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The Hovercraft Society
Formed in 1971

News Notes

No 4-25 July 2025

SSC 113 on delivery, courtesy Textron Systems and US Naval Sea Systems Command.

Introduction

This month we have news of the latest SSC delivery and contracts in the US, while three Griffon GH2500 craft have been delivered to the Pakistan Navy. Two Wind Farm SES, the UMOE *Firmus* and *Rapid* have moved to management by Tee Marine in Denmark.

There is a range of news from Griffon Marine including their new Commando Insertion Craft concept.

New deliveries of air lubricated ships have been reported from Silverstream and Knutsen, and the first technical conference on ALS has been held in Trondheim.

Hovercraft rescue services have been busy in the UK and France during June and July. Meanwhile the HoverAid River Rover has reached its base in Madagascar and begun medical services along the Mangoky river system.

In Sweden, Ivanoff Hovercraft have completed a 500km expedition along the river that borders Finland up to the Norwegian border, a major achievement for light hovercraft.

Finally, we give links to some YouTube videos!

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NEWS ITEMS

SSC Delivery Update 14^{TH} June

Textron Systems has announced delivery of the 14^{th} Ship-to-Shore Connector[1] to the U.S. Navy, underscoring their commitment to strengthening the fleet's operational reach with unmatched amphibious capabilities.

As the next generation of Landing Craft, Air Cushion (LCAC), the all-aluminium Ship-to-Shore Connector meets the U.S. Navy's requirements for increased payload and availability. With over 1,600 square feet of deck space, four gas turbine engines and 30 years of service life, this amphibious solution is one of many ways they are PushingPastPossible.

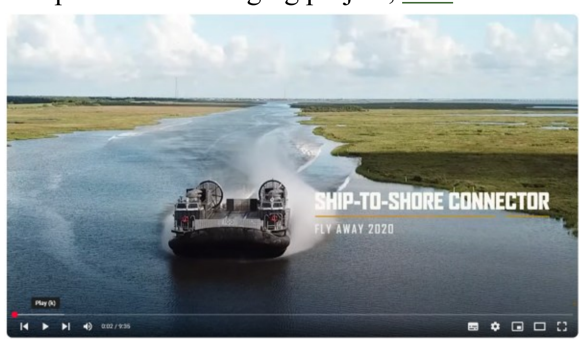
SSC Contract update 11^{TH} July

Textron Systems Corp., New Orleans, Louisiana, was awarded a $353,961,249 fixed price incentive-firm target contract modification to previously awarded contract (N00024-23-C-2452) to exercise the option for the construction of three more Ship to Shore Connector LCAC 100 class craft. Work will be performed in New Orleans, Louisiana (66%); Pasadena, California (11%); Cincinnati, Ohio (7%); Gloucester, United Kingdom (4%); other locations (3%); Hunt Valley, Maryland (1%); Huntsville, Alabama (1%); Russellville, Arizona (1%); Stamford, Connecticut (1%); West Palm Beach, Florida (1%); Riverdale, Iowa (1%); Chanhassen, Minnesota (1%); Gold Beach, Oregon (1%); and Chesapeake, Virginia (1%),and is expected to be completed by July 2031. Fiscal 2025 shipbuilding and conversion (Navy) funds in the amount of $353,961,249 were obligated at time of award and will not expire at the end of the current fiscal year. Naval Sea Systems Command, Washington, D.C., is the contracting activity. (Awarded June 30, 2025)

This latest award for additional craft will allow for continued production at Textron Systems New Orleans shipyard and across Textron dedicated suppliers, maintaining commitment to provide this critical capability to the US Navy.

Below, a video issued August 2024 on Textron Systems YouTube channel, here:

Development and trials of the prototype SSC LCAC 100 from 2020 is presented in a video below (9:35) This is includes observations from a wide selection of the staff that completed this complex and challenging project, here.



Rolls Royce SSC contract update

Rolls-Royce Corp. has also received a $54,7 million order for the production of another 12 MT7 turboshaft engines, ancillary parts, and

[1] SSC 113 is 14^{th} craft including prototype, LCAC 100

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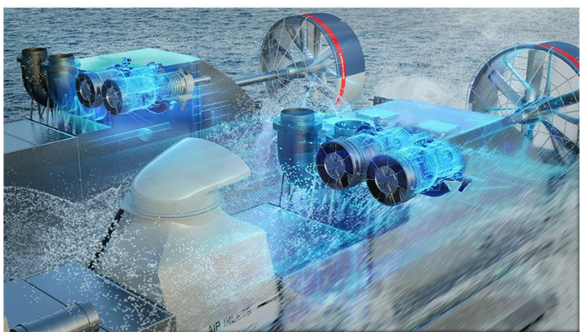
installation kits to support the U.S. Navy's Ship to Shore Connector (SSC) program.

According to Naval Sea Systems Command, the work will be performed in Indianapolis and is expected to be completed by June 2029. Fiscal 2025 shipbuilding and conversion (Navy) funds in the amount of $54,730,397 will be obligated at the time of award and will not expire at the end of the current fiscal year.

The contract was not competitively procured, as Rolls-Royce is the only responsible source capable of meeting the Navy's requirements under 10 U.S. Code 3204(a)(1).

Specifications for the MT7 engines can be found on the Rolls Royce site, here. An image of the installation is shown below, courtesy Rolls Royce.



The gas turbines have shaft drive from the cold end (intake) of the engine and exhaust forward via a right-angled bend.

CCG Vancouver ops reinstated 4th July

From early June the Vancouver based CCG rescue hovercraft were grounded due to a shortage of specialist trained personnel. The initial CTV report can be viewed here (0:51) together with their first text report. CTV News followed up early July after CCG were able to restart ACV operations. This article can be reached here, summarised as follows:

The Canadian Coast Guard says it has resolved a crew shortage that temporarily grounded its hovercraft vessels in British Columbia last month.

The agency confirmed on Friday the vessels were operational again after a lack of qualified personnel forced the coast guard to suspend its hovercraft service on June 13.

Coast guard spokesperson Anna Muselius says the crew shortage was fixed this week, with the agency now closely monitoring hovercraft crew scheduling on a weekly basis.

"Additionally, two new pilots are in the final stages of training and will soon be available to enhance crew capacity," Muselius said in an emailed statement to CTV News.

