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**DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OF AN
AUTONOMOUS UNDERWATER VEHICLE (AUV)**

TAN WEI CHIANG

**A report submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Mechatronics Engineering**

**Faculty of Electrical Engineering
UNIVERSITI TEKNIKAL MALAYSIA MELAKA**

2016/2017

I declare that this report entitle “**Design and Development of an Autonomous Underwater Vehicle (AUV)**” is the result of my own research except as cited in the references. The report has not been accepted for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature of any other degree.

Signature :

Name : TAN WEI CHIANG

Date :

To my beloved mother and father

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First of all, I, Tan Wei Chiang as an undergraduate student from Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM) would like to express my greatest appreciation and deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Mohd Shahrivel Bin Mohd Aras for his patient guidance, professional training, encouragement and valuable advice during this FYP. His methodical approach to problem solving and encouraging words always filled me with optimism, energy and enthusiasm. Since his leadership and guidance made it a great learning experience for me.

My grateful thanks are also extended to Mr. Mohd Zamzuri AB Rashid and Dr. Muhammad Herman Jamaluddin also Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM) for offering me resources in running the program during the Final Year Project. Besides that, I also thanks to my classmates, including Ng Yong Jie, Ooh Man Chun, Melvin and others who always helping and teaching me a lot of things.

Last but not least, I would take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to my parents for their continuous shower of love, unceasing encouragement and support throughout all these years. I derived inspiration from their sacrifice, encouragement from their faith, found happiness in their pride and all my strength from their unconditional love. Without the help of the particulars that I mentioned above, I might face difficulties during my Final Year Project. I thank and sense of gratitude to everybody who directly or indirectly offered their helping hand during the entire period of the Final Year Project.

ABSTRACT

In underwater field, Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) and Autonomous Underwater Vehicle (AUV) are created to help human do marine research. AUV is an unmanned or fully sensors robotic vehicle that is using high technology to bring new capabilities to work in the subsea environment. One of the problems facing by AUV is the depth control since it may loss during surveillance because autonomously navigate in the sea. Thus, this project focused on the design and development of a low cost AUV with small size and high performance with its depth control. AUV need to be in small size to ease the mobility of the AUV when it performs tasks. Different speed will be used to test and evaluate the depth control since the depth also influenced by its speed. In designing the AUV, SolidWorks software is used and undergoes various simulation tests such as stress and strain test and stability by referring the center of mass. Next, the hardware that discussed and selected included frames, hull, enclosure box, propulsion and submersion that achieve a certain performance in terms of reliability and controllability. This project uses pressure sensor MPX5700AP as depth control to determine the depth of AUV submersion. AUV uses an AfroESC 30A to control the speed for Blue Robotics T200 thruster to move it along vertical and horizontal axis that automatic operate based on the programming coding. In this project, the scope of the study focused on the interface between mechanical and electrical design with the small size (70cm X 50cm X 30cm) made of acrylic that waterproof and the submerge range of depth in between 2 to 6 meters. The AUV is going to undergo a series of field test at the end to evaluate its ability and performance in the swimming pool task.

