

AWS OCEAN'S WAVE ENERGY TECHNOLOGY SECURES BACKING FROM THE UK GOVERNMENT

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(Inverness) AWS Ocean Energy has today received additional funding support to develop its new wave energy device. The Highlands company and its project partner, the University of Strathclyde, have received £350,000 from the Technology Strategy Board, which is sponsored by the UK Government to promote and support innovation and technology.

The Technology Strategy Board funding follows the support given earlier this month to AWS Ocean Energy by the Scottish Government's WATERS programme (Wave and Tidal Energy: Research, Development and Demonstration Support). Both funding streams will be used by AWS Ocean Energy to further develop its AWS-III device, a ring-shaped multi-cell surface-floating wave power system, the result of almost two years of intensive research and development work.

The funding from the Technology Strategy Board is part of a £7m million funding package awarded to 9 wave and tidal stream research and development projects. The projects are focusing on the twin aims of driving down the cost of energy while improving the reliability and performance of wave and tidal stream energy devices. Some of the projects will look to enhance the performance of existing devices while others aim to develop novel, breakthrough concepts.

Simon Grey, Chief Executive of AWS Ocean Energy said: "This latest funding is very welcome as we continue to develop our AWS-III wave energy device. As with WATERS, our application for funding was approved after careful scrutiny by the Technology Strategy Board, and so it is another positive statement about our R&D work to date. Our trials on Loch Ness will restart in September for a 6 week period and thereafter a detailed assessment of the trial results will be undertaken before we start building and then deploy a full-scale version of one of the wave absorption cells."

Iain Gray, Chief Executive of the Technology Strategy Board, said: "By 2050 we are going to have very different energy needs than we have today and we will be getting our energy from different sources. The UK is well placed to exploit wave and tidal stream energy resources with all of the coast line that we have, and it is expected this kind of technology will be an important part of the renewable energy mix needed in the future.

"We still need to prove which technological solutions will most successfully harness marine energy and we need to reduce the cost of the energy produced to make the technology competitive with other renewable energy solutions. So there are a range of technological challenges to address."

Elaine Hanton, Joint Head of Energy at Highlands & Islands Enterprise said: “The Highlands and Islands of Scotland are uniquely placed to support the growing marine energy sector. AWS Ocean Energy are at an exciting stage in their development, having just completed the first phase of their trials on Loch Ness, and we are delighted that they have secured further funding to support them in their ongoing development.”

A single utility-scale AWS-III, measuring around 60 metres in diameter, will be capable of generating up to 2.5 Megawatts (MW) of continuous power.

The company is seeking industrial and utility partners to enable the launching of a 12-cell, 2.5MW pre-commercial demonstrator in 2012 and subsequent commercialisation of the technology. Alongside the development of the AWS-III, the company is developing associated, patented technologies such as remote mooring systems and believes there is significant potential for manufacturing key components in Scotland.

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Notes to Editors:

1. AWS Ocean Energy (www.awsoccean.com) is based in Inverness, in the Scottish Highlands. The company is chaired by John Anderson, the Chief Executive Officer of Entrepreneurial Exchange.

2. The company's board and executive management team are advised by a Technical Advisory Committee comprising:

- o Dr Bruce Storm (formerly of Halliburton and a R&D physicist)
- o Professor Antonio Sarmiento (IST Lisbon, Head of Portugal's Wave Energy Centre)
- o Dr Tom Thorpe (wave energy specialist)
- o Andrew Mill (Chief Executive, NaREC and former Managing Director of EMEC)
- o Terry Rhodes (Head of Offshore Structures, Shell UK)

3. The Technology Strategy Board is a business-led executive non-departmental public body, established by the Government. Its role is to promote and support research into, and development and exploitation of, technology and innovation for the benefit of UK business, in order to increase economic growth and improve quality of life. It is sponsored by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills(BIS). For more information please visit www.innovateuk.org.

For further information

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