The coast guard abruptly halted the hovercraft operations from their Sea Island sea base in Richmond, citing an "unanticipated" shortage of pilots certified in the operation of air-cushioned vehicles.

The Sea Island station houses both of the coast guard's B.C.-based hovercraft, *CCGS Moytel* and *CCGS Siyay*.

The air-cushioned vessels are commonly called upon for rapid, shallow-water responses at beaches and other areas that are otherwise inaccessible to rigid-hulled boats, including the mudflats surrounding the Vancouver airport.

A spokesperson for the Vancouver Airport Authority said last week the agency was aware of the rescue vessel outage and its potential effects on the airport's disaster response planning.

"This is just one aspect of a potential response in the areas surrounding YVR," the spokesperson said in an emailed statement. "There are also a number of additional assets to support an incident, such as helicopters and inflatable fast-rescue vessels, to ensure safety and operational continuity," she added.

The Coast Guard says it is facing the same shortage of qualified mariners that has affected the marine industry globally since the COVID-19 pandemic.

The agency currently employs an estimated 6,400 personnel across the country, including roughly 1,600 vessel crew members and 1,300 vessel officers.

"Crewing shortages for hovercraft pilots do not affect other Canadian Coast Guard vessels or activities in B.C.," coast guard spokesperson Alex Coutts said in a statement to CTV News.

"Canadians and our partners can rest assured that the Canadian Coast Guard has the resources necessary to continue providing essential services."

Many thanks to CTV for their reports.

New Eureka Naval Craft Outfit

Eureka Naval Craft are aiming to set new standards in meeting the US Navy's demand for optionally manned combatant vessels. Their strategic partnership with **Greenroom Robotics**, an industry leader in maritime autonomy, uniquely positions them to advance the Navy's Future Unmanned Surface Vessel (USV) program.

Their flagship vessel, the AIRCAT Bengal MC – Modular Attack Surface Craft (MASC), exemplifies their commitment to adaptability and mission readiness.

As showcased in the video above, its modular design enables rapid reconfiguration for a wide range of mission profiles, effortlessly transitioning between crewed and unmanned operations. This unmatched flexibility ensures their platforms are always ready to meet the Navy's evolving operational needs.

Secretary of the Navy John Phelan has underscored the critical need for innovative, scalable solutions. Eureka Naval Craft are working to deliver that - combining proven engineering excellence with next-generation modularity.

Eureka Naval Craft are excited to collaborate with the U.S. Navy and industry leaders to shape the next generation of maritime defence. Eureka Naval Craft is a U.S. based maritime and defence innovation company. It introduced the launch of the company at the Euro Naval exhibition and Conference in Paris in November 2024. In an interview at that show by Naval News here, CEO Bo Jardine explained how the craft can be configured for various weapons outfits including energy directed weapons (with uprated generating sets) tracking the direction being followed by the US Armed forces among others to begin the cost-effective fight back against drone attacks.

Griffon Marine

New hall at CCPL Goa Shipyard

A new hall is being assembled at Goa Shipyard for fabrication and assembly of the Griffon Marine GH8000 craft ordered by the Indian Coastguard earlier this year. Griffon Marine have had Senior Design Engineer Matthew Nokes on site for liaison since mid-March.

Below the fabrication hall in mid-May, Courtesy Matthew Nokes.

Griffon CIC concept for amphibious landings

Successful amphibious landings demand control, survivability, and the ability to access terrain others can't. That's exactly what shapes the Griffon Marine Commando Insertion Craft.

Built on a twin-hull catamaran for superior directional stability during high-speed approaches, it features a forward-mounted air cushion – not for full flotation, but to fine-tune

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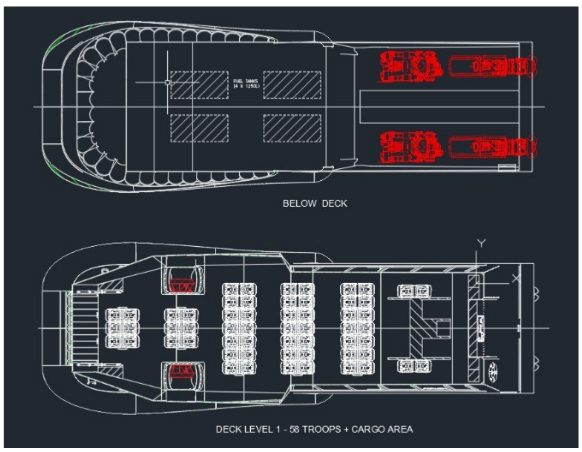
trim, absorb beach impact, and enable dry landings on unstable or unprepared ground.

The design is a shallow-draft, low-profile, high-agility platform, built for rapid deployment across mudflats, estuaries, and tight coastal zones. Its modular architecture allows for mission-specific outfit, without compromising the core objective: To get in fast and get out fast.



This is the Griffon Marine concept for updating the Royal Marines CIC currently being proposed for contracts due to be awarded end 2025.

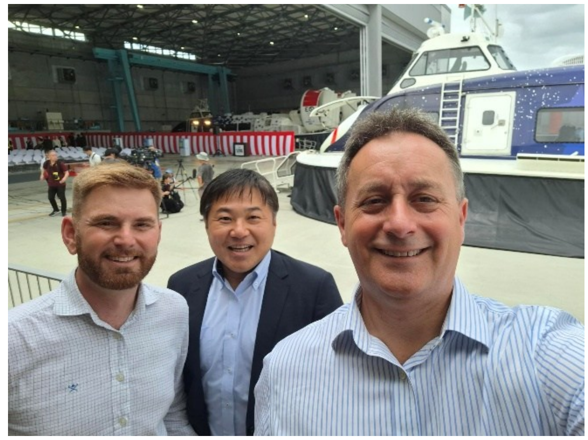
The main and lower deck layout are shown above. 58 Marines are on the upper deck. Two crew are in the aft wheelhouse. The lower deck houses fuel tanks in forward raft structure. Aft, the main engines and water jet units fit into the catamaran hulls. Alternate payload would be ATV's and weapons trailers for the commando force.

Further images of the craft can be seen on page 18, courtesy Griffon Marine Ltd.

Official Start to Oita airport service

Griffon Marine were honoured to attend the Opening Ceremony on Saturday 19th July for the launch of the Oita Daiichi Hover Drive passenger service in Japan.

