Study on analysis and design of an VIAM-AUV2000 Autonomous Underwater Vehicle (AUV)

Tran Ngoc-Huy*, Chau Thanh-Hai

ABSTRACT
This paper presents the design of the VIAM-AUV2000 autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV) with a built-in cylinder for floatation and counterbalance. The modular structure including mechanical design, electronic system, and control algorithm ensures continuous operation for the vehicle at a depth of 50 meters underwater. The main content will consist of two parts: the mechanical implementation and the electrical system. The mechanical implementation part will focus on calculating ship hull profile and material selection; computing and simulating stress and distortion on ship hull and waterproof covering using finite element method with NX Nastran; analyzing and planning cylinder and counterbalance arrangements. At the same time, the advantages of hybrid AUV design inspired from the traditional one with thruster and fins as well as the underactuated glider form using counterbalance and cylinder for diving and floating are discussed specifically in the upcoming sections. The electrical system for the robot is also mentioned and clarified through the selection of sensors, actuators and hardware design to ensure stable operation for diving robot at a depth of 50m and operate continuously for long periods under water by using traditional AUV mode and glider mode. Some experimental results of thruster and three-axis tilt estimators with error of less than 1° are also presented in this paper.

Key words: AUV, FEM, diving/floating mechanism, thruster, tri-axis rotation angles estimator

INTRODUCTION
Nowadays, along with the rapid revolution of humankind, science and technology become more modern day by day, we gradually explore and conquer the mysteries of nature. However, the ocean is still a mystery far away from our reach and understanding. The research of ocean, decryption of the mystery in the deep of the sea required modern technology such as unmanned underwater vehicles, which can swim in the deep that no human can reach. In order to investigate the water environment, examine the ecosystem, probe the environmental fluctuation, or use for the military purpose, national defense, and observation... many prototypes of AUVs have been researched and developed. AUV Remus 100 of Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution can dive to 100 meters in more than 10 hours at the velocity of 2.3 m/s. Lightweight AUV developed by Porto University in cooperation with OceanScan work at 20 meters depth in 8 hours at 1.5-2m/s. Autosub6000 of Autonomous Underseas Vehicle Applications Center can dive to 6000 meters in 30 hours at 5km/h. Slocum Glider without thruster can work in several months. Vietnam is a coastal country with more than 3.200 kilometers of coastline, and the sea area is about 1.000.000 square kilometers. Economic, scientific, tourism activities and national defense that take place on the sea are playing a very important role. Nowadays, many constructions are built on the sea such as ports, oil platforms, oil and gas pipelines, etc. At the same time, the arising of critical demand for surveying the topography and environment deep down the water surface as well as maintenance and equipment inspection. In the military, the demand for observation and mine removal also experience great increasing... That why the research and development of devices working underwater is one of the most important missions in order to take advantage of the sea and marine resources.

This paper will focus on the design of AUV hull using Finite element analysis to determine the suitable thickness of hull's part; design the diving and floating mechanism; and design the control system for AUV.

METHODOLOGY OF DESIGN
Design Ideas
Design specifications:
- Torpedo shape
- Maximum depth: 50 meters
- Maximum velocity: 2 meters per second
- Time of continuous working: 2 hours

• Maximum weight: 70 kilograms

The design idea for diving/floating mechanism has been integrated into five design plans (1 – 5) which shown in Figures 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. Where 4:
1: VIAM-AUV2000’s head
2: VIAM-AUV2000’s body
3: VIAM-AUV2000’s tail
4: Cylinder (Figure 4)
5: CounterWeight (Figures 2 and 4)
6: Control board (Figure 3)
7: Battery (Figure 3)
8: Cylinder (Figures 3 and 6)
9: Stern wing (Figures 3 and 6)
10: Thruster (Figure 3)

Those design plans are considered by using the decision matrix 5, with plan 1 is chosen to be the standard for comparison.

From the result of Table 1, our team decided to choose plan 4: diving/floating mechanism using one cylinder and counterweight (Figure 5).

Design Of Shape And AUV Hull

Almost torpedo shaped AUV based on Myring shape (Figure 7) with the cylinder body, the head and stern will be designed according to formula (1) and (2) 6.