ABSTRAK

Dalam bidang bawah air, kenderaan kawalan jauh (ROV) dan kenderaan bawah air (AUV) yang dicipta untuk membantu manusia melakukan penyelidikan marin. AUV adalah kenderaan robotik tanpa pemandu atau sensor sepenuhnya yang menggunakan teknologi tinggi untuk membawa keupayaan baru untuk bekerja dalam persekitaran dasar laut. Salah satu masalah yang dihadapi oleh AUV adalah kawalan kedalaman kerana ia boleh kehilangan semasa pengawasan kerana autonomi mengemudi di laut. Oleh itu, projek ini memberi tumpuan kepada penciptaan dan pembuatan AUV yang kos rendah dengan saiz kecil dan berprestasi tinggi dengan kawalan kedalaman. AUV perlu direka dengan saiz kecil supaya memudahkan mobiliti AUV semasa ia melaksanakan tugas. Kelajuan yang berbeza digunakan untuk menguji dan menilai kawalan kedalaman kerana ia mempengaruhi kedalaman. Dalam mereka AUV, perisian Solidworks digunakan dan kemudian menjalankan pelbagai ujian simulasi terhadap AUV seperti ujian tekanan dan kestabilan dengan pusat jisim. Seterusnya, perkakasan yang dibincangkan dan dipilih termasuk rangka, badan kapal, kotak kepungan, pendorongan dan penenggelaman yang mencapai prestasi yang tertentu dari segi kebolehpercayaan dan keupayaan pengawalan. Projek ini menggunakan pengesan tekanan MPX5700AP untuk kawalan kedalaman bagi menentukan kedalaman AUV semasa menyelam. AUV menggunakan AfroESC 30A untuk mengawal kelajuan T200 penujah supaya bergerak sepanjang paksi menegak dan mendarat yang automatik beroperasi berdasarkan pengaturcaraan. Dalam projek ini, skop kajian memberi tumpuan kepada reka bentuk mekanikal dan elektrik dengan saiz kecil (70cm X 50cm X 30cm) diperbuat daripada akrilik yang berkalis air dan kedalaman di antara 2 hingga 6 meter. AUV akan menjalani satu siri ujian pada akhirnya untuk menilai keupayaan dan prestasinya dalam tugas-tugas yang disediakan di dalam kolam renang.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	TITLE	PAGE
	SUPERVISOR’S VERIFICATION	i
	PROJECT TITLE	ii
	DECLARATION	iii
	DEDICATION	iv
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
	ABSTRACT	vi
	ABSTRAK	vii
	TABLE OF CONTENTS	viii
	LIST OF TABLES	xi
	LIST OF FIGURES	xiii
	LIST OF ABBREVIATION	xvi
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	1.1 Introduction	1
	1.2 Motivation	3
	1.3 Problem Statement	4
	1.4 Objectives	4
	1.5 Scope	5
	1.6 Organisation of Report	6
	1.7 Summary	6
2	LITERATURE REVIEW	7
	2.1 Introduction	7
	2.2 Theories and Principle Apply	8
	2.2.1 Density	8
	2.2.2 Buoyancy and Gravity (Archimedes principle)	8
	2.2.3 Stability Principle	10
	2.2.4 Hydrostatic Pressure	10
	2.2.5 Environment Forces	11
	2.3 AUV Coordination System	11

2.4 Mechanical Design	12
2.4.1 AUV Design Comparison Architecture Frame	12
2.4.2 AUV Frame Design	15
2.4.3 AUV Hull Design	16
2.4.4 AUV Electronic Enclosure Box	17
2.4.5 Propulsion System	18
2.4.6 Submersion System	19
2.5 Electronic Design	20
2.5.1 Electric Power Supply	20
2.5.2 Sensors	21
2.6 Software (SolidWorks, Arduino, MATLAB)	22
2.7 Summary	23
3 METHODOLOGY	24
3.1 Introduction	24
3.2 Project Flowchart	25
3.3 Project Methodology Flow Chart	26
3.4 Project K-Chart	27
3.5 Mechanical Description (Solidwork Design)	28
3.5.1 AUV Body Frame	28
3.5.2 Pressure Vessel Hull	29
3.5.3 AUV Electronic Enclosure Box	30
3.5.4 Propulsion	31
3.5.5 Submersion system	32
3.5.6 AUV Prototype Assembly Drawing and Actual Structure	33
3.6 Electrical Description	34
3.6.1 Electric Power Source	35
3.6.2 Depth Sensor	36
3.6.3 10 DOF IMU Sensor	36
3.6.4 Arduino Mega 2560	38
3.6.5 Afro ESC 30A	38
3.7 Simulation Analysis Description	39
3.7.1 Simulation 1: Center of Mass (COM)	39
3.7.2 Simulation 2: Stress and Strain Simulation	39