Griffon Marine is proud to have supplied their innovative Griffon 12000TD hovercraft for this exciting new route. Prior to July Daichi Hover Drive have operated excursion trips in the bay.



The world's second scheduled passenger hovercraft service officially begins on 26th July, running between Oita Airport and the Oita City.

Initially operating 6 return crossings a day, the journey will take just 35 minutes to connect Oita City to Oita Airport (instead of over an hour by road) using 3 x 12000TD hovercraft.

This is a major milestone for the Oita Daiichi Hover Drive team, now moving forward to the airport service. CEO Mark Downer and Chief Engineering Pilot Ben Avery MNI represented Griffon Marine at the event (see above, courtesy Griffon Marine).

The Hoverdrive site for bookings is here. It is available in English and Japanese.

Griffon 2500's to Pakistan

The UK Ministry of Defence, Defence Equipment and Support has completed the sale of three Landing Craft Air Cushion (Light)

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(LCAC(L)) hovercraft and all associated spares to the Pakistan Navy.

A handover event was held in London in the last week of June, attended by Commodore Richard Whalley and DE&S colleagues, alongside those from the Pakistan High Commission London, the Attaché Defence Procurement and other senior representatives from both ministries (see header photo, courtesy DE&S).

Previously used by Royal Marines, the hovercraft were decommissioned from service in 2021. In 2022, DE&S awarded UK-based Griffon Marine Support a contract, overseen by the DE&S Boats Team, to refurbish the boats and prepare them for transfer.

The hovercraft have now been sold by the DE&S Exports & Sales Team – a key part of the UK's export enterprise, delivering essential equipment capability to allies and partners through Government-to-Government export and sale of surplus defence equipment.

The LCAC(L) can traverse both land and water and was identified by the sales team as being well-suited to Pakistan's maritime environment, offering highly mobile, shallow-water operational capability for operations such as coastal patrol, humanitarian assistance, and rapid deployment missions.

Commodore Richard Whalley, Head of Exports and Sales at DE&S, said: *"This sale continues a long history of excellent defence equipment sales with the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and reaffirms our positive defence relations. By transferring these proven assets, we are supporting the Pakistan Navy's ability to enhance its coastal and amphibious operations, supporting our shared goal of maintaining global security as well as providing a return for the UK's defence budget."*

Through the managed sale and disposal of surplus UK defence equipment, the DE&S Exports and Sales team ensures economic returns while extending the operational life of military capabilities.

A Pakistan Navy spokesperson said: *"The Pakistan Navy values its defence cooperation with the UK. This is evident through joint exercises, training exchanges, defence acquisitions and collaborative efforts in maritime security. Our recent acquisition of hovercraft from the UK will enhance our defence capabilities, particularly in maritime security and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Operations."*

Griffon Marine Support, headquartered in Southampton, will continue to provide in-service support for the hovercraft under its own contract with the Pakistan Navy, building on Pakistan's use of LCAC(L)s by its armed forces for over 20 years.

Dan Pountney, Head of Griffon Marine Support, added: *"It has been a pleasure working alongside the DE&S Exports & Sales Team and the DE&S Boats Team – who we have supported for the past seven years with maintenance, refits, and mid-life upgrades – to prepare the hovercraft for sale to our long-standing customer, the Pakistan Navy. We are proud of this collaboration and look forward to continuing our in-service support for both UK boats and the Pakistan Navy."*

Richard Thomas from Naval Technology commented in his story from the event that the UK presently sees no use for LCAC capability:

The UK's decision to axe its Albion-class amphibious assault ships in 2024 effectively ended its ability to conduct amphibious operations at scale, until the future introduction of the Multi-Role Strike Ships (MRSS), at some point in the 2030s.

As a result, the UK has to rely on its few remaining Bay-class landing ship docks to provide such capability, although at a vastly reduced scale.

Able to operate seamlessly from land to water-borne operations, the LCACs appeared well-suited for use in maritime patrol and HADR operations throughout UK waters.

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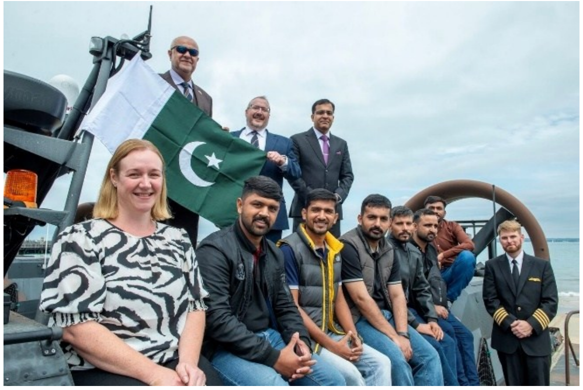
Readers may note that Pakistan currently operate 14 Griffon Marine 8100 class and 2000 class hovercraft.



Above another photo from the handover ceremony at the end of June, courtesy Griffon Marine.

British Ambassador visit to Portchester

Griffon Marine welcomed Her Excellency Julia Longbottom CMG, British Ambassador to Japan, to the Portchester facility on July 3rd.

The visit showcased Wyvern-J, their next-generation military hovercraft developed with the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force and a symbol of British engineering, innovation, and international partnership.

From immersive VR cockpit design to global training operations, the Ambassador explored how Griffon Marine Ltd is delivering real impact:

- Advancing UK-Japan defence
- Creating skilled jobs & apprenticeships
- Driving regeneration in Portchester

International Trade Award

Above, The Griffon Marine team at the award ceremony

Griffon Marine have won the International Trade Award at the Maritime UK Awards 2025.

Supported by the Department for Business and Trade, this award recognises their commitment to global trade, with 80% of their craft exported worldwide.

This is the first award under the Griffon Marine Ltd name, since rebranding from Griffon Hoverwork.

Ben Taylor Podcast including Vulkan Marine

Vulkan Managing Director, Adrian Birkin, and Mark Downer, CEO at Griffon Marine Ltd, had the pleasure of joining Ben Taylor for an episode of the **BenTaylorPodcast** at the Seawork show in Southampton 10th to 12th June.

The conversation explored the future of hybrid technology in the maritime industry, diving into Vulkan's hybrid solutions and Griffon's exciting prospects for hybrid hovercraft. Adrian and Mark also reflected on the strong partnership between their two companies, and shared insights on what's ahead.