Head’s shape:

\[ r(x) = \frac{1}{2} d \left[ 1 - \left( \frac{x - a}{a} \right)^2 \right]^{\frac{n}{2}} \]  

(1)

Stern’s shape:

\[ r(x) = \frac{1}{2} d - \left[ \frac{3d}{2c} - \frac{\tan \theta}{c} \right] (x - a - b)^2 + \left[ \frac{d}{c} - \frac{\tan \theta}{c} \right] (x - a - b)^3 \]  

(2)

Where:

\( r(x) \): radius of section at position x.
\( d \): the maximum of diameter at the cross-section.
\( a, b, c \): length of head, body, and stern of AUV.
\( \theta \): angle at the end of the stern.
\( n \): parameter of the head’s shape.

Parameters for designed AUV shape included a, b, c, n, \( \theta \) is shown in Table 2 7.

Base on AUV prototypes that have been built in the world and the other underwater vehicles, especially vehicles work in the sea environment, we decided to use Aluminium Alloy T6 – 6061 with mechanical properties shown in Table 3 7.

Using finite element method (FEM) with NX Nastran apply for AUV hull, 4mm thickness, 800mm length, 250mm outside diameter, two end fixed by the flange, the pressure at 50m depth is 0.5MPa. The result in Figure 8 show that the maximum stress on AUV hull...
Figure 2: Diving/floating mechanism using a counterweight.

Figure 3: Diving/floating mechanism using two cylinders controlled by one motor.

Table 1: Decision matrix for design plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy for manufacturing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy for assembly and maintenance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple in control</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good arrangement</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Score</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4: Diving/floating mechanism using 2 cylinders controlled by one motor and counterweight

Figure 5: Diving/floating mechanism using one cylinder and counterweight

Table 2: Parameters of AUV’s shape

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameters</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>300 mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>1400 mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>250 mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>θ</td>
<td>25°</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3: Aluminium Alloy T6-6061 mechanical properties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ultimate tensile strength (MPa)</td>
<td>$\geq 310$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tensile yield strength (MPa)</td>
<td>$\geq 270$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drag race</td>
<td>$10%$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thermal conductivity (BTU hr.ft.$^\circ$F)</td>
<td>$1160$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

is $14.94\text{ MPa} < [\sigma_e] = 275\text{ Mpa}$ and maximum displacement is $0.0287\text{ mm}$.

Using FEM apply for AUV flange with 3, 4, 6 mm thickness, the result is shown in Figure 9, and Table 4.

The flange with 6mm thickness is the most suitable for AUV body. However, with the demand for setting up other components, AUV flanges have to bear lots of loads, such as the mass of components inside AUV, ... By optimizing the structure of the flange and using FEM, we got the structure of the particular flange shown in Figure 10. The Figure 10 also indicates the maximum stress and displacement, which is $48.84\text{ Mpa}$ and $0.0577\text{ mm}$ respectively.

Design Of Diving/Floating Mechanism

Piston-cylinder pump

Figure 11 shows structure of Piston-cylinder 3D model. Axial force acting on the cylinder is calculated with formula (3) include friction force between O-ring and cylinder wall (4), water pressure acting on the piston (5), pneumatic pressure while piston mov-
Table 4: Value of maximum stress and displacement on AUV hull

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thickness (mm)</th>
<th>Maximum stress (MPa)</th>
<th>Maximum displacement (mm)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>175.8</td>
<td>0.626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>125.8</td>
<td>0.489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>65.94</td>
<td>0.242</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pneumatic pressure:

\[ F_n = \frac{P^2}{\pi d^2} \]  \hspace{1cm} (6)

Let assume that the process is isothermal:

\[ P_1 V_1 = P_2 V_2 \Rightarrow P_2 = \frac{P_1 V_1}{V_2} \]

The preliminary diameter of ballscrew is calculated with formula (7):

\[ d_1 \geq \sqrt{\frac{4 F_s}{\pi [\sigma]}} \text{ (mm)} \]  \hspace{1cm} (7)

Where \([\sigma]\): tensile yield strength of the material.

