



Presenter Biographies Day 3 –

Daily Host – Maaten Furlong – **Associate Director NOC National Marine Facilities**



Dr Maaten Furlong is a Systems Engineer with over 20 years of experience in Marine Autonomous Systems (MAS). He has worked on most aspects of the R&D and operation of MAS and has led and participated in numerous science and engineering expeditions.

From 2013 to 2022 he was head of the NOC's Marine Autonomous and Robotics Systems (MARS) group, and was instrumental in expanding the size of the team. In this role, he oversaw the operations and development of the MAS fleet and was actively involved in improving operational efficiency. He has won Innovate UK funding and was responsible for the technical development of the £16M Oceanids programme for which he acted as a technical advisor. In 2021 he led the Future Marine Autonomous Systems work package of the Net Zero Oceanographic Capability project looking at decarbonising oceanographic observations.

In 2022 he became the Associate Director of NOC's National Marine Facilities division, where he oversees MARS, the wider National Marine Equipment Pool and the operations of the UK's research vessels RRS *Discovery* and the RRS *James Cook*.

Theme 4

Session Chair Chloe Yarren - BMT

Chloe Yarren – Marine biogeochemist at the National Oceanography Centre



Chloe Yarren is the Maritime Autonomous Systems Engineering Lead at BMT. She graduated Swansea University with a degree in Theoretical Physics before joining QinetiQ to work in mine countermeasures. Chloe has been at BMT for seven years, working mostly in maritime consultancy for complex systems, and specialising in autonomy in recent years. Chloe has led BMT's internal autonomy research and development theme as well as delivering research and innovation to customers. Chloe sits on various industry groups including the Society of Maritime Industries Autonomy Council, the Maritime Autonomous Systems Regulatory Working Group and the UK's Maritime and Coastguard Agency National Correspondence Group. Chloe's recent work includes advising on the regulation of autonomous systems, providing engineering expertise into reducing the security risk of AUV operation and developing concepts of employment for Multi-Domain Integrated Systems.

George Morton – National Oceanography Centre



George Morton is a Chartered Engineer with seven years of experience in the Oil and Gas industry, where he held roles in operations, projects, and finance. More recently, he spearheaded maritime decarbonisation initiatives at Ocean Infinity, a leading UK marine technology company. In late 2023, George founded Online Oceans, a Southampton-based start-up aimed at enabling low-cost ocean

access through affordable, long-endurance ocean robots. Online Oceans' first product, the Solar Scout, is a 2.4-meter solar-electric ocean robot designed for six-month deployments in the open ocean.

John Houlder – Sonardyne



At Sonardyne John is a Senior Product Manager, responsible for Sonardyne's portfolio of Hybrid-Navigation systems, including the SPRINT-Nav family. John also manages the Product Management function at Sonardyne, with a keen interest in making sure Sonardyne's technology led development translates to easy to use, valuable products for subsea robotics and survey.

Before working as at Sonardyne John was a Senior Surveyor with MMT involved in high resolution high accuracy marine Survey, this passion for high quality data and seabed mapping still informs the work he does within Sonardyne

Matt Smith – BMT



Matt is a Senior Navigation and Seamanship Engineer with BMT, a role he has held since January 2023, before which he was a Royal Navy Navigation Officer in a seagoing career lasting over a decade. During his time in the Royal Navy, he gained his degree in Maritime Studies, achieved RN Master Mariner status, operated around the world, commanded a coastal patrol vessel and served as a Navigation Officer on both Queen Elizabeth carriers.

Since joining BMT, Matt has undertaken a wide variety of work for a range of clients, including looking at novel position, navigation and timing solutions for use by military assets and numerous tasks relating to the design, operation, assurance and certification of MASS. He was solely responsible for the creation of the UK Naval Authority and Technology Group Situational Awareness Design and Assurance Tool.

Matt is an Associate Fellow of the Royal Institute of Navigation and sits on the committee of their Maritime Navigation Group.

Nigel Lee – Robosys Automation



Nigel is the Chief Strategy Officer for Robosys Automation with offices in UK, USA, Canada and India. Nigel is a dynamic, entrepreneurial and results focused Global Sales & Business Leader, with a track record of driving sustainable, profitable, year on year growth in Public Companies, Private Equity owned companies and SMEs, where he has successfully managed sales revenues in excess of £100M per annum.

