ROBOTIC POD

QUICK START GUIDE

Product code: MRMC-1464-01

Robotic Pod Quick Start Guide

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Contact information
Mark Roberts Motion Control Ltd. Unit 3, South East Studios Blindley Heath Surrey RH7 6JP United Kingdom
Telephone: +44 (0) 1342 838000
E-mail: info@mrmoco.com (sales and general enquiries) support@mrmoco.com (customer support)
Web: www.mrmoco.com www.mrmocorentals.com

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Chapter 1 **Quick Start**

Important safety instructions

To ensure the best from the product, please read this manual carefully. Keep it in a safe place for future reference.

To reduce the risk of electric shock, do not remove the cover from the unit. No user serviceable parts inside. Refer servicing to qualified personnel.

Power and connections

- This unit must be connected to a mains socket outlet with a protective earth connection.

- This unit is not disconnected from the AC power source as long as it is connected to the wall outlet.

- When not using the unit for a long period of time, ensure that the AC power cord is disconnected from the wall outlet.

- The AC wall outlet should be installed near to the unit and be easily accessible.

- Do not plug in or attempt to operate an obviously damaged unit.

General care

- Do not force switches or external connections.

- When moving the unit, disconnect the mains cable and then disconnect the long umbilical cable.

- Do not attempt to clean the unit with chemical solvents or aerosol cleaners, as this may damage the unit. Use a clean dry cloth.

- Do not use around flammable gas. All electrical equipment can generate sparks that can ignite flammable gas.

- Keep away from pets and children. The head has powerful motors that can pinch, so take care not to get your hands trapped in the head or cabling.

- • Keep cables tidy. Use cable ties to keep them out of harm's way. If you have a head with slip rings then make use of them; avoid running any cables between the base and the rotating head or camera.

Location

Installation of this unit should be away from sources of excessive heat, vibration, and dust.

Intellectual property

This product includes confidential and/or trade secret property. Therefore, you may not copy, modify, adapt, translate, distribute, reverse engineer, or decompile contents thereof.

Overview

Thank you for using the Robotic Pod camera head from Mark Roberts Motion Control (MRMC). The Pod head is designed for reliable day-in, day-out use in professional studio and Outside Broadcast environments. The versatility of the Pod head makes it suitable for live action, stills, and time-lapse applications.

You can use the Ethernet connection on the Pod head to connect directly to a PC running Multi-Head Controller (MHC) software.

Mounting positions

Robotic pod - Overslung

Robotic pod - Underslung

The tilt axis allows 340 degrees of movement preventing the Pod to look straight up in underslung position and straight down in overslung position.

Setting up the hardware

1. Mount the Pan Tilt Arm (PTA) onto a heavy-duty scaffolding pole by securing the PTA to the pole using the two scaffolding clamps.

Ensure the nuts on the clamps are tight and the arm cannot twist on the scaffolding plate.

Note

Ensure the mounting bar can take the weight without stress and that the space on the bar is free to allow full movement of the pod when panning without hitting any obstacles. The maximum weight of the PTA system is 30kg but due to motion and, if mounted outdoors possible high winds, the bar should be able to support at least 100kg.

⚠️ The torque setting of the screws in the scaffolding clamps is 159.1Nm. Always ensure there is enough thread going through the nyloc nut.

Nuts

PTA underslung

PTA overslung
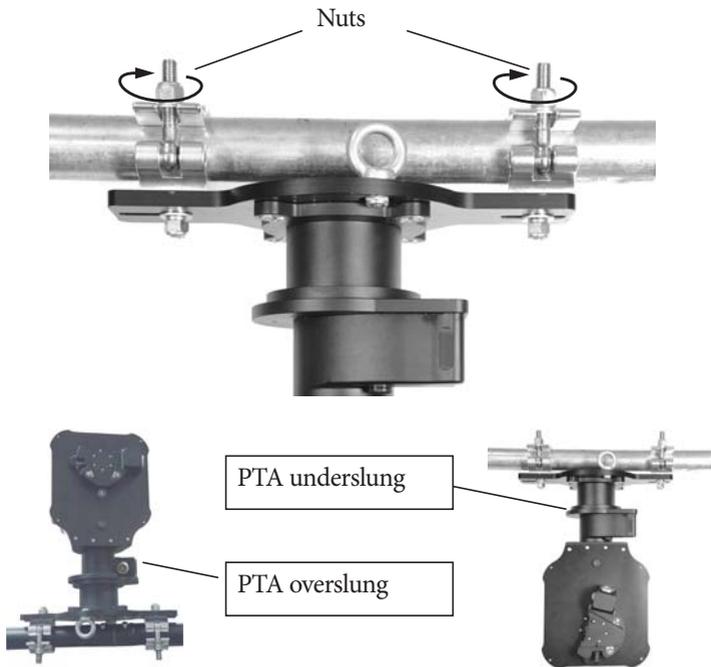
If the head is going to be used for target tracking, then ensure that the PTA is perfectly levelled to the ground using a spirit level.

