



Iran Captures US Underwater Drone in the Strait of Hormuz

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Iran's Revolutionary Guards announced the capture of a **US underwater drone** at the entrance of the Strait of Hormuz, in what Tehran described as an intelligence and operational operation.

According to Iranian media, the vehicle would be a **Dive-LD**, an autonomous underwater vehicle produced by US company Anduril. The system, approximately **5.8 meters** long, is designed to operate unmanned in missions that include mine search and neutralization, seafloor mapping, information gathering, and inspection of underwater infrastructure, including pipelines and cables.

The Revolutionary Guards presented the capture as an intelligence success, describing the vehicle as one of the most advanced US unmanned underwater systems.

The Pentagon: "It was an older model and it had malfunctioned"

The American version, however, is very different.

A Pentagon spokesman confirmed that a US underwater drone had been lost, specifying that the vehicle had suffered a **malfunction more than a day before** while conducting reconnaissance activities in regional waters in support of ongoing operations.

According to Washington, the Dive-LD involved was an **older model**, which did not collect sensitive data and did not have classified sonar or radar. The Pentagon therefore ruled out that the capture would allow Iran to obtain particularly sensitive military technologies.

Reuters also notes that it was unable to independently verify the dynamics of the capture described by Tehran.

A system designed to operate without putting personnel at risk

The episode nonetheless highlights the growing importance of **autonomous underwater systems (AUV)** in US naval operations.

The Dive-LD can remain at sea for **up to 10 days** without returning to base and is designed to reach depths of approximately **6,000 meters**. Its use allows for surveillance, reconnaissance, and mapping activities without directly exposing personnel aboard a naval unit.

The value of the episode does not necessarily lie in the technology potentially recovered by Iran, but in the fact that a US autonomous system deployed in a highly contested operational area ended up in the hands of an adversary.

The Strait of Hormuz is increasingly becoming a contested environment

The incident occurs during a phase of strong military escalation between the United States and Iran. The Strait of Hormuz represents one of the main strategic points of the crisis, both for its importance for maritime and energy traffic and for the growing use of unmanned systems.

The presence of underwater drones adds a new dimension to the competition: beyond the surface and airspace, **the seabed of the Strait is also becoming an environment for surveillance, intelligence, and electronic and underwater warfare.**

The capture of the Dive-LD, although Washington describes it as the accidental loss of a non-sensitive vehicle, also demonstrates an operational problem destined to become increasingly relevant: **an autonomous system can be deployed in high-risk areas without endangering crews, but if it loses the ability to return or is neutralized, it can itself**

become a source of information for the adversary.

Sources: Reuters, Defense News, U.S. Department of Defense, Anduril.