	3.8 Experiment Implementation Description	40
	3.8.1 Experiment 1: Waterproof Test	41
	3.8.2 Experiment 2: Balancing Test	41
	3.8.3 Experiment 3: Buoyancy Test	42
	3.8.4 Experiment 4: Pressure (Depth) Test	43
	3.8.5 Experiment 5: Speed Test	45
	3.8.6 Experiment 6: Turning Test	45
	3.9 Summary	46
4	RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	47
	4.1 Introduction	47
	4.2 Solidwork Analysis	48
	4.2.1 Analysis 1: Center of Mass (COM)	48
	4.2.2 Analysis 2: Stress and Strain Simulation	50
	4.3 Experiment Results	56
	4.3.1 Experiment 1: Waterproof Test	56
	4.3.2 Experiment 2: Balancing Test	57
	4.3.3 Experiment 3: Buoyancy Test	59
	4.3.4 Experiment 4: Pressure (Depth) Test	60
	4.3.5 Experiment 5: Speed Test	63
	4.3.6 Experiment 6: Turning Test	66
	4.4 Modelling and Controller	67
	4.4.1 System Identification Toolbox in MATLAB	67
	4.4.2 AUV Depth Controller (On-Off Controller)	71
	4.4.3 AUV Depth Controller (PID controller)	72
	4.4.4 AUV Depth Controller (FLC Controller)	75
	4.5 Summary	80
5	CONCLUSION	81
	5.1 Conclusion	81
	5.2 Future Work	82
	REFERENCES	83
	APPENDIX A - H	86-94

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE NO.	TITLE	PAGE
2.1	Comparison table Architecture design of Open Frame AUV	13
2.2	Comparison table Architecture design of Close Frame AUV	14
2.3	Effect of increasing K_p , K_i and K_d parameter [5]	23
3.1	The comparison for different type of propeller pitch [25]	31
3.2	Specifications of the thruster [25]	32
3.3	Specifications of IMU sensor [3]	36
4.1	Center of mass in Solidwork Mass Properties	49
4.2	Model Information (Hull)	50
4.3	Material Properties (Hull)	50
4.4	Load and Fixtures definition	51
4.5	Mesh Information	51
4.6	Mesh Information Details	51
4.7	Study Results for Stress	52
4.8	Study Results for Displacement	53
4.9	Study Results for Deformation	53
4.10	Study Results for Factor of safety	54
4.11	Relation between water depth and water pressure	55
4.12	Waterproof Test for time controller (0.5 meter depth)	56
4.13	Waterproof Test for depth controller (10 minutes)	56
4.14	Observation of AUV forward movement	57
4.15	Buoyant force acting on AUV	59
4.16	Output signal voltage	60
4.17	Actual and measured pressure	62

4.18	Speed test results	64
4.19	Turning speed test in lab pool	66
4.20	Turning speed test in swimming pool	66
4.21	Depth data AUV	67
4.22	Depth data AUV for On-Off Controller	71
4.23	Rule table of FLC	76
4.24	Summary of the tuning process	79
4.25	Performances of the controller	79

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE NO.	TITLE	PAGE
1.1	Types of Underwater Vehicle [1]	1
1.2	Classification of Underwater Vehicle [2]	2
1.3	Performances of three Underwater Vehicles [3]	2
1.4	Forecast Global AUV demand by sector [4]	3
1.5	The Simple Block Diagram for AUV [3]	5
2.1	MIT Odyssey IV [2]	7
2.2	Density Test [8]	8
2.3	The three buoyancy concepts [7]	9
2.4	The operation of ballast tank [8]	9
2.5	Stability of Immersed object [7]	10
2.6	AUV coordinate system [10]	12
2.7	Isometric view for open frame and close frame AUVs	15
2.8	Open Frame design by Team5374 University of Arizona [10]	15
2.9	AUV cylindrical pressure hull [14]	16
2.10	Electronic waterproof housing box [11]	17
2.11	Pelican 1010 case [22]	17
2.12	Propeller system and Thruster used by AUV [24]	18
2.13	Lego compatible propellers [23]	19
2.14	The Pressure sensor as depth sensor [19]	21
3.1	AUV project flowchart	25
3.2	AUV project methodology flowchart	26
3.3	K-Chart	27
3.4	AUV open body frame (Design & Fabricated & Structured)	28
3.5	Three types of AUV hull shape	29
3.6	Cylindrical hull (Design & PVC pipe)	29