Watch the episode by clicking on the YouTube image above (length 22:00, after 8pm UK time 25th July).

Ben has posted 16 episodes of his podcast on YouTube focussed on the marine and superyacht industry. There are also a number of videos of varying length with interviews of personnel in the marine industry.

SILVERSTREAM NEWS

Silverstream given Kings award

Silverstream has received the King's Award for Enterprise in the Innovation category, the UK's

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most prestigious accolade celebrating business excellence. This marks the second time that Silverstream has received a King's Award, following their 2023 recognition in the International Trade category.

Above Noah Silberbauer talke with Kind Charles at the award ceremony.

The award recognises their patented air lubrication technology, the Silverstream® System, as a truly innovative clean technology solution that is making a meaningful impact on maritime decarbonisation.

It comes at a pivotal moment for the shipping industry, as decarbonisation regulations tighten and become more complex, particularly following developments at MEPC 83, the IMO's committee responsible for environmental matters. Silverstream is helping owners navigate this uncertainty – supporting them to act now with proven fuel and emissions savings that deliver immediate benefits while preparing them for what's ahead.

Founder & CEO Noah Silberschmidt said: *"We are delighted to win our second King's Award, which recognises both the dedication of our exceptional team and the real-world impact of our technology on maritime decarbonisation. Innovation is not just something we do at Silverstream – it's part of who we are. This award is a testament to the technical experts across our business who continuously refine and improve our system. Their work enables us to help the industry meet today's environmental and regulatory challenges with confidence. It's a proud moment for all of us."*

The Silverstream® System fundamentally changes the interaction between water and a vessel. It shears air from air release units (ARUs) in the hull to create a uniform carpet of microbubbles that covers the full flat bottom of a vessel. As a result, frictional resistance is decreased – significantly reducing fuel consumption and associated emissions.

This latest recognition builds on their 2023 King's Award for Enterprise in the International Trade category, which celebrated success in exporting the Silverstream® System and working with global maritime partners to scale uptake of their proven technology worldwide.

The King's Awards scheme was instituted by Royal Warrant in 1965, with the first Awards made in 1966 under the scheme's original title, The Queen's Award to Industry.

His Majesty The King hosted a Reception for The King's Awards for Enterprise recipients at Windsor Castle.

Grimaldi Grande Shanghai on trials

The *Grande Shanghai* — the very first PCTC equipped with Silverstream air lubrications system has started its sea trials.

On 21st July in Haimen (Jiangsu, China), the naming ceremony of the *Grande Shanghai* was held — marking the launch of the first vessel in a batch of ten next-generation PCTC (Pure Car & Truck Carrier) vessels out of an order of 17 commissioned by the Grimaldi Group from China Merchants Heavy Industries. The first five vessels will be capable of transporting 9,000 CEU (Car Equivalent Units), while the remaining five will offer an increased capacity of 9,800 CEU

The 9,000 CEU carrier was designed by Knud E Hansen, and Italian class society RINA has granted it ammonia-ready notation. Grimaldi

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Group Ro-Ros equipped with the Silverstream® System have been delivering significant fuel savings. The Grimaldi announcement can be see here.

Knutsen LNG Carrier with ALS

Knutsen Group announced the delivery of a brand-new 174k LNG carrier, *MRAIKH*, on June 26, 2025. This marks the first in a series of 10 vessels they have contracted with Qatar Energy.

MRAIKH is equipped with the latest energy efficiency measures, including an air lubrication system and LNG-compatible boilers, ensuring lower emissions and more sustainable voyages.

The *MRAIK* LNG carrier is equipped with a HD Hyundai air lubrication system (ALS). This system injects air along the hull to reduce friction and improve fuel efficiency.

At the same time Knutsen held a naming ceremony for the last in a series of LNG carrier (LNGC) newbuilding's built for charterer Shell.

The company took to business social media platform LinkedIn to announce the vessel's name, *Zoe Knutsen*.

"We are proud to announce the naming ceremony of *Zoe Knutsen*, the ninth and final vessel in a series of LNG carriers delivered to Shell. The ceremony took place on 25 June and marks the culmination of a significant and successful collaboration," Knutsen Group said.

The LNGC newbuilding series for oil and gas super major Shell saw its first vessel, *Santander Knutsen*, delivered in June 2022, according to the company.

Zoe Knutsen is scheduled for delivery in September 2025 and will go straight into service under charter with Shell, operating as part of its global LNG fleet.

These vessels have also been built at HHI in South Korea and include the HD Hyundai Air Lubrication system.

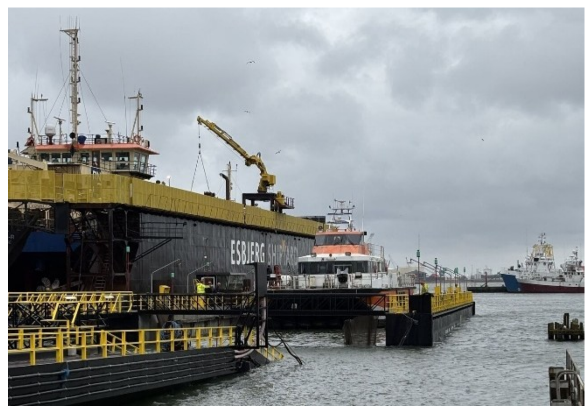
Tee Marine take over SES management

Fresh names, fresh paint, and full steam ahead!

UMOE Firmus and UMOE Rapid are now ready for action, proudly showing off their new homeports.

Tee Marine have taken over operational management for these two SES CTV vessels after their release from a 5-year contract at Ørsted.

The company have carried out maintenance and refurbishment in a floating dry dock at Esbjerg and are now being actively marketed for new tasks at offshore wind farms.



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Above and below on next page views of the craft in Esbjerg during refurbishment. The bow segments are in well used state but nevertheless with little tip wear. Courtesy Tee Marine.

Tee Marine are aiming to raise the bar every day to become excellent in SES operation. The mission is to deliver the best CTV service in the industry and be the best place to work and thrive—for both their crew and client technicians.

