



FALCON FREES WILLY

Helping Free Willy in the fourth remake of the film is a strong-swimming Falcon.

With the world-famous Willy strapped to its back, the small Saab Seaeye Falcon ROV used its five powerful thrusters and intelligent electronics to give Willy the wriggle he needs to swim free.

Filmed in South Africa, the realistic swimming motion was cleverly recreated through the precise fingertip control of the Falcon by ROV pilots Nick Stroud and Josh Smit of Marine Solutions.

The biggest challenge, according to Marine Solutions director, Kevin Bey-Leveld, was to make the Orca whale, with its large body, look like it really was swimming along.

The success of the project, says Kevin Bey-Leveld, helped keep down the cost of filming.

“The way the Falcon flies, combined with trained ROV pilots, allowed the director to film the sequences in a relatively short space of time, in terms of normal filming,” he explains.



Willy with Falcon

Video from Marine Solutions [here](#)

Although small and compact, the Falcon was powerful enough to manoeuvre in both swimming pool and the open ocean – the trick, explained Kevin Bey-Leveld, was to balance the buoyancy to compensate between sea water and fresh water.

It is not the first time the Falcon has starred in the movies. In the Bollywood film, ‘LUCK’, also filmed in South Africa, it was strapped under a 4.2 metre long latex and polyurethane replica of a tiger shark and used to replicate the realistic swimming motion of the shark and its violent attacks on hapless swimmers.

The Falcon is owned and operated by Cape Town based Marine Solutions. The ROV’s worldwide success across a range of industries, has come from its power to hold steady in strong cross currents, and its distributed intelligence control system

that allows up to 128 devices to be connected together on a single RS 485 serial network. This means different equipment can be easily added and changed as needed.

Marine Solutions, based in Cape Town, was founded in 1999 and supports the offshore industry globally in both ROV operations and cable assembly, manufacture and overmoulding.

Saab Seaeye is the world's largest manufacturer and market leader in electric ROV systems, and provider of autonomous and hybrid underwater vehicles. Markets include offshore energy, defence forces, marine science and hydro-engineering.

More information contact:

Kevin Bey-Leveld
Marine Solutions
+27 21 511 0843
kevin@marinesolutions.co.za
www.marinesolutions.co.za

Dave Grant
Saab Seaeye Ltd.
+44 (0)1489 898000
dave.grant@saabgroup.com
www.seaeye.com