Torque on ballscrew:

\[ T = \frac{F_s h_1}{\pi d^2} \text{ (Nm)} \]  \hspace{1cm} (8)

Lead angle:

\[ \gamma = \arctan \left( \frac{P_h}{d_1^2} \right) \text{ (°)} \]  \hspace{1cm} (9)

Where

- \(P_h\): pitch (mm)
- \(\eta_1\): efficiency (%)

The overall parameters of the cylinder’s ballscrew are shown in Table 5.

Overall efficiency:
Figure 9: Displacement (left) and stress (right) on different thickness AUV flange

### Table 5: Parameters of cylinder’s ballscrew

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>p (mm)</th>
<th>d₁ (mm)</th>
<th>N (rpm)</th>
<th>Fa (N)</th>
<th>T (Nm)</th>
<th>P (W)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>2187</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>22.31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \eta_{ch} = \eta_{motor} \cdot \eta_{gearbox} \cdot \eta_{belt} \cdot \eta_{bearing} \cdot \eta_{cv} = 0.8 \times 0.7 \times 0.95 \times 0.99^2 \times 0.95^2 \simeq 0.47 \quad (10) \]

The required motor capacity:

\[ P_{dc} = \frac{22.31}{0.47} \simeq 47.5 \text{ W} \]

For the cylinder system, use MAXON motor EC-1 52φ52mm, brushless, 180W (Part number 574741), maximum torque \( T_{max} = 12.2 \text{ Nm} \), \( N = 4720 \text{ rpm} \), and planetary gear box GP 52 C φ52, with transmission ratio 81:1.

### Counterweight

Counterweight includes 8 round battery with is 310g/battery (Figure 13), linear bearing, \( P_{counterweight} = 3 \text{ kg} \)

After considering (7), (8), (9) and standard specification selection, the parameters of counterweight’s ballscrew is shown in Table 6. The axial load \( F_a \) is calculated while AUV swimming in the glider’s journey (Figure 14). Let assume that \( F_a \simeq P_{counterweight} = 30 \text{ N} \).

For the counterweight, Faulhaber 2444 motor 51W would be use for counterweight with some specification such as aximum torque 18Nm, 45000rpm, and
Figure 10: FEA of designed AUV flange

Figure 11: Piston-cylinder 3D model

Table 6: Parameters of counterweight’s ball screw

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>p (mm)</th>
<th>d₁ (mm)</th>
<th>N (rpm)</th>
<th>Fa (N)</th>
<th>T (mNm)</th>
<th>P (W)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0,3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Design and manufacture thruster

The thruster was designed using a magnetic coupler-gas shown in Figure 16 with specifications Table 7. Figure 17 (above) depicts the relationship between speed and current of the thruster. Considering the motor speed of 1000 rpm, the circuit still withstands 10A currents because of its good heat dissipation. Figure 17 (below) show that the thruster is stable and less noise. At 1000 rpm, the thrust of the engine was able to reach more than 6 kgf corresponding to 55% of the motor's power output.

METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS OF THE ELECTRICAL SYSTEM

The robot is connected to the control center located on the surface (on the shore, on the mothership…), data will be transmitted to the central station for management and command control via RF wireless system, GSM/GPRS, and Sonar.

The electrical system structure of the AUV is shown in Figure 18. The high-performance central processing unit allows the AUV to process received data at high speed, creating a premise for the AUV applies the advanced algorithms of guidance and control to serve
Figure 14: Glider

Figure 15: Completed 3D model of AUV

Figure 16: Thruster of AUV-VIAM2000
Table 7: Specifications of thruster

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Brushless DC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Size (mm)</td>
<td>L360mm x D86mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power (W)</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed (rpm)</td>
<td>1850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depth rate (m)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max. thrust (kgf)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of wings of the propeller</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power supply (Vdc)</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>CANBUS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The algorithm in the tri-axis rotation angles estimator consists of two layers, each with an extended Kalman filter. Table 8 shows the error of the system in the
Figure 18: The electrical system of AUV-VIAM2000

Figure 19: Tri-axis rotation angles estimator (left) and its algorithm (right)

Table 8: Results of the experimental error of the system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experiment</th>
<th>RMS error (deg)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\phi$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATIC</td>
<td>0.4055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURN_X</td>
<td>0.2640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURN_Y</td>
<td>0.4324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURN_Z</td>
<td>0.6066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURN_XYZ</td>
<td>0.5103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATIC_MAG_EXT</td>
<td>0.3729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURN_Z_MAG_EXT</td>
<td>0.4903</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
static state, rotating around the x, y, z-axes, in the static state influenced by the external magnetic, and rotating around the z-axes influenced by the external magnetic.