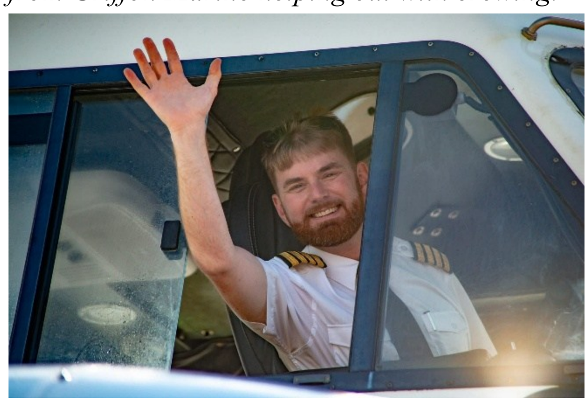
Tee Marine can be found here. Jimmy T Kristensen, owner of Tee Marine has a wealth of experience of SES CTV operations with Ørsted and World Marine.

The company also have an active Facebook page here, where they announced at the beginning of July an partnership with Tidal Transit market and operate Tidal Transit's fleet of electric and diesel CTVs to offshore wind farms in Denmark and Germany, while facilitating vessel re-flagging to make the process as convenient as possible for charterers.

Hovertravel News

The Isle of Wight Festival 2025 from 19th to 22nd June was a busy time for Hovertravel. Additional flights were put in place for the influx of music fans, and the services were full. Hovertravel drew on its sister company Griffon Marine for pilots and support, to man the services and satisfy demand.

Above, the mele at Southsea, below Ben Avery from Griffon Marine helping out with crewing.



Hovertravel are celebrating their 60th Anniversary this year and so have put on more experience tours and a special 60th Anniversary experience on Monday 4th August. Click on the image below to see that and book.

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Ivanoff Hovercraft expedition

Magnus Ivanoff and colleagues took two IH3 and an IH6 hovercraft on an expedition in Northern Sweden 11-13 July. This first adventure was to follow the Torne and Muonio Rivers all the way up to Kilpisjärvi and the Treriksröset tripoint from Haparanda on the coast. They covered approximately 500 kilometres along the river over the course of three days. The first day covered 180 km from Torneå to Lappea. The second day was from Lappea to Muonio, about 140 km. The last day took them from Muonio to Treriksrøset, about 200 km and the most challenging section. There were some heavy rapids sections including rapids where the craft had to be taken around by road.

The two rivers followed upstream partly define the country border with Finland and the journey end point is the point where Norway, Sweden and Finland connect. There are roads following fairly closely all the way up from Torneå. The E8 and 99 follow the course of the river north.

The rivers and lakes that form part of their course form a complex route to follow. The expedition was a success proving the durability and reliability of the craft, as well as the driving skills of the pilots! White water such as transited on this journey requires considerable experience! There is a Facebook open group that is available to follow them for future expeditions as well. Go here: **Hovercraft Expedition**.

Material from this first event is also available on YouTube here. There are three short 'taster videos at present, which give a good impression of the river.

To get an impression of the route followed it is recommended to start at Haparanda on Google maps and trace it from there.

Another update on Owen's Revolution

A significant moment for Revtech Hovercraft Design Studios has been achieved as they ran the prototype electric thrust system destined for the Revolution personal/utility hovercraft. The installation looks extremely promising for future full electric machines. The 70kw brushless PMDC motor will provide unmatched simplicity with reliability and super smooth power delivery.

Owen Ellis is expecting 100+kgs thrust. The plan is to only use about 25kW of available power.

Revtec have been supported by Keith Oakley and Ewan Maxwell with valuable input, influence & assistance.

Progress in Australia will stall for next 6 months while Owen spends the summer in Montreal.

Reverse thrust has also been tested at lower powers with Ewan at the controls of the new Revtech electric SUPAduct. Battery depletion restricted higher power settings for the testing.

Once back in Australia the final stages of installing this thrust system in a Revtech Revolution will be completed, allowing full craft testing. Thanks, as usual to Owen for the update information.

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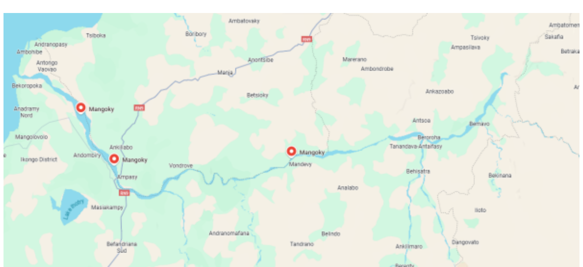
HOVERAID UPDATE

The new River Rover is now operational in Madagascar. It has been named 'Faith'.

Now she's on the Mangoky River in Madagascar based at Beroroha, so HoverAid can take their Community Health Programmes and Medical Clinics further than ever along the river to otherwise inaccessible communities.

Roughly the size of the UK and Germany put together, Madagascar has a road system the size of Devon. Often hit by cyclones, 20 of its 25 million people live in the rural areas, with little or no access to clean water or medication. When the rains come, many areas are completely unreachable by car and very hard to get to by boat or plane.

At these times, hovercraft are the answer especially in the south west where the Mangoki river is situated..



The above extract from Google maps doesn't do justice to the river system. Readers are recommended to seek for Beroroha and take a look from there. Beroroha is RH side of the image above.

HoverAid statistics this year so far are 12 medical clinics, 9140 patients, 170 major surgeries. More can be found at the HoverAid site, here.

BARB RESCUE ACTIVITY

BARB were busy in June. During the first weekend BARB's volunteers were called by HM Coastguard to Brean beach with their two hovercraft following concerns for two young people in deep mud.

Brean's Beach Warden had raised the alarm after seeing the two venturing far across the mudflats to reach the sea. Devon & Somerset Fire Service and Burnham Coastguards were also called to the scene, along with a Coastguard rescue helicopter.

Fortunately, the youngsters waded out of the mud and up the beach to safety when they saw the response. They were checked over as a precaution and given safety advice about the dangers of wading out into the mud on an incoming tide.

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This was another good example of a multi-agency response with a positive outcome. If you see someone in difficulty along the coastline, call 999 and ask for the Coastguard.

Since then they have participated in beach cleaup exercises and was called out to Weston-super-Mare by HM Coastguard to two separate incidents on Saturday afternoon (June 28).