3.7	Three types of electronic enclosure box shape	30
3.8	BlueRobotics Thrusters T200 [25]	31
3.9	Orthogonal View with parameter for T200 Thruster [25]	32
3.10	Submersion system [26]	32
3.11	AUV assembly drawing	33
3.12	AUV Prototype	34
3.13	Block Diagram of the Embedded System Design	34
3.14	Electrical parts	35
3.15	12V Lead-acid battery (Left) and 9V Energizer battery (Right)	35
3.16	MPX5700AP depth sensor with pin configuration [9]	36
3.17	10 DOF IMU sensor	37
3.18	Arduino Mega 2560	38
3.19	Afro ESC 30A [25]	38
3.20	Equipments used in experimental tests	40
3.21	waterproof test of AUV	41
3.22	Iron steel inside the weight	42
3.23	AUV hanging by the weight measuring device	43
3.24	Swimming pool depth (5 feet = 1.524 meter)	44
3.25	Tupperware with depth sensor put underwater	44
3.26	AUV speed test at swimming pool	45
3.27	AUV turning speed test at swimming pool	46
4.1	Different view of AUV center of mass	48
4.2	Meshing Results	52
4.3	Graph of Maximum stress versus water depth	55
4.4	The plate inside PVC hull	57
4.5	Weight for left, right and both	58
4.6	Graph of buoyant force against weight	59
4.7	Graph of signal voltage against water depth	61
4.8	Pressure converter	61

4.9	Graph of actual and measured pressure against water depth	62
4.10	Output against absolute pressure (Datasheet)	63
4.11	Velocity graph of AUV	64
4.12	Acceleration graph of AUV	65
4.13	System Identification Toolbox	68
4.14	Import data	69
4.15	Time plot for both data	69
4.16	Transfer Function Model	69
4.17	3 Poles and 2 zero	70
4.18	Transfer Function Model	70
4.19	Step Response	70
4.20	Graph of depth input and output against time	72
4.21	Simulink of PID for AUV depth control	73
4.22	PID function block parameters after tuning	73
4.23	Original and PID response before and after tuning	73
4.24	PID step response after tuning	74
4.25	PID tuning performance parameters	74
4.26	Basic Configuration of Fuzzy Logic Controller	75
4.27	Fuzzy inference system (FIS) editor	75
4.28	‘error’, ‘differential error’ and ‘output’	76
4.29	Rule editor of FIS	76
4.30	Simulink of FLC	77
4.31	Initial output response of the system	77
4.32	Membership function NL partition is moved to left	78
4.33	The output response after NL partition is tuned	78
4.34	Reduce scaling factor and move to right	78
4.35	One dropped signal after tuning	78
4.36	Output response of tuned PID and FLC	79

LIST OF ABBREVIATION

UTeM	-	Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka
AUV	-	Autonomous Underwater Vehicle
ROV	-	Remotely Operated Vehicle
OOS	-	Ocean Observation System
UUV	-	Unmanned Underwater Vehicle
ONR	-	Office of Naval Research
MIT	-	Massachusetts of Washington
USM	-	Universiti Sains Malaysia
IMU	-	Inertial Measurement Unit
CAD	-	Computer-Aided Design
COM	-	Center of Mass

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Generally, Unmanned Underwater Vehicles (UUV) have been designed and developed in various countries, including Malaysia for the past ten years in marine technology. It can be categorized into two forms which are Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) and Autonomous Underwater Vehicle (AUV) with the almost the same function as shown in Figure 1.1. Figure 1.2 shows the classification of UUV. AUV is basically an extension of the ROV's technology. The ROV is controlled by the human from the controller and needs navigation control on the surface of the core ship, whereas the AUV is controlled by its on-board controller guided by build-in pre-programmed instructions with free from a chain [1-2]. The common AUV has a submarine or torpedo shape with a minimum of one thruster for forward, backward and rudders adjust left and right direction.

