Mobile Space Robots for Terrestrial Applications

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Mobility: Introduction (videos)
Mobility: Background

- A branch in the Robonaut family tree
  - Common design philosophy and components
Mobility: Common Themes

- Safety is paramount
  - Getting crew home is top priority in space
  - Translates to earth
  - Functional redundancy
- Extreme dexterity
  - Independent wheel modules
  - Active suspension
  - Crab steering
- Re-use to cut development time and cost
- Multiple control modes
  - Ride-on
  - Teleoperated
  - Autonomous and shared control modes
Chariot Chassis

- Developed beginning in 2007
- Concept/prototype of crew rover developed for surface exploration
- Goal: challenge the conventional wisdom of crew rovers
- Designed for extreme terrain mobility
- Six wheeled rover with each wheel module having 3 motions
- Capable of being driven by on-board crew, tele-operation and ground control
Chariot Chassis

- Designed as a modular chassis carrying a variety of payloads
  - Crew in pressurized suits, standing up, Chariot style
  - Configured as a flat deck for general purpose payloads
  - Small Pressurized Rover Cabin (forming NASA’s Lunar Electric Rover)
  - Science and surveying instruments
  - Supplementary power

- Currently two models in 1st generation series
Chariot Chassis: Video
Space Exploration Vehicle

• Pressurized Mobile Habitat consisting of:
  – Small Pressurized Rover cabin
  – Chariot chassis
• Crew explores in shirt sleeves
• Access to space through suit ports
  – No airlock
  – Direct access to suits from cabin
  – EVA in 15 minutes vs. 4 hours on Space Station
• Nominal operations: 2 astronauts for 3, 7 or 14 days
  – 4 crew for up to 24 hours
Space Exploration Vehicle

• Features:
  – 2 person cockpit
  – Redundant driving stations
  – Separate crew areas with privacy curtains
  – Storage for up to 14 days
  – Water system
  – Waste control system
  – Exercise devices
  – Hatches with docking ports
  – Aft driving station
  – Aft enclosure for suit dust and thermal protection
Modular Robotic Vehicle

• NASA developed unique skills in Astronaut rovers during NASA’s Constellation program (2006-2010),
  – Focus on safety & reliability
  – R&D scale of investment
  – Highly maneuverable vehicles
  – Rigorous testing
  – Different requirements than Mars rovers
  – Dual purpose: Astronaut or robotically driven

• MRV projects spins technologies to terrestrial applications
MRV: Unique Vehicle Capabilities

• Fail-operational *drive-by-wire* design
  – Focus on vehicle safety under fault conditions
• Independent, modular wheel systems
• Extreme maneuverability
• Battery electric vehicle
• Designed for robotic control: remote and autonomous driving
MRV: Vehicle Specs

- Design speed: 64 kph (40 mph)
  - Currently computer limited to 25 kph (15 mph)
- Curb weight: 900 kg (2000 lb)
- Footprint: 2.15 x 1.55 m (7’ x 5’)
- Drive-by-wire without mechanical backup
Robonaut Humanoid

A Great Relationship
Robonaut Humanoid

• Developed in partnership with General Motors
• Developed to serve as Astronaut assistant, working safely near humans
• Deployed to International Space Station 2011; legs 2014
• World class dexterity
Robonaut 2 Introduction
Robonaut ISS Mobility
Valkyrie Humanoid

Walking Humanoid developed for in space surface applications and disaster recovery
  – Heavily inspired on inability to access Fukushima after the disaster

Leveraging prior NASA technology investment
  – Radiation survivability
  – Thermal range
  – Mechanism
  – Soft goods
  – Dexterous tool use

Making significant progress towards walking through National Robotics Initiative grant
  – A challenge for Mars tasks is currently being formulated
Valkyrie Humanoid
Concluding Remarks