Their Spirit Of Lelaina 3 hovercraft was heading to a fundraising event in Brean when their volunteers were tasked with helping investigate reports of two children in difficulty in deep mud near to Weston's The Grand Pier. As the hovercraft arrived, the crew received the welcome news from Weston-Super-Mare Coastguard Rescue Team that the youngsters had freed themselves and headed up the beach.

As the BARB team was preparing to head back to Burnham, we were tasked with investigating a hydrofoil enthusiast who was spotted wading through deep mud on nearby Uphill Beach. The hovercraft was flown out to check on his welfare and confirmed that he was safe and well despite wading through mud in the extreme heat.

A big thank you goes to the Uphill land yachting club at Uphill for temporarily stopping their racing to allow BARB to safely launch its hovercraft on the beach.

Once complete, the team headed on to Brean's The Beachcomber, Brean which was kindly holding a fundraising event for BARB.

Thanks go to our hard working volunteers for their time and efforts on a busy afternoon in the sweltering heat.

Ulverston Inshore Rescue

UIR as part of the coastal rescue teams supporting Furness Coastguard were tasked on 8th June along with Arnside & South Lakes Coastguard Rescue Team, Morecambe Coastguard Rescue Team, Knott End Coastguard Rescue Team and Rescue 199 - Coastguard helicopter. Also in attendance were Morecambe Lifeboat, Barrow Lifeboat, Bay Search & Rescue and Ulverston Inshore Rescue.

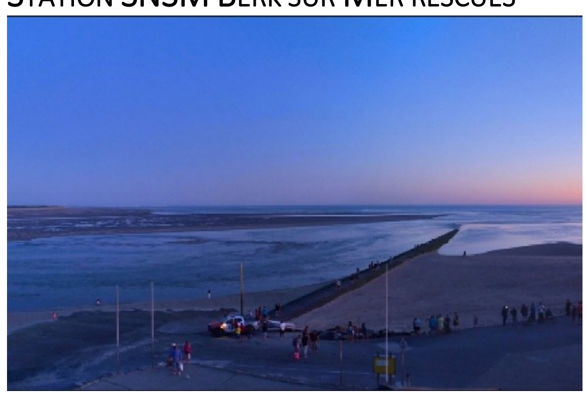
All teams were tasked to search for a possible missing person from a tender that washed ashore near Arnside.

Furness Coastguard were tasked to check the boat yards in the Barrow area to try and gather further information regarding the vessel/owner before continuing to search along the coastline to Humphrey Head. At Humphrey Head, the team were notified that the owner had been located safe and well.

If in danger on the coast or one of the four navigable lakes, Windermere, Coniston, Ullswater or Derwent Water, then dial 999 and ask for the Coastguard.

Below, the team on a training night with the Ulverston Inshore Hovercraft earlier this year in March.

Station SNSM Berk sur Mer rescues



Friday evening, 12th July, 10:21 pm: the CROSS Gris-Nez reports 6 people including children surrounded by the tide near the Berck lighthouse.

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At 22:29, SNSM glider "Maxime Touchais" is flying from the Bay d'Authie, as night falls.

In the area, they learn two witnesses attempted to rescue them by jumping into the water. With the help of firefighters and police, they retrieve the whole group after searches both on the beach, on the water and on the waterfront. All are taken care of for full checkups: some children unfortunately inhaled water.

Meanwhile, in Baie d'Authie, SNSM rescuers who stayed on duty also intervene with three fishermen, who were also trapped by the rising tide.

So this was a double save that could have turned into drama - an express mobilization: each volunteer left their family to join the station and apparatus in record time.

Above and below, two views of SNSM presentation on 2nd July to the media.

After a session with the 1o'clock news team of TF1 on 2nd July it was the turn of France3.

The two media teams met with the hovercraft on the beach, experienced its operation and carried out interviews. The subject: the record number of interventions related to tidal encircles over the last 3 months. There were16 interventions and more than 100 people rescued.

SNSM would like to remember their mission:

⚓ Rescue at sea must remain free, in accordance with humanitarian commitment and International Maritime Law.

⚓ As lifeguards at sea, SNSM will continue to assist anyone in distress, regardless of their situation or nationality - and this, always for free.

⚓ SNSM will continue the rescue missions with determination, but preventing the dangers is essential. Some of the situations are of life emergencies, especially for children.

SNSM have made proposals to the municipality to strengthen prevention and enable them to intervene even faster.

🙏SNSM biggest fear? Coming too late to a call.

⚠️The sea is dangerous... but the beach can be deadly.

📞In case of an emergency at sea or isolation by the tide, only one thing to think: call 196.

NEOTERIC AND WATERFRONT PLANNING TEAM

June 19th, Neoteric Hovercraft President Chris Fitzgerald joined with community leaders and Riverfront Development Advocates on an afternoon hover over the Wabash River. On Thursday afternoon, Mike Knopp, the driver behind the transformation of Oklahoma City's downtown, visited Terre Haute. He toured the

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Wabash River on the locally manufactured Neoteric Hovercraft along with Neoteric President Chris Fitzgerald, Marla Flowers, Lourie Danielson, Director of Riverfront Development, Brian Horsman, President of River Development and James Owen.

Knopp was in Terre Haute to impart his experience in enhancing his community's river into a world-class water sports training ground and driving economic development across the region. A YouTube video of the OKC riverfront today can be found here. He also has a TEDx Talk regarding the transformation of the OKC Riverfront that can be viewed here. The event was organized by Lori Danielson, Director of Riverfront Development.

News from 'The e-hovercraft collective'

For those of you looking to move to electric lift powered hovercraft, Graham Nutt currently has two of the centrifugal lift fans that Keith Oakley and Owen Ellis have built into their craft Ziehl&Abegg 410mm diameter at GBP 125 each. They include integral AC electric motors that need change out to DC power. Send a message to info@e-hovercraft.info and Graham will respond.

Meanwhile on the e-hovercraft site, there are some thoughts aired on possible competitive events. Go here to take a look.

Hovercraft Museum News


The Museum is open on both Saturdays and Sundays from 10am to 3pm at through the summer.

From Saturday, 5th July, right through until 28th September, their ever-popular Little Hover World returns to The Hovercraft Museum bigger and better than ever, for another summer of fun! Spot the little Lego figures working, hiding and playing around the museum!

Details and updates can be found on their internet site THM, or on their Facebook page. A view of their souvenir shop and café can be seen here.

