

Saab Seaeye Falcon ROV keeps fresh water flowing in Buenos Aires

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Fresh water to the eight million inhabitants of Buenos Aires is now more secure. For the first time, the Argentinean water authority is able to inspect the whole length of its pipeline from the inside. They are sending two Saab Seaeye Falcon DR remotely operated vehicles (ROV) swimming down its entire 96 kilometre length, round bends, and up and down levels, 35 metres below ground.

The authority - Water and Sanitation Argentinos (AySA) - was created by the Federal Government to improve drinking water and sewage services to the city.

With almost 100 kilometres of fresh water pipeline to inspect for potential failure, ranging in diameter from three metres to six metres, the task has been too dangerous and impossible to achieve with divers. So this vital work has never before been undertaken.

For AySA, the Falcon DR has the advantage of working tirelessly and safely to check for cracks and breaks caused by earth movement. Fitted with 1100 metres of umbilical, each of the remotely operated vehicles (ROVs) can swim between inspection hatches, dotted every kilometre along the pipeline.

Inspection must be carried out overnight and only in the winter months, as this is the only time flow can be reduced to half the normal daily rate of five knots. In summer the rate is kept permanently high for crop irrigation.

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