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## **Explorer makes history as first human to successfully dive to the deepest point in the Southern Ocean, in the South Sandwich Trench**

*Victor Vescovo completes the second dive in the Five Deeps Expedition to the bottom of the Southern Ocean*

*Discovery Channel capturing expedition for documentary series*

DALLAS, TX (February 4, 2019) – The Five Deeps Expedition crosses another historic dive off its list when explorer Victor Vescovo became the first human to dive to the deepest point in the Southern Ocean – in the southern portion of the South Sandwich Trench – at 7,433.6 meters/24,388 feet in his private submersible, the *Limiting Factor*. Located just north of the Antarctic continent, the Southern Ocean’s South Sandwich Trench has not been thoroughly explored and is the only subzero Hadal zone (deeper than 6,000 meters) in the world. No human has ever dived in the trench, and what few samples have been taken from its hadal depths, date back to the early 1970s. Due to its remote location, this dive posed many logistical and weather-related challenges, however the scientific findings could prove to be groundbreaking.

A revolutionary documentary series about the expedition is also being filmed by Atlantic Productions for Discovery Channel and will air in early 2020.

“I am so proud of the entire team for working in very difficult, near-zero (Celsius) temperatures to launch and recover the *Limiting Factor*. It was an extremely challenging dive technically, but we were lucky with the weather and were able to visit the bottom of the Southern Ocean for the very first time,” said Vescovo. “It also felt great to prove the technical capability of the sub to do a manned dive into a sub-zero Hadal zone, which has never been done before – or even attempted to our knowledge. It was a great day for science and engineering.”

To accomplish the dive, a two-person deep-sea research submersible was manufactured by Triton Submarines of Sebastian, Florida specifically for this endeavor. Designed to slip vertically through the water column at high speeds, Vescovo was able to safely reach the bottom of the South Sandwich Trench in approximately 2.7 hours. While on the bottom accompanied by two deep-diving scientific landers, he mapped and took high-definition video of the sea floor and also collected soil and water samples for further study.

The Five Deeps Expedition is the first oceanic journey to take a manned, commercially-certified submersible vessel further and deeper than any in history. In addition to Vescovo's solo dive, the expedition also accomplished:

- First human being to reach the bottom of the Southern Ocean in the southern portion of the South Sandwich Trench
- Most accurate mapping of the South Sandwich Trench to date using a modern multibeam sonar system
- Deepest dive into a sub-zero Hadal zone, only the third solo dive below 7,000 meters
- The third-deepest solo dive in history, after James Cameron's 2012 dive to the Pacific Ocean's *Challenger Deep*, and Vescovo's dive in December 2019 to the bottom of the Atlantic

"The Antarctic is our second home, but the logistics required for this expedition have taken things to a whole new level," said Rob McCallum of EYOS Expeditions. "This is a remarkable achievement in the world of polar exploration, as the South Sandwich Trench is one of Earth's last unexplored frontiers."

"These were the first ever manned submersible dives in the South Sandwich Trench and an unprecedented opportunity for us to visit a part of the ocean that has never been seen before," said Patrick Lahey of Triton Submarines. "This is the true essence of exploration and is akin to someone making the first summit of a remote mountain on land. It's history in the making and what a thrill it is for all of us on board to be part of something so exciting and important."

The next stop on the Five Deeps Expedition is the Java Trench, commonly believed to be the deepest point in the Indian Ocean. The Java Trench has not been thoroughly explored and the team aims to verify its depth with the use of its Kongsberg EM124 multibeam sonar system. The findings from this dive will then be compared to those from the Diamantina Trench, southwest of Australia, to determine if the Java Trench is indeed the deepest point in the Indian Ocean, or if the title properly belongs to the Diamantina.

The other remaining major dives planned for the Five Deeps Expedition include:

- Mariana Trench/Challenger Deep (Pacific Ocean, 10,925 meters)
- Tonga Trench (Pacific Ocean, 10,882 meters)
- Molloy Deep (Arctic Ocean, 5,573 meters)

For updates on the expedition, visit [fivedeeps.com](http://fivedeeps.com). The website also has all of the information one might need regarding the technology, scientific goals, crew and team bios, FAQs, as well as an expedition photos, live tracking, and an expedition overview.

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### **Partnership opportunities**

Organizations are welcome to submit interest in supporting the expedition and its scientific missions to [FiveDeepsPress@richards.com](mailto:FiveDeepsPress@richards.com).