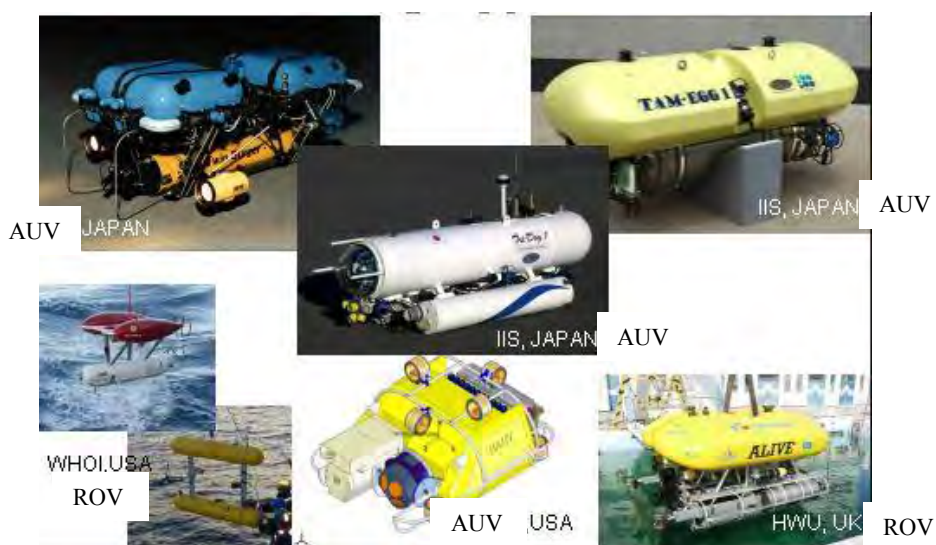


Figure 1.1: Types of Underwater Vehicle [1]

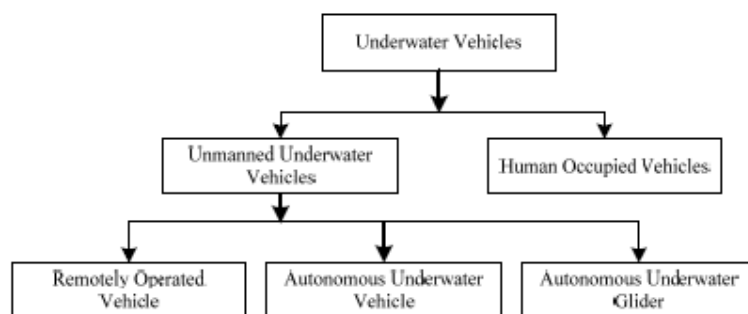


Figure 1.2: Classification of Underwater Vehicle [2]

Formerly, underwater vehicle has been used in a limited number of tasks. With further research and development, it able to reduces the limitation and increase the capability to do more tasks. Today, most of AUV can be seen in military field include mine detection, topography, search, observation mission, oiled and gas industry and some of the expeditions to explore under the deep sea as shown in Figure 1.3 [3].

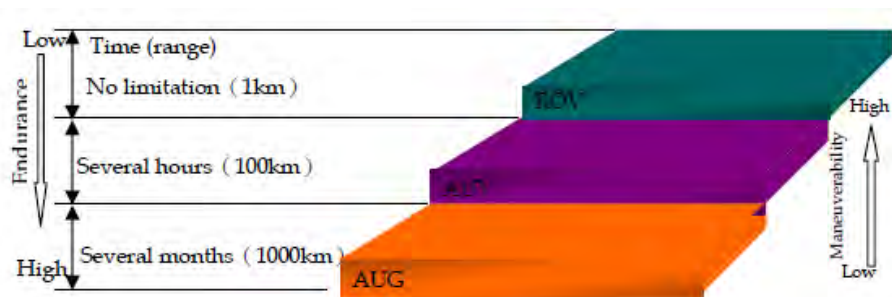


Figure 1.3: Performances of three Underwater Vehicles [3]

This project is getting more and more important that shows the design implementation of an AUV for a multiplicity of research test bed platform in underwater technologies [4]. In shallow water, the use of large AUV is not practical since the larger object has more inertia when moving around in the water and it is difficult to avoid obstacles. Thus, small AUV more suitable in shallow water to perform tasks due to its ease of mobility as well as compact without limiting its functionality and long lasting power [2].

This project focuses on mechanical design and depth controller for AUV. To complete this need to develop low cost AUV and fabrication for AUV in Underwater Technology Research Lab at UTeM. The subparts of developing an AUV are mechanical body construction, electrical and electronic circuit designing, AUV test run and report writing.

1.2 Motivation

In Malaysia, the underwater vehicle still not widely studied and investigated. Malaysia still considered far behind as compared to western countries due to some limitations like Ocean, underwater knowledge, high and efficient sensor technology. Western countries have many researchers, engineers and scientist who keeping design and develop unmanned vehicles for the underwater exploration purpose as shown in Figure 1.4. However, Malaysia still lack of knowledge and technology to carry out this AUV project.

