
Submarine, powered by Fuel Cell, enters off-shore test programme

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The joint-venture between the two German ship manufacturers Howaldtswerke-Deutsche Werft (HDW) and Nordseewerke Emden has entered a new stage of the fuel cell submarine test programme today. For the first time, the new hydrogen powered fuel cell U-boat left the ship yard and the harbour in Kiel to get tested in the German Baltic Sea.



Several engineers from both manufacturer, members of the crew and component supplier technicians went out to inspect and test important equipment in deep water for the first time. One key element is the hydrogen fuel cell which powers the boat. The new U-Boat class 212 will therefore be the first non-nuclear, non-conventional submarine in the world.

The fuel cell engine has various advantages compared to a conventional diesel engine. It is more efficient and therefore the boat is able to stay under water for a longer time (up to 3 weeks!). Furthermore, the new propulsion systems does not absorb any heat which makes it rather difficult to

locate the submarine. The German Navy plans to use four of these boats from 2004.

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