2. Attach the safety cable around the bar, through at least one eyelet, and through the pan safety hole (near the connector socket). Remove any excess slack by making extra loops around the bar. Then join with a carabiner and screw the carabiner shut.

Eyelet

Wind any excess cable around scaffolding pole

Carabiner screwed shut

Pan safety hole
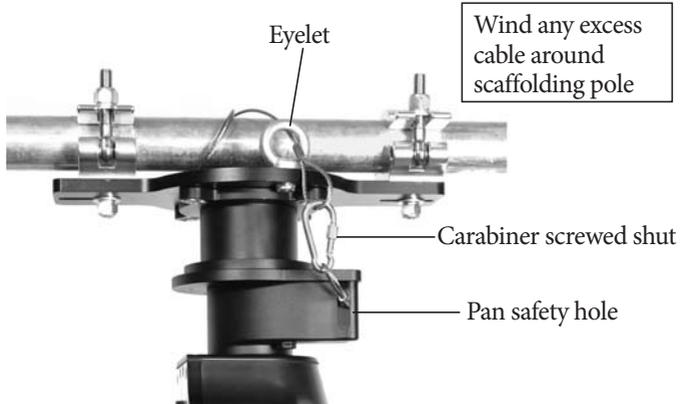
Note

Safety cables should be wound up to keep them short:

- In the event of a fall, the falling item has less opportunity to get speed before the cable catches it.

- This prevents them catching on any moving parts.

3. Attach the roll ring to the arm by sliding the roll wedge into the side plate and ensure the safety catch locks into place —preventing the roll ring to be detached again. Then tighten the two captive screws to firmly secure the roll.

Roll motor

Do not use the roll motor as a carrying handle.

Safety catch

Once the roll ring is attached to the arm, safety catch locks into place

Tighten the screws using 4mm allen key. The torque setting of the screws is 11.2Nm.

Do not touch the contacts on the roll ring or the PTA.
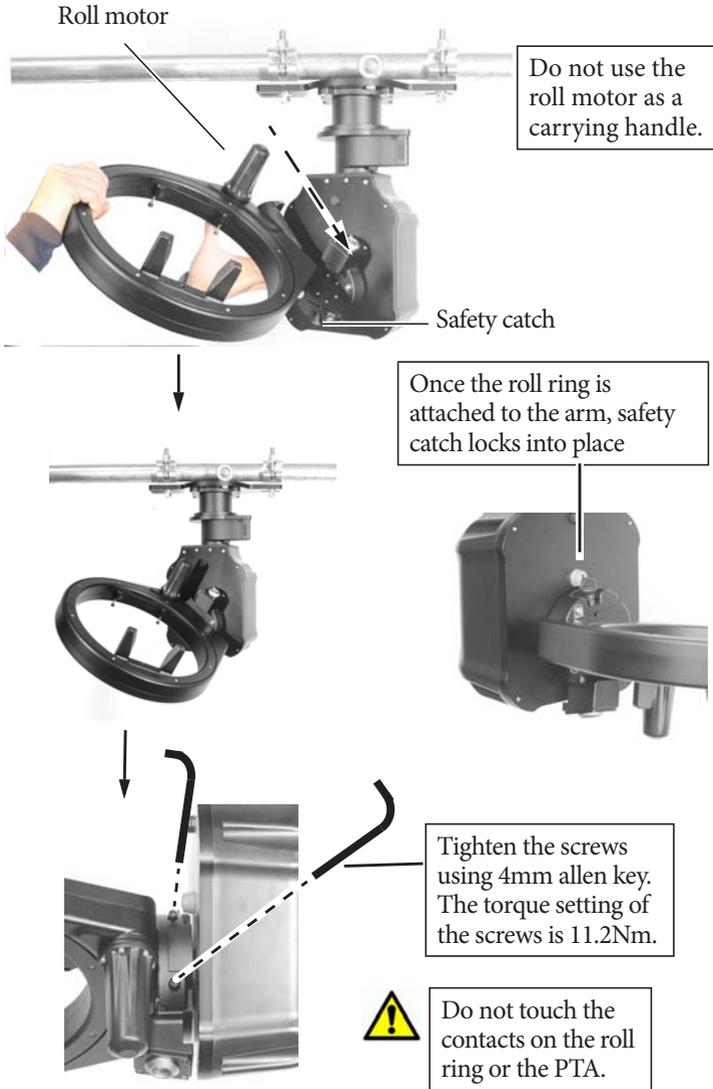
4. Attach the pod to the roll ring by sliding the pod front into the roll ring from rear. Note the Pod has a wedge on its bottom that will slide into a plate on the roll ring. As you mount the Pod, you can use the roll ring to help support the weight of the Pod.

