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Schneider
KREUZNACH

Jos. Schneider Optische Werke GmbH
Business Unit Industrial Optics
Ringstrasse 132 • D-55543 Bad Kreuznach
Germany
Tel: +49 (671) 601 389
Fax: +49 (671) 601 108
muschertd@schneiderkreuznach.com
www.schneiderkreuznach.com
PRESSCONTACT: Dirk Muschert

NASA SELECTS SCHNEIDER LENSES FOR NEXT-GENERATION SPACE SHUTTLE FLIGHT SAFETY SYSTEMS

Schneider's advanced optics are key elements in new monitoring systems designed to reduce flight risks

Hauppauge, New York, October 20, 2005 – Schneider Optics, Inc. has announced that NASA has implemented Schneider lenses in two mission-critical space shuttle flight safety systems, as part of NASA's Shuttle Return to Flight Program.

NASA will utilize a Schneider Kreuznach Xenoplan f2.8/50mm Compact C-Mount lens on the Space Shuttle's new orbital inspection boom, which is equipped with cameras and a laser ranging system designed to enable astronauts to scan the orbiter's exterior for damage while in orbit. Discovering damage while in orbit could be a life-saving event -- affording the Shuttle crew the opportunity to repair the damage before re-entry into the atmosphere, or, if repairs are impossible, dock with the International Space Station to await rescue from the launch of an additional Shuttle or a Russian Soyuz capsule.

"NASA was seeking a high-quality, low-distortion corrected lens, optimized from 400nm – 1000nm, able to cover the 22mm image circle of the new system camera's high resolution CCD," said Schneider Optics Chief Executive Officer Dwight Lindsey. "The lens needed to be compact in size, and able to maintain its optical quality after withstanding the G-forces and vibrations of Space Shuttle launches, atmospheric re-entries and landings, as well as in the extreme environment of space. Schneider C-Mount lenses were able to satisfy all of those requirements, and because we were able to provide the solution with a standard modified product, NASA realized significant cost-savings over a full-custom solution."

Prior to implementing the system, Schneider's industrial optics engineering team performed calculations that enabled NASA to analyze real-time data that predicts how the Schneider lens would perform with the new vision system. "We are constantly urging system designers to call Schneider optical engineers as early in the design process as possible, to ensure optimal overall performance of the entire system," explained Lindsey. "This project is an ideal example of just how much early consultation can lead to the best possible solution."

Schneider engineers recommended a modified Xenoplan f2.8/50mm Compact C-Mount lens with design enhancements to further increase ruggedization. *"Our Compact C-Mounts are known for their ability to unshakably lock in iris and focus settings, and perform in even the harshest industrial applications,"* said Lindsey. *"We're proud and honored*

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that their performance has been recognized by NASA, and that they've been chosen as an integral part of NASA's Shuttle Return to Flight Program."

The new inspection system featuring the Schneider Xenoplan Compact C-Mount lens is scheduled to be implemented in upcoming missions of the existing Shuttle fleet.

Prior to being selected for the new orbital inspection boom, Schneider Xenoplan lenses were also used by NASA as part of a three-dimensional structured light (DSL 3-D) system designed to quantify experimental damage to a panel of Space Shuttle tiles. In laboratory testing, researchers fired pieces of insulating foam (identical to the foam that broke off during the launch of the Shuttle Columbia) at the test panel through a compressed-air cannon. Using the DSL 3-D optical system, which provided an ultra-high-resolution map of the test panel's surface, researchers were able to determine the existence of even microscopic damage.

For further technical and contact information, please visit:
USA: http://www.schneideroptics.com/oem/
Elsewhere: http://www.schneiderkreuznach.com/industrialoptics

About Schneider:
The Schneider-Group, founded in 1913 in Bad Kreuznach, Germany, is a worldwide market leader in high-quality lenses for industrial applications, photographic lenses, filters, cinema projection lenses and optical accessories. In total, Schneider has manufactured more than 15 million lenses and has created thousands of optical designs. The Schneider-Group has 550 employees worldwide.

Business Unit INDUSTRIAL OPTICS
Jos. Schneider Optische Werke GmbH designs, develops, manufactures and markets optical and opto-mechanical components and subassemblies for machine vision and other image processing applications. By providing high-quality optical solutions, Schneider helps system integrators and equipment manufacturers to enhance their vision systems.

Headquarters:
Jos. Schneider Optische Werke GmbH
Ringstraße 132
55543 Bad Kreuznach
Germany
Phone: +49 671 601-389
Fax: +49 671 601-108
www.schneiderkreuznach.com
industrie@schneiderkreuznach.com

North America:
Schneider Optics Inc.
285 Oser Ave,
Hauppauge, NY 11788
USA
Phone: +1 631 761-5000
Fax: +1 631 761-5090
www.schneideroptics.com
oem@schneideroptics.com