**DISCUSSION**

The study has presented many designed options and selected the most optimal designed solution for the AUV-VIAM2000, which is from selecting the Myring shape to using a combination of counterbalance and cylinder structure to support floating/diving. Thus, this help the diving robot can operate flexibly in two modes: AUV and glider that will help save energy. We also used finite element method to compute, simulate stress and distortion on ship hull which is 5mm thickness, and waterproof covering. In addition, tri-axis rotation angles estimator implementation has been tested with error <2 degrees in many cases and integrated into the AUV-VIAM2000. The 600W thruster device that we designed to ensure movableness of AUV-VIAM2000.

**CONCLUSIONS**

This paper has analyzed and selected the complete design options for the AUV-VIAM2000, capable of diving/ floating at a depth of 50m by a combination of cylinder and counterbalance. Through stress simulation, finite element analysis has been used to select materials and suitable shell thickness, ensuring that the robot can operate at a stable design depth. Last but not least, the research has achieved some goals in building electrical system comprising sensors and actuators selection, hardware design, thruster manufacture and control as well as tri-axis rotation angles estimator implementation.

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**CONFLICT OF INTERESTS**

The author declares that this paper has no conflict of interests.

**AUTHORS’ CONTRIBUTIONS**

Tran Ngoc Huy has proposed the methodology and wrote the manuscript. Chau Thanh Hai implemented hardware configuration, experiments and wrote the manuscript.

**ABBREVIATIONS**

AUV: Autonomous Underwater Vehicle  
FEM: Finite Element Method  
DVL: Doppler Velocity Log  
GPS: Global Positioning System  
GSM: Global System for Mobile Communications  
GPRS: General Packet Radio Service  
CAN: Controller Area Network

**REFERENCES**

Phân tích và thiết kế robot lặn không người lái VIAM- AUV2000

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Tóm tắt
Bài báo giới thiệu về thiết bị lặn không người lái (AUV) sử dụng cơ cấu lặn nổi tích hợp xylanh và đối trọng, được xây dựng theo từng module riêng từ thiết kế cơ khí, hệ thống điện tới xây dựng giải thuật điều khiển cho thiết bị để đảm bảo thiết bị hoạt động liên tục một thời gian dài ở độ sâu 20 mét nước. Nội dung chính sẽ trình bày tính toán biên dạng vỏ tàu; lựa chọn vật liệu vỏ; tính toán và mô phỏng ứng suất, biến dạng trên vỏ tàu và các nắp đậy chống thấm bằng phương pháp phân tich phần tử hữu hạn với module tích hợp trong phần mềm Solidworks; phân tich và lựa chọn phương án bố trí xylanh - đối trọng. đồng thời, bài báo này sẽ chỉ ra những ưu điểm nổi trội trong thiết kế lặn nổi tích hợp xylanh và đối trọng, sử dụng thiết bị đẩy và bánh lái để xoay chuyển và đẳng glider sử dụng cơ chế đối trọng để hỗ trợ lặn nổi. Ngoài ra, việc thiết kế hệ thống điều khiển cho robot cũng được được cập và làm rõ thông qua lựa chọn thiết bị cảm biến, cơ cấu chấp hành và thiết kế phần cứng để đảm bảo khả năng hoạt động ổn định cho thiết bị lặn ở độ sâu 50m và vận hành liên tục dưới nước trong thời gian dài ở hai chế độ AUV truyền thông và glider. Một số kết quả thử nghiệm thiết bị đẩy và bộ ước lượng góc nghiêng ba trục với sai số dưới 1° cũng được trình bày trong bài báo này.

Từ khóa: Thiết bị lặn không người lái, phương pháp phân tử hữu hạn, cơ cấu lặn nổi, thiết bị đẩy, bộ ước lượng góc nghiêng ba trục

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