CADDIS // SUBSEA-LAUNCHED UAS

SubSea Craft (UK) - diver-launched, ballast-ascent, folding-quad ISR drone

W1D0WM4K3R // B1SCU1TK1D.com - capability sheet - all specs vendor-claimed

WHAT IT IS

- **Platform:** CADDIS is a subsurface-launched and controlled UAV: divers release it underwater, a ballast package carries it slowly to the surface, the arms swing out and the props unfold, and it lifts off. No launch tube, no ship, no deck signature.
- **Self-recovery:** In rough seas a wave can flip it after surfacing - it rights itself and attempts take-off again.
- **Specs (vendor-claimed):** 5 kg payload. 37 minutes flight endurance. Missions: over-the-horizon awareness, comms relay, recon prior to insertion. Submerged control via Sonardyne AvTrak 6-class links and proprietary subsurface screens; airborne downlink 'through obfuscated means that work over a distance' (SubSea Craft CCO).
- **Lineage:** Emerged from SubSea Craft's Victa diver delivery unit. Publicly presented at DSEI 2025, London.

THE DEMONSTRATION

- **Exercise:** AUKUS Pillar II 'Big Maritime Play' - multinational maritime exercise, 5-8 Oct 2026, off Southern California. Run at the request of the US Office of the Under Secretary of War for Research & Engineering.
- **The pairing:** Divers deployed CADDIS and the NSI Arowana UUV (Naval Systems Inc., US) separately from underwater. CADDIS surfaced, flew to a designated target, and relayed data down to Arowana - which then proceeded to the same surface target from below.
- **Second demo:** SubSea Craft's MARS USV paired with Arowana for over-the-horizon engagements against surface targets in the open ocean.
- **Status:** Demonstrated, not fielded. One exercise is a data point, not a program of record. Results published 4 Nov 2026.

WHY IT MATTERS

- **Signature:** Launch originates underwater from divers - no surface vessel, no deck, no radar cue before the drone is already airborne. The crew never surfaces.
- **Cross-domain handoff:** Air and undersea assets share one target picture without a ship in the loop. ISR above, prosecution below, one network.
- **The read:** The quiet trend of this decade: small units carrying their own cross-domain ISR stack. Caddis-class folding VTOL is the air half. Counter-UAS work must now watch for targets that appear from below the horizon line, not beyond it.

SOURCES