5. Tighten the three screws on roll ring to secure the Pod into the head.

The Pod is not secure until it is screwed in. The torque setting of the screws is 11.2Nm.

6.   Attach the safety cable between the Pod handle and the roll safety hole. Ensure you do not tie it around the roll ring. Wind up any excess cable by looping further through the holes. Screw close the carabiner.

Roll safety handle

Pod handle
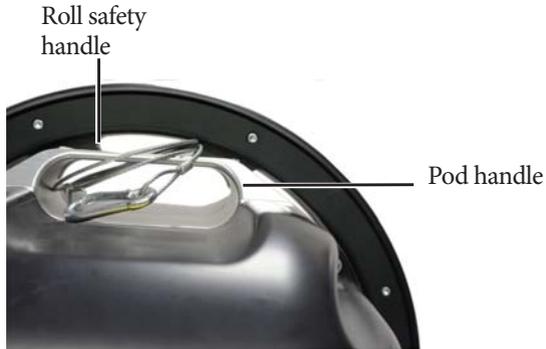
⚠️ Ensure that you do not tie the safety cable around the roll ring.

7.   Once the Robotic Pod is fully constructed, test the movement of the unit by hand before connecting to power. Ensure that full movement of all axes is possible and there are no obstructions.

Connecting the cables

Attach the power cables ensuring each connector is fully secured into the socket and that the cable or connector is not caught in any moving part.

Break-out box

Communications / POWER 24V

1

2

ETHERNET

3

SDI OUT

4

6

PC running MHC Software

USB

5

From Mains

100-240V 447-63Hz
1.6A Max

USB joystick, such as an XBox joystick or MRMC Joystick Controller
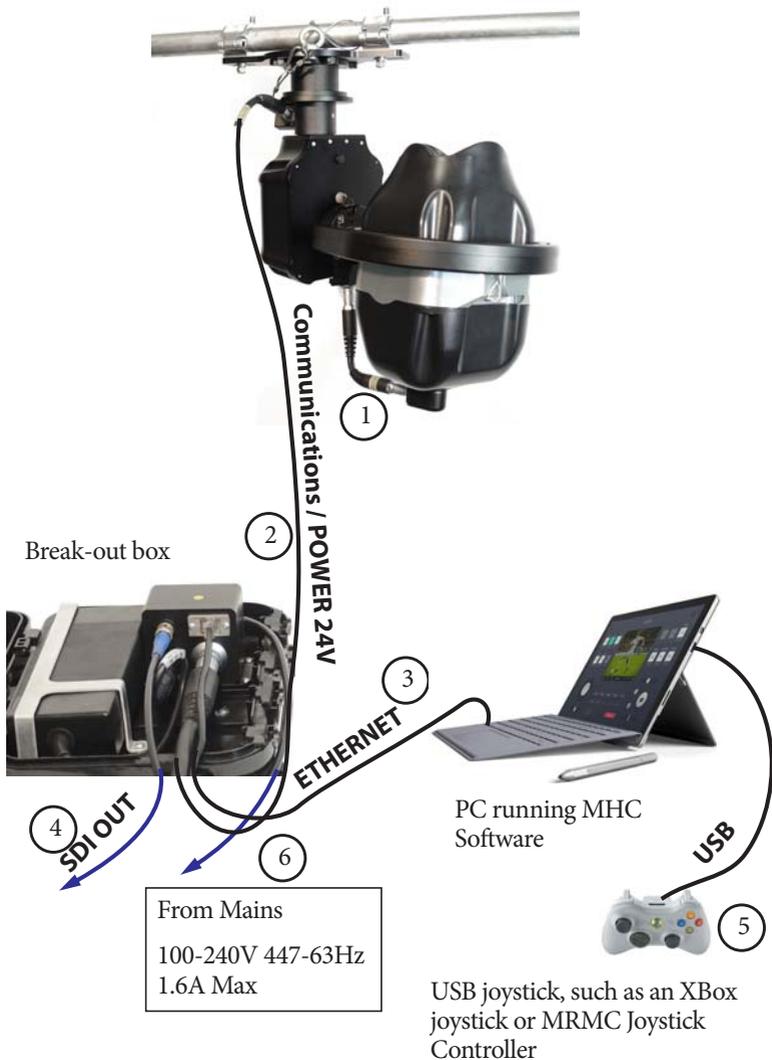
1. Connect the short umbilical cable to the power connectors in the PTA and the Pod. Ensure the red markers on the socket and the plug align.