### **About Caladan Oceanic**

Caladan Oceanic is a private company dedicated to the advancement of undersea technology and supporting expeditions to increase the understanding of, and support, the productive sustainment of the oceans. Founder Victor Vescovo has long had a passion for exploration and has summited the highest peak on all seven of the world's continents including Mt. Everest and skied at least 100 kilometers to both the North and South Poles. He also served for 20 years as an officer in the US Navy Reserve, retiring with the rank of Commander. With the completion of the Five Deeps Expedition, Vescovo could become the first person in history to have been to the top of all the world's continents, both poles, and the bottom of all its oceans.

### **About Triton Submarines, LLC**

Triton Submarines of Sebastian, Florida, is the most experienced civil submarine producer in the world today – and the only contemporary manufacturer of acrylic and titanium pressure-hull-equipped personal submarines to deliver multiple classed and certified vessels capable of diving to 3,300 feet (1,000 meters) or more. Triton Submarines' senior staff have over 350 years of combined experience with more than 80 different submersibles, and their operations team members have together logged over 25,000 dives. Triton clients also enjoy superlative after-sales service and technical support from a company dedicated to their total satisfaction.

### **About EYOS Expeditions**

EYOS Expeditions has been designing complex and challenging expeditions for private vessels since 2008. Drawing on the decades of experience of the company's co-founders, the EYOS team has delivered over 1,200 safe and successful expeditions to some of the most remote destinations on Earth. EYOS Expeditions holds several "world firsts" and routinely takes clients to destinations rarely or never before visited. EYOS Expeditions and sister company Expedition Voyager Consultants has worked behind the scenes on many of the industry's groundbreaking itineraries and has a long history of delivering once-in-a-lifetime experiences for clients while maintaining the highest standards of safety, professionalism and environmental stewardship. EYOS Expeditions is today regarded as the industry leader for planning and operating remote expeditions using submersibles.

### **About Atlantic Productions**

Atlantic embraces several companies including the BAFTA- and Emmy-winning special effects company ZOO VFX and virtual reality company Alchemy. In 25 years, it has built a reputation for world-class storytelling, enhanced by the latest technology. Their

diverse output includes 11 projects with David Attenborough including BAFTA award-winning Flying Monsters, Museum Alive (Sky) and The Great Barrier Reef; Inside the Commons (BBC), Time Scanners (NatGeo), Mission Galapagos (BBC), Jerusalem, City of Heaven (Discovery) and the acclaimed theatrical film The Wildest Dream: Conquest of Everest. Recent projects include the critically acclaimed Judi Dench: My Passion for Trees (BBC) and The Coronation (BBC/Smithsonian/ABC), made with the Queen. Atlantic won the first-ever BAFTA award for virtual reality with David Attenborough's Great Barrier Reef Dive. Discovery Channel have commissioned Atlantic Productions to film a five-part documentary series covering the Five Deeps mission.

### **About Discovery Channel**

Discovery Channel is dedicated to creating the highest quality non-fiction content that informs and entertains its consumers about the world in all its wonder, diversity and amazement. The network, which is distributed to 88.3 million U.S. homes, can be seen in 224 countries and territories, offering a signature mix of compelling, high-end production values and vivid cinematography across genres including, science and technology, exploration, adventure, history and in-depth, behind-the-scenes glimpses at the people, places and organizations that shape and share our world. For more information, please visit [www.discovery.com](http://www.discovery.com)

### **About Newcastle University**

Newcastle University, based in Newcastle upon Tyne, United Kingdom, is a modern civic university with a proud tradition, committed to world-class academic excellence – but excellence with a purpose. Newcastle University is a red brick university and is a member of the Russell Group, an association of prestigious research-intensive UK universities. The University's international strategy supports our aim to have a strong international community, experience, reputation and impact. The University hosts students from over 120 different countries and staff from over 80 countries with excellent cross-cultural interaction from working with more than 200 overseas universities and institutions. The university has one of the largest EU research portfolios in the UK. The annual income of the institution for 2017–18 was £495.7 million of which £109.4 million was from research grants and contracts, with an expenditure of £483.3 million.

### **About the British Geological Survey**

The British Geological Survey (BGS) is a partly publicly-funded body which aims to advance geoscientific knowledge of the United Kingdom landmass and its continental shelf by means of systematic surveying, monitoring and research. The BGS advises the

British government on all aspects of geoscience, as well as providing impartial advice on geological matters to the public, academics and industry. BGS is a component body of the UK Natural Environment Research Council which is the UK's leading body for fundamental, strategic and applied research and monitoring in the environmental sciences both in the UK and for international projects. The core outputs of the BGS include geological, geophysical, geochemical and hydrogeological maps, descriptions and related digital databases. Scientists at the BGS produced the first comprehensive map of African groundwater reserves. One of the key strategic aims for the next decade is to complete the transition from 2-D mapping to a 3-D modelling culture.