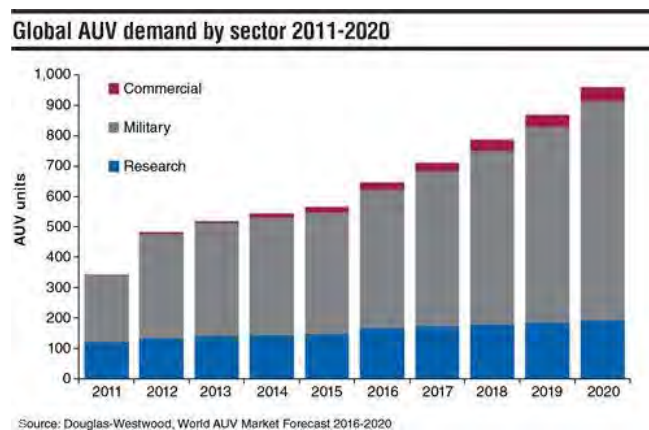


Figure 1.4: Forecast Global AUV demand by sector [4]

The ocean still has a lot of unidentified quantities which occupied approximately 71% of the surface of the Earth. So, there have many studies and growth about the underwater field include marine life environment and marine resources research and so on. The AUV investigation and navigation is not sufficient because underwater has low transparency and hard to observe the whole underwater life in detail [5].

Next, by referring to plane crashed case, MH370 which happen in the Indian Ocean. Malaysia needs to use technology from Australian country due to lack of technologies to detect splinter of the plane. Malaysia required to pay the commercial aid to relevant countries, while they actually used this chance to continue their further research [27].

Thus, the consequence of this project develops an AUV with low cost and good performance ready to join in any AUV competitions like Singapore AUV Challenge and Innovate. The project starts by design and fabricate following modifications, addition of basic sensor and common movement control.

1.3 Problem Statement

During the past few decades, a lot of engineers design and developed underwater vehicle to explore the depths of the deep sea and used in supervising marine environment and marine ocean life. Since the technology is getting an advance, integrated sensors AUV has been developing for advance growth in the military field by GPS and regulate the presence of mines in the seabed. Every 10m diving will raise one atmospheric pressure cause the water pressure stop from being stepped into the deep sea easily [6].

The AUV design is limited because the mechanical parts of AUV body must be strong enough to withstand the deep water pressure. Its body should be designed with hydrodynamic shape to ensure reduced the drag force exerted on it that will cause more power consumption. In Malaysia, the study of underwater technology lags behind western countries like USA, Russia, Japan and others. The tragedy MH370 submerge into Indian Ocean should be a warning to everyone about the importance of improving the technology in Malaysia [27].

AUV may loss during surveillance because autonomously navigate in the underwater seabed which is unpredictable and inherently dangerous. In depth motion control, AUV is particularly dangerous in vertical trajectory due to easier get inspected structure damage by crashing the bottom of the seabed. Thus, this project is developing to solve by improving the current AUV performance in terms of depth control and efficiency.

1.4 Objectives

Three objectives that required to achieved during this FYP;

1. To design and develop an AUV that able to float and submerge stabilized for underwater application.
2. To design a depth controller of the AUV at the desired depth with zero overshoot.
3. To study by evaluating and analysis the performance of an AUV in terms of maneuverability and movement.

1.5 Scope

The scopes and limitations of this project are:

- a. The AUV is required in small size, dimension less than 70cm X 50cm X 50cm and lightweight less than 30Kg.
- b. Power should be self-contained and tethers of any sort are not allowed.
- c. The voltage of the power source used by each AUV should not exceed 24VDC.
- d. AUV must be designed and developed with no danger of any kind to anyone or anything at the venue.
- e. AUV has to swim underwater without surfacing or touching the bottom or wall.
- f. The depth rating of the AUV is less than 3 meters from the water surface due to the limitation depth of a swimming pool and water leakage inside the hull.
- g. The maximum duration for the AUV activity in underwater is 1 hour per cycle to prevent humidity hazards.
- h. The microcontroller used is Arduino Mega, due to it has high processing power and up to 54 General Purpose Input Output pins.
- i. Arduino Mega, MPX5700AP, 10 DOF IMU and ESC are tested for electronic sensor performance in underwater as shown in Figure 1.5.
- j. 10 DOF IMU sensor is used as input for the tilt balancing mechanism of the AUV.
- k. Increase the downward force (weight) acting on AUV to reduce the power used by thruster to submerge.