2. Connect one end of the long umbilical cable to the PTA-1 and the other to the power supply socket in the break-out box. Ensure the red markers on the socket and the plug align.

3. Connect one end of the network cable to the Ethernet connector in the junction box and the other to the PC. If your setup contains multiple heads connected via Ethernet, then the network cable would connect to a network switch, which in turn would be connected to the PC.

4. Connect the **SDI Out** connector to a video output device using a standard coaxial cable.

5. Optionally, connect the USB port on the PC to a joystick, such as an Xbox joystick or a MRMC Joystick Controller. This device gives you a precise and real-time control of the camera direction and functions. You can use the MHC screen to control the camera instead if you omit a joystick.

6. Finally, connect the mains cable to the power supply.

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Chapter 2 **Setting up the Robotic Pod System using MHC**

To control and use the Pods, you need to connect them to the network that has the PC running the MHC server software. You can choose to assign the Pods to specific users using MHC server. Then, each user can use the MHC client application to control the Pod assigned to them

1. Attach the cables to the Pod and PC, as described in the previous section.

2. There is no power switch on the Pod; it is powered on whenever the mains supply is attached and live.

3. Similarly, to turn off the Pod you simply remove the power cable.

4. Power up the PC. Both the MHC Server and Client applications are started. The MHC Main page appears.

   Observe that the connected Pod appears as white or green icons light-grey tabs to show that it is connected over the network.

5. Clicking/tapping the Pod icon **enables** the Pod and changes the icon to green showing it is selected for control from the Main page.

Observe that the disconnected Pods appear as red icons.

Home Zeroing – Pod

Pan, Tilt and Roll axes in Pods are absolute encoders making Homing an automatic function. Therefore these axes do not need to be Homed by the User. However, the lens axes Zoom and Focus do need to be Homed. To home the axes, left-click and hold the Pod head icon and select **HOME FOCUS** or **HOME ZOOM**.

Note

The focus and zoom axes must be homed individually. If an error occurs after homing, do the following:

1. In the ⚙ > **Robot** > **Axes** tab, check that the Status of the axis is **ON** in the grey box. If it is not, click the **ENABLE** button to turn it on.

Status should be ON
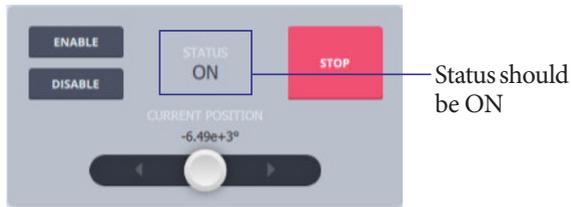
2. Click/tap the **HOME** button to home the selected axis.

Changing system configuration and network settings

Launching MHC as Admin

To change any network setting, you need to be logged in to the MHC Client as the Administrator.

1. Log out of the User login.

2. Log in to the MHC client as Administrator using the following credentials:

   - Username: Admin

   - Password: Admin1234

Note

At any time, if you need to restart MHC, perform the following steps:

1. Close the MHC Client and the MHC Server windows.

2. Double-click or tap the MHC Server desktop icon to launch it.

3. Double-click or tap the MHC Client icon to launch it. The MHC Client can be launched on the same or a different computer present on the same network.