He has over 17 years of high tempo global defence, maritime and commercial sales experience with Lockheed Martin, Ultra Electronics and 6 years under US Private Equity ownership as VP Sales at Domo Tactical Communications.

Previously Nigel served in the Royal Navy for 23 years as both an engineer and a seaman/warfare officer, on both ships and submarines. Throughout his career he has been extensively connected with the sea from extensive service in submarines and ships to more recently enabling maritime autonomy for unmanned vessels.

Nigel is a Council member of the Society of Maritime Industries (SMI) Maritime Autonomous Systems Group.

Richard Mills – Cellula Robotics



Richard Mills is the Chief Commercial Officer at Cellula Robotics. He has a passion to drive the adoption of long range Autonomous Underwater Vehicles (AUVs) across market segments. His subsea career started with International Submarine Engineering (ISE) Ltd. in Vancouver, Canada in 2008, working predominantly with their Explorer class of AUVs. He joined Kongsberg Maritime in 2012, leading their Marine Robotics sales team for a decade. There he developed a global team of high performing professionals, promoting and selling HUGIN AUVs and the Sounder Uncrewed Surface Vehicle (USV). In January 2023 Richard moved to Washington DC, where he lead the newly established Kongsberg

Discovery's sales team across the Americas. This included all product lines, from fishery sonars to radios and radars, as well as AUVs and USVs.

Richard Joined Cellula Robotics in mid-2024 and leads their commercial activities, including sales, marketing, partnerships and more. He is keen to build awareness of the potential of fuel cell powered AUVs for survey, science, and security.

Prior to joining the subsea industry, Richard served in the Royal Air Force and worked with Army Air Corps for 16 years. He is a life member of the Marine Technology Society; a panel member of the Society of Underwater Technology's Panel on Underwater Robotics; a volunteer technical reviewer for the IEEE and MTS Oceans conference; and has served as board member with a small underwater vehicle technology company.

Graceann Robertson –Verlume



Graceann Robertson – Marketing Manager, Verlume

Graceann Robertson is a senior marketing and communications professional with eight years of experience in the energy industry. In the role of marketing manager at Verlume, Graceann is the focal point for managing product brands and developing Verlume's image to support the company's ambitious growth plans.

Following her first three-year stint at Verlume, she spent two years in the energy team of a communications and marketing agency working with clients across oil & gas and renewables markets. She returned to Verlume in July 2021 to rebrand the company and is now driving the brand into wider energy markets.

Graceann is a graduate of the University of Aberdeen, holding a joint honours degree in Business Management and French, as well as recently obtaining a diploma in Sustainable Marketing from the Chartered Institute of Marketing.

Graceann has previously been co-chair of the Aberdeen Renewable Energy Group Young Professionals Network and marketing co-ordinator of the Energy Institute Young Professionals Network.

Dan Hook – RAD Propulsion



Dan Hook is a qualified Naval Architect and Chartered Engineer. He has worked in the marine robotics sector for over 20 years, first as a co-founder and Managing Director of ASV Ltd (which sold to L3 Harris in 2018), then as the CTO of Ocean Infinity and now founder CEO of RAD. A big supporter of young engineers and start-up companies he is also a Trustee of the National Oceanography Centre. His current work is focussed on decarbonisation, electric drives, control systems and the industrialisation of unmanned systems.

Anahita Laverick - OSHEN Ltd



Holding a degree in Aeronautical Engineering from Imperial College London, Anahita completed her Master's in the design and navigation of transatlantic autonomous micro-vessels. In early 2022, she founded Oshen, a startup focused on the mass deployment of autonomous, micro-vessels for ocean data collection. Oshen's microASVs offer the potential for persistent, low-cost monitoring in various applications, from meteorological data to marine conservation. Anahita currently oversees Oshen's strategic development and hardware design, applying her specialised knowledge to advance autonomous marine sensing technologies.

David Rennie - Unique Group



David Rennie holds a BSc in Electrical and Electronic Engineering from Edinburgh University and is a member of the IET. Based in Aberdeenshire, Scotland, David began his career at GSE Rentals, where he spent 16 years as a Geophysical Survey Equipment Engineer, working with systems such as MBES, side scan sonar, sub-bottom profiler, and magnetometers. During this time, he developed a multiplexed gradiometer system for use with EdgeTech and Klein sonars, creating the accompanying acquisition control software.