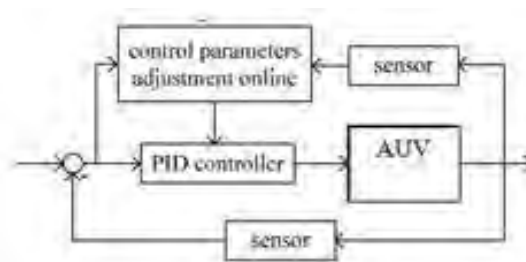


Figure 1.5: The Simple Block Diagram for AUV [3]

1.6 Organisation of Report

Chapter 2 is literature review which described the background theory which needed for this project. It also discussed the factors affecting an AUV followed by the mechanical design and electronic design. There are also the discussion and comparison between the previous AUVs project. For Chapter 3, methodology gives hardware in mechanical and electronic design and offerings the assembly AUV design chosen that were developed. There are comparisons between the shape and materials for mechanical parts.

Chapter 4 are results and discussion that described several simulations in the SolidWorks Xpress to help investigate the AUV. The simulation can be done through the SolidWorks toolbox to show the center of mass and stress-strain tests. Also, several tests on AUV in the swimming pool are to perform its performance. For Chapter 5, conclusion reviews the whole information in details for this project. There are also some suggestions for future work and recommendations.

1.7 Summary

This chapter concludes that the importance of an AUV in the water application. It summarized that the AUV platform is very limited because the requirement component specification is very critical like waterproof issue, imperfect accuracy and error. It focuses more on the new propulsion systems and batteries with high capacitance. The key to this enabling technology is the development of the optimum sensing and platform required, which are low cost, highly reliable, robust and environmentally friendly.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

It presents the background theory which required during the course in the previous study related to Autonomous Underwater Vehicle (AUV). The first section deals with theories and principles for design any types underwater vehicle. Next, it discussed mechanical design for underwater vehicles and also basic electronic information based on researchers' findings.

In early 1957, Stan Murphy, Bob Francois success to develop the first AUV and later on, Terry Ewart continued the project at the University of Washington. AUV development began in the 1960s at the University of Washington and made very large leaps in the early 1990s with the backing of Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and the Office of Naval Research (ONR). Next, more and more submersibles are designed and fabricated for different function as shown in Figure 2.1 [1, 2].



Figure 2.1: MIT Odyssey IV [2]

Generally, a submersible vehicle is no more a new impression. The first American submarine was called “Turtle” which built at Saybrook, in 1775 by David Bushnell and his brother, Ezra. In November of 1879, the Reverend George W. Garrett developed the first practical powered submarine, “Resurgam”. It was powered by a Lamm 'fireless' steam engine, and could travel for some ten hours of power stored in an insulated tank.

2.2 Theories and Principle Apply

There are several theories and principles are required to discuss during AUV design processes like density, gravity and buoyancy, stability, pressure, hydrodynamic damping and added mass. The vehicle's ability to submerge is influence by buoyancy and density.

2.2.1 Density

Density is defined as the mass of an object per its volume. Mass is the quantity of matter confined in an object (kilograms, Kg) whereas Volume is the quantity of space taken up by a quantity of matter (cubic meters, m³). Commonly, density can be used to define or determine the substance. This is important in determining how different materials interact when mixed together for AUV mechanical design as shown in Figure 2.2.

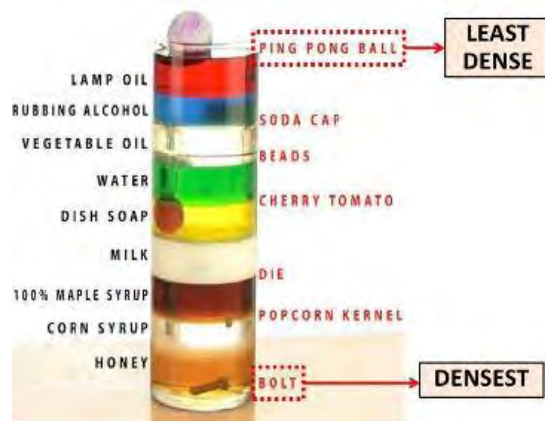


Figure 2.2: Density Test [8]

2.2.2 Buoyancy and Gravity (Archimedes principle)

Greek philosopher Archimedes discovered the Archimedes Principle, which proves the object absolutely or partially immersed in a liquid will exist by a buoyancy force which same as the weight of the water it dislocates. In other word, an AUV is submerged into underwater either fully or partially, there exists upward force on AUV that is same as the weight of the underwater that is displaced by the AUV [7].