Network setup

Settings | Manual Pod addition | Automatic Pod addition | Log out

Heads on the network | Heads not on the network
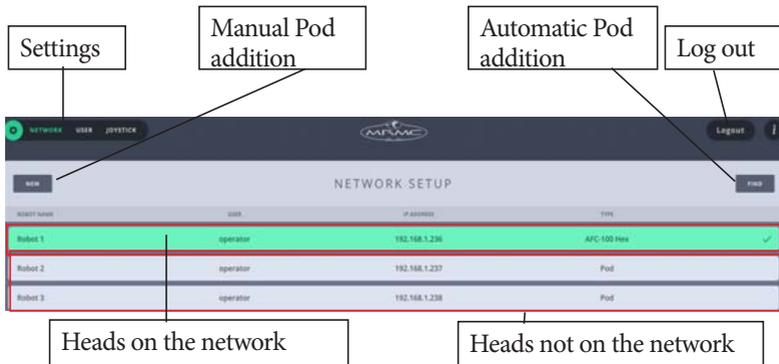
> **Note**
>
> You can click the **Settings** (⚙) button to display the Settings menu. The tabs in the menu are:
>
> - **Network** – Settings regarding connected/connecting Pods
>
> - **User** – Add/change user accounts
>
> The **Settings** menu is different for Administrator and User login.

When you log in as the Administrator, the NETWORK SETUP page launches and provides a general overview of all the Pods linked to the system's network. If you are loading MHC for the first time you probably have 4 robots already set up with addresses from 192.168.1.236 to 192.138.1.239. You can delete these if you want a clean slate to start from.

The two row colours represent the status of the Pods:

- **Green**: The Pod is connected and ready to operate.

- **Grey**: The Pod with the IP address is not connected with the system's network or is not powered up.

Adding Pods

1. Click the **FIND** button to automatically find the connected Pod(s). This will show you all the Pods that are connected.

2. Select the Pod's row that you want to connect to and click the **ADD** button. This will connect the Pod to the system, and move it to the group of connected Pods (the green section).
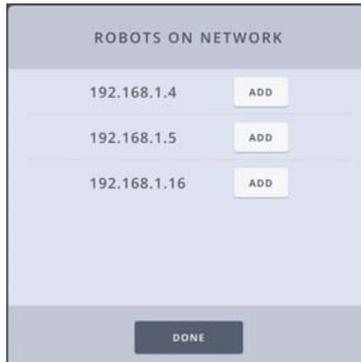
Then, enter the **TYPE** of head and a **NAME** for it. The row for the Pod stays grey until the Pod is actually present on the network.

Caution

Do not connect a Pod with the same IP address as another Pod on the network. This would cause an IP address conflict and both Pods will not function.

Adding the Type of Pod

It is important to choose the **Type** of head as **Pod** in MHC before entering the robot IP address because once it is connected MHC will try to change it to whatever it currently set to. Ensure that you choose the correct head because if you chose the wrong one, the Pod either won't work as expected or won't work at all.

Changing a Pod's name

You can change the name of a connected or disconnected Pod. The name appears in the **ROBOT NAME** column. To change the Pod's name:

1. Select the row for the Pod.

2. Click or tap in the box representing the name of the Pod.

3.   Enter the name for the Pod.

Assigning Pods to user(s)

As of MHC v2.1, a Pod can be assigned to a specific user or **All** users. Assign a Pod to the user by selecting the user from the drop-down list. If you select **All** from the User drop-down, then all users who are logged in to the MHC Server can use the Pod.

Removing a Pod

To remove a Pod, click the appearing **remove** () button on the Pod's row.

Editing network settings on the Pod

On the NETWORK SETUP page, only the disconnected (grey) Pod's IP address is editable. Only when the Pod is connected, can the network settings be changed on it.

Select a robot that is connected (green) and click in the **IP ADDRESS** box.

Edit IP address

Use the appearing dialog box to change the IP settings of the robot. Your system will also automatically update its local reference address, so you won't lose the connection to the edited robot.

Enter the **IP Address, Subnet Mask,** and **Default Gateway** if your network IT manager deems it necessary. Clicking **SAVE TO ROBOT** will change the IP address on the head and also tell MHC where to find the head at the new address. If you are changing across to a different subnet, the head will appear disconnected until you change your computer network IP address to the new subnet range. You can also use this dialog box to configure FTP server settings for a Pod. For more detail on this, refer to Appendix 3 *FTP Settings*.

> Note
>