David then joined Fugro Survey as an AUV Support Engineer, focusing on the Kongsberg Hugin AUV operated from their Aberdeen base. In 2011, he transitioned to Senenergy Survey & GeoEngineering (later Lloyd's Register S&G) as an Operations Project Manager. By 2015, he was promoted to Operations Manager, overseeing marine geophysical surveys for the oil & gas, renewables, and construction sectors.

In January 2020, David assumed the role of Technical Manager of the Autonomous Division at Unique Group in the UK. Here, he leads initiatives centered around Unique Group's in-house designed unmanned vessels Uni-USV fleet, contributing to advancements in autonomous marine technology across various industries. David's extensive experience reflects his deep expertise in subsea technology and autonomous systems.

Ludovic Basin - Exail



After a geomatic degree, I spent 20 years working in the Seismic for CGG & Seabed Geosolutions in various functions, first offshore as Land Surveyor then Navigator in Shallow Water and OBC acquisition, then as Navigation Field support Engineer on marine streamer acquisition in the back office, and finally as Navigation & Positioning Technical Manager on Ocean Bottom Acquisition.

I moved then 7 years to SBG Systems as Technical Support Director, before joining Exail 2 years and half ago as Subsea Solutions Manager.

John Hunnibell - ACUA Oceans



John is a seasoned maritime technology and operations professional with two decades of expertise in steering intricate marine technology projects, trials, and demonstrations, as well as a comprehensive experience in designing and delivering marine training. His career roots in the Royal Navy as a surface fleet seaman officer and specialist maritime bomb disposal supervisor was marked by various key leadership roles, such as command of the Navy's Maritime Autonomous Systems Trials Team, which instigated his transition to civilian roles in similar positions in marine tech. John held roles as the Head of Thales UK's Maritime Autonomy Test and Evaluation Centre, and the Capability Manager for the Mine Hunting Capability Programme at the UK Ministry of Defence. John is now the Chief Product Officer at ACUA Ocean (pronounced Aqua!), which is a UK-based startup developing a unique SWATH-hulled USV. John leads with all customer engagement activity and developing the capability roadmap of that product, as well as having responsibility for all waterfront activities, including tests, training, customer-facing demonstrations, and engagement with marine legislative authorities.

Jonathan Beaumont - Oil Spill Response Ltd



Following the completion of my master's degree in marine biology and oceanography from the University of Southampton in 2022, I have been working as a technical advisor for OSRL.

My primary role is to respond to global oil spill incidents liaising closely with senior management teams, contractors, regulatory bodies, and other key stakeholders within the industry. Outside of responding to global incidents, my work leading the spill monitoring and dispersant effectiveness working group at OSRL has exposed me to some of the latest subsea

marine monitoring technology and allowed me to gain insight into the use of AUVs during a response scenario. I particularly enjoy working with clients to improve preparedness through

reviewing contingency plans and delivering specific incident/crisis management training. During my time at OSRL I have responded to multiple oil spill incidents across Argentina, Tobago, the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia as well as assisting preparedness training in Denmark, the United Kingdom and Cameroon.

Iain Vincent - ecoSUB Robotics



Iain Vincent is a graduate in Marine Environmental Science from the University of Portsmouth, UK. Iain is a founder member of the Society of Maritime Industries, Marine Autonomous Systems Group.

Iain has extensive experience working with key marine science institutions across the UK as well as international manufacturers of sensor technology, and benefits from many productive relationships with members of the science community. Iain has led programs to secure funding for the development of ecoSUB AUVs and has been involved in the concept design, stakeholder engagement, project delivery and direction of the ecoSUB program.

In 2016 Iain was appointed as a Director of ecoSUB Robotics Limited, the company formed to spin out the low cost AUV technology developed in collaboration between Planet Ocean and the National Oceanography Centre (NOC) and was appointed General Manager in 2022.

Mike Gallo -EIVA



Mike Gallo is EIVA's Business Development Manager of EIVA's Robotics and AI team. He has decade-plus experience in Sales / BD in the offshore / survey world, having got his start at Coda Octopus and more recently with Rovco / Vaarst (now Beam), he has covered different aspects and perspectives of the technologies required to gather datasets and estimating position offshore and underwater, from more