Key information for visitors include their seaside location at Lee on Solent right at the seafront with the NHTU slipway opposite the entrance. They have over 50 craft on show, a gift shop/café on site, are family friendly.

They have full wheelchair access to hangars & gift shop/café and put on activities for their younger visitors. Dogs are also welcome (with their owners . . .!)

Activity at British Hovercraft

British Hovercraft exhibited at the Thames Traditional Boat Festival 18th - 20th July with a BHC Beast in white and at a specially discounted price.

During June BHC have been exhibiting in the Philippines at a boat show in Antipolo with their agent Versacraft there.

In July they operated their craft for soil sampling in the intertidal area of the Mersey outside Liverpool.

Later, on 22nd July the company exhibited at a show in Royal Albert Dock Liverpool – it was wet as can be seen from the photo below.

Overall, at the moment BHC continue busy delivering craft around the world, attending summer shows across England, and managing to squeeze in coastal survey support tasks.

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Above a BHC Beast on show at Royal Albert Dock, Liverpool in July.

Clubs and Associations Update

The June and July period has been a busy one for hovercraft competitive events in UK, Europe and USA. It is still mid-season, and much could still happen in the remaining events for the eventual season winners.

To gain a taste of the action it is recommended to go to the YouTube and Facebook sites of the different clubs and federations. You may find what you need in our Light Hovercraft Directory.

An example is the HCGB YouTube channel where all the events are recorded, here.

If you have an interest in a particular formula, you can scan through to see just those races. Otherwise, you have a daylong video!

The Hovercraft Club of America have events upcoming in August, and the Australian Hovercraft Association have their annual event in September.

The Hovercraft Club of Great Britain

THEHOVERCRAFTCLUB OF GREAT BRITAIN

2025 Race Meetings

Remaining Race meeting weekends for 2025 are currently planned as follows:

23-24 Aug 2025: Port St Pere, France EHF

6-7 Sept 2025: Saalburg, Germany EHF

20-21 Sept 2025: Lillingstone Dayrell HCGB (Chilterns Branch new venue)

4-5 Oct 2025: Whittlebury HCGB

We will aim to give an overview of the season of hovercraft events worldwide in our November issue.

Society News

THS Meetings

The following THS meetings are currently planned, see table below Details of further meetings will be publicised in the events blog once finalised, and in the next NewsNote. At present all meetings are held on Zoom.

2025	Subject
August 21st 19:30 UKt	Committee Meeting
September 18th 19:30 UKt	Committee Meeting
October 16th 19:30 UKt	Committee Meeting
November 20th 19:30 UKt	Committee Meeting
November 22nd 15:00 UKt	Afternoon Conference & Dinner, Portsmouth
December 18th 15:00 UKt	THS AGM (Zoom)

Presently we do not have zoom presentation meetings booked, we will let members know in good time if we are able to arrange a meeting.

We have moved the Conference and dinner to November 22nd. Our Technical Secretary is not able to make the original date planned in October. We hope members will be able to attend in November!

Members will note that Committee have reduced the annual membership fees. This was after considerable discussion. Our finances will be stable with these adjusted rates.

The biggest changes at present relate to Light Hovercraft. Recognising that our main technical library may not be critical to those building or having interest in small hovercraft, we are now assembling a library of materials that is valuable

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for those involved with small and racing hovercraft. We now also have a membership category for these engineers and enthusiasts, and subscription suitable for that.

We continue to maintain focus on the whole industry, including air lubrication of ships, which is becoming an important category in itself.

With these changes we hope to widen membership of The Hovercraft Society in 2026.

Technical Briefs

IMO Conference on Autonomous Shipping

IMO together with the Norwegian Government held a conference on Autonomous vessels and the development of regulations for these. Unmanned vessels is a quickly developing technology both for military and commercial applications.

There were fifteen papers presented at the conference, which are available for download as a zipped folder of pdf documents. The Conference programme can be see here, and the document download is available here.

The conference was held in part as preparation for the MASS discussions at the 110th session of the Maritime Safety Committee, to begin the following day.

First Air Lubrication Conference held

The First International Symposium on Air Lubrication Technologies – SALT'25 was held in Trondheim, Norway, at NTNU on 16-17 June.

The conference was organised jointly by SINTEF Ocean, the Technical University in Trondheim and the Berkeley University in USA. It was sponsored by HR Wallingford and funded by the Research council of Norway.

A total of 21 presentations were made, focussing on the physics of air lubrication and research into its fundamentals including interpretation of physical experiments. The Programme is available here.

Transactions in the form of two-page summaries of each presentation including figures are available for download here.

An internet site has been established with the intent that there should be a series of conferences following advances in the physics knowledge and its application. The site is here.

This first conference was clearly academic in nature. It would be good if the various specialist companies and shipyards would present their in-service experiences in the future to compare with the theory and laboratory testing!

From the Internet

We hope the material below is useful and enjoyable. Click on images and links to go to the recordings.

Griffon arctic video

The operations shown are mostly from some while back now but give a valuable impression of hovercraft in the arctic. Well worth a watch!

Posted 23 May 2024, length 2:21, here.

Skjold Class Corvette

Posted on YouTube 10th December 2022, by Military TV. The video is length 8:03, here.

This is another useful overview of the high-speed vessels in service with the Royal Norwegian Navy providing part of the coast surveillance and protection up into the Barents sea.

Click on the image above to view the video with thanks to Military TV.

New Chinese WIG

WIG Technology is a particular interest for THS Technical secretary, hence inclusion of this and the next piece.

WIG for both commercial and military application have been under research and development since the 1980's in China.

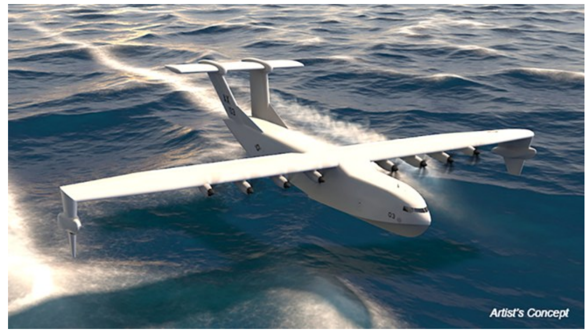
Recently images have been seen of a new craft than can be seen in the image below. One might view this configuration as a ground effect enhanced flying boat. The ground effect on the configuration shown will be mild but may well be useful to enhance payload and range for fast deployment of troops and light equipment to the islands and shoals east and south of China.

