important role on offshore platforms."

Responding to challenges in a simulated oil and gas operational environment and performing routine tasks are the challenges involved in developing an autonomous robot.

The robot developed by taurob and TU Darmstadt is ATEX-certified, which means it can perform tasks such as visual inspections, read dials, level gauges and valve positions, navigate through narrow pathways and up and down stairs, measure temperature and gas concentration, as well as detect and navigate around obstacles and humans without any risk of ignition.

The project will see development of another two robust and reliable versions of the successful ARGOS robot that has better functionality to be operated by offshore workers to replace the need for on-site robotics experts.

Total E&P Technology & Innovation head Dave Mackinnon said: "Total believes that robots have the potential to play an important role on offshore platforms."

“We are on the cusp of delivering technology that will improve safety, reduce costs and even prolong the life of North Sea operations. Robots represent an exciting new paradigm for the oil and gas offshore industry and Total is proud to be part of it.”

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