

AARC: Atlantic Autonomous Robotics Consortium

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There is a need for a maritime robotics testing course with appropriately positioned centers in the Eastern Atlantic that can work with the growing number of unmanned (i.e. autonomous) ocean-related vehicles in the air (UAVs), on the surface ocean (USVs) and underwater (UUVs) that can work with specific systems and companies as well as promote inter-operability across platforms and domains. Such a long-distance course where no single spot is too far to allow retrieval when needed would be attractive for testing and training purposes for maritime robotics companies from around the world. Assuming that appropriate agreements are in place, valuable ocean observation information for scientists and NATO navies alike could be gathered. There is a logical, rough “half-moon” (a half circle arc) anchored by the Underwater Systems & Tech Lab at the University of Porto in the North side and by PLOCAN in the Canary Islands in the South one. The Azores in the West would represent the westernmost segment of the route (1,500 km from Porto), which is the location of the Atlantic International Research Centre (AIR Centre). Madeira would be the next center to the southeast (950 km from Azores) continuing South to PLOCAN on Gran Canaria (550 km).

The Atlantic Autonomous Robotics Consortium (AARC) would bring together an array of stakeholders including academia, government, industry, military, NGOs and others to promote ocean robotics-related collaboration and coordinate a larger Blue-Voice for the region internationally in a Triple Helix approach context