There is a middle length article in The Aviationist here. It will be interesting to see how this develops. Meanwhile the USA DARPA development project has been closed out, see below.

DARPA Project closed

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency in the USA has ended its research programme to create a heavy cargo seaplane.

The nearly three-year-old Liberty Lifter program was intended to design and build — and possibly float and fly — a long-range, low-cost seaplane that could take off and land in rough seas. DARPA said in 2023 that it wanted the plane to have roughly the same size and capacity as a C-17 Globemaster, which can carry more than 170,000 pounds of cargo such as M1 Abrams tanks.



This programme was aimed at a high lift flying boat that would have intercontinental range. By developing a concept that used the additional lift that a wing gains when close to the ground or water surface such craft can deliver a much higher payload than a free flying aircraft.

Alternatively, the aircraft range can be extended.

Two concepts were developed, one with a twin fuselage which was developed until 2024, while the final stage development focussed on the more traditional configuration above.

DARPA have gained the technical knowledge to fulfil the mission. The final challenge would be to bring investment costs within the desired limits.

OBSERVATIONS

This month we dedicate a page below to images of the Commando Insertion Craft proposed by Griffon Marine. The concept is an important one to develop a high speed and yet comfortable delivery ashore from over the horizon for a significant group of Marines and their vehicles allowing rapid movement once ashore.

The images are courtesy Griffon Marine.

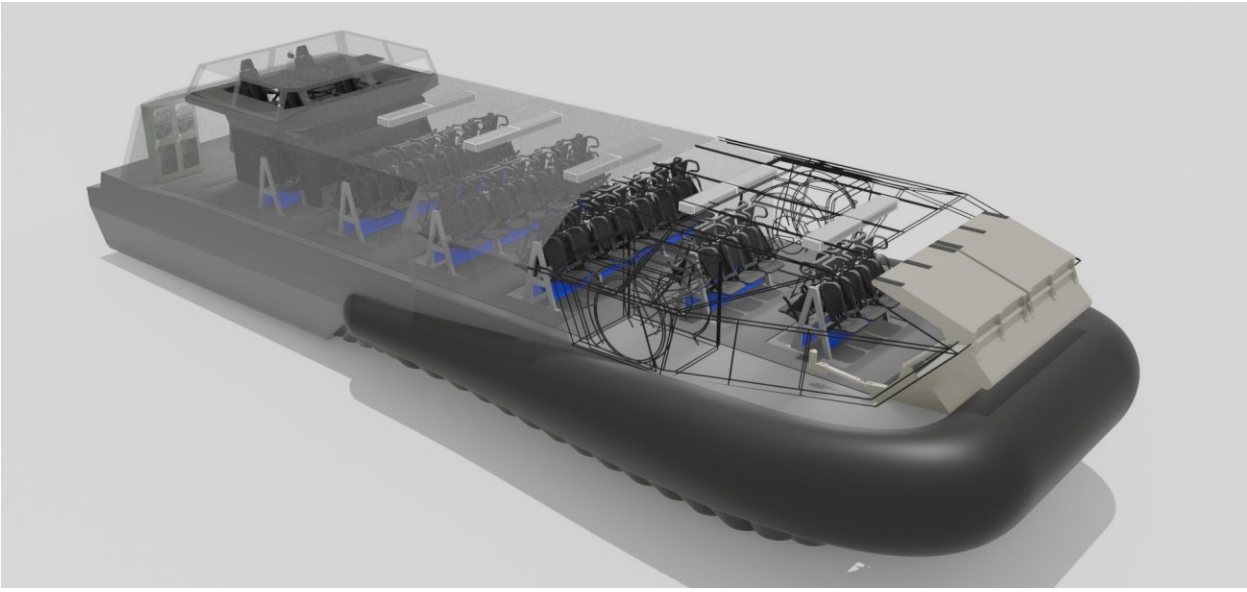
This is yet another News Note that has taken time to assemble. It is hoped the various links throughout this issue will enable readers to access information online without getting too distracted.

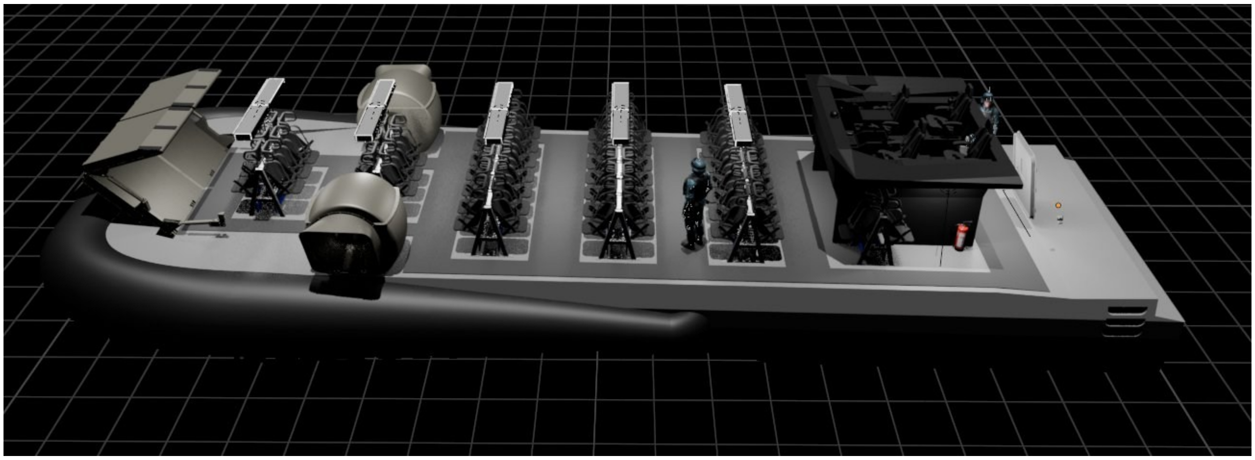
It is also hoped that the Light and Recreational Hovercraft Directory now available from the THS internet site is an interesting and useful document for members.

I hope you have enjoyed this issue!

THS Techsec


GRIFFON
MARINE
SOLUTIONS





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