

## US Army purchases robotic scouts (w/ video)

October 10 2011, by Lisa Zyga

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The Recon Scout XT robot can be attached to the SearchStick to survey environments while keeping soldiers in relatively safer positions. Image credit: ReconRobotics

(PhysOrg.com) -- By being the first to scout out an unknown building or peek over a wall, a small dumbbell-shaped robot will be taking over some of the riskiest tasks in the US Army. The robot's maker, ReconRobotics, Inc., recently announced that the US Army has requested to purchase 315 of the Recon Scout XT robot kits and an equal number of SearchStick devices for \$4.8 million. The company expects to deliver the products by the end of October.

The Recon Scout XT robots are designed to assist fire teams by increasing the teams' situational awareness and standoff distance when

investigating unknown environments or during compound clearing operations. For instance, before entering a building or cave, a soldier can toss one of the 1.2-pound robots inside the confined space. Using a hand-held device, the soldier can steer the camera-equipped [robot](#) around as it transmits live video of the environment back to the soldier. The video allows soldiers to determine the layout of the enclosed spaces and the location of hidden enemies, and to identify potential improvised explosive devices.

According to ReconRobotics, the robot can roll quietly over dirt, sand, rocks, and door thresholds, and withstand a 30-foot drop. Its infrared optical system automatically turns on in low light conditions, allowing it to see in complete darkness. It can also be operated in any of three transmitting frequencies, allowing soldiers to operate up to three robots in the same environment at the same time. The systems can be recharged using standard 5590 or 2590 batteries.

The SearchStick, a pole with powered jaws, can clasp the Recon Scout XT robot, which allows it to serve as a pole camera. The SearchStick has a collapsed length of 20.5" (52 cm) and can be extended to a length of 72" (183 cm). Instead of tossing the robot, soldiers can physically maneuver the robot to gain views over walled compounds, rooftops, high windows, stairwells, and attics, or in confined spaces such as ventilation ducts, crawl spaces, tunnels, and under vehicles.

More than 2,000 Recon Scout systems are already being used by the US military, as well as friendly international forces and law enforcement agencies. As ReconRobotics emphasizes, the option of sending robots to scout unknown environments can not only enhance mission planning and execution, but also save human lives.

**More information:** [www.reconrobotics.com](http://www.reconrobotics.com)  
via: [The Engineer](#)

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