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SEA TOW® LAUNCHES ARGUS™ BETA TESTING

TOMS RIVER, NJ (July 20, 2010) – Together with Sea Tow Services International, the New Jersey-based Sea Tow Manasquan began beta testing the Autonomous Remote Global Underwater Surveillance (ARGUS) system this week. ARGUS is an onboard sensor platform developed by the Maryland-based SURVICE Engineering Company to autonomously sample and report geo-referenced water depth and marine environmental data from vessels-of-opportunity traveling through inland and coastal waterways.

Owned by Capt. Kermit Koch, Sea Tow Manasquan will serve as the core fleet for the coastal New Jersey beta testing network. A second beta testing network is also being launched by Sea Tow operations in the Chesapeake Bay. Because they patrol virtually every day and frequently access remote areas, Sea Tow vessels are ideally suited to provide the backbone for local ARGUS networks. The information gathered from these networks will supplement data from other recreational and commercial vessels and will be used to further advance hardware and process development of this unique system.

“Sea Tow’s participation in the ARGUS beta testing,” said Sea Tow CEO, Capt. Joe Frohnhoefer, “is a great example of how we improve recreational boating by undertaking initiatives that go far beyond our core mission of providing the best 24/7 on-water assistance available. We participate in projects like these because we are uniquely suited to do so, and because successful results will parlay into better boating experiences for our members. If more accurate charting data becomes available via the ARGUS platform, then our members can use it to avoid unknown shoaled areas, for example, and the probable grounding that will come with it.”

Representing the commercial workboat sector of the marine industry, the South Carolina-based Stevens Towing (www.stevens towing.com) will also participate in ARGUS beta testing. The company’s high-use vessels will focus on capturing data from commercial waterways that are critical to marine transportation. In return, ARGUS promises to provide Stevens and other users of the system with enhanced operational safety and efficiency, as well as, as an added benefit, enhanced operational productivity via Wave WiFi™ connectivity through land-based hotspots established for data harvesting.

Other partners involved in ARGUS development include the Florida-based GEOSat Solutions, which is providing the ARGUS-optimized extended-range marine Wave WiFi system (www.wavewifi.com); the Florida-based EarthNC, which is a leading provider of online and mobile charting solutions for the commercial, recreational, and Federal boating markets (www.EarthNC.com); and the Maryland-based Flying Point Marina, which is a local marina providing testing assets and support to SURVICE’s ARGUS developers.

Also, the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Program—part of the Center for Environment and Society (CES) at Washington College in Chestertown, MD—will use ARGUS for depth and water quality/contaminant sampling to help safeguard the Chesapeake Bay (<http://ces.washcoll.edu>). This application is similar to one that was recently proposed for ARGUS-equipped Sea Tow vessels to help assess the effects of the widely reported Deepwater Horizon oil spill off the Louisiana coast. CES will also provide academia-developed GIS interfacing and applications to serve the scientific community. The Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway Association (www.atlanticintracoastal.org) has also endorsed the project as a means to provide near-real-time condition data to supplement ongoing surveying efforts of the waterway.

About Sea Tow

Based in Southold, NY, Sea Tow Services International has over 120 franchised locations throughout the United States, Australia, Europe, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico; and the organization represents nearly 1,000 captains, crew, and professional support staff who are on call 24 hours a day to serve the recreational boating community. For additional information on Sea Tow, visit www.seatow.com.

For more information on ARGUS, this beta testing, or SURVICE Engineering, visit <http://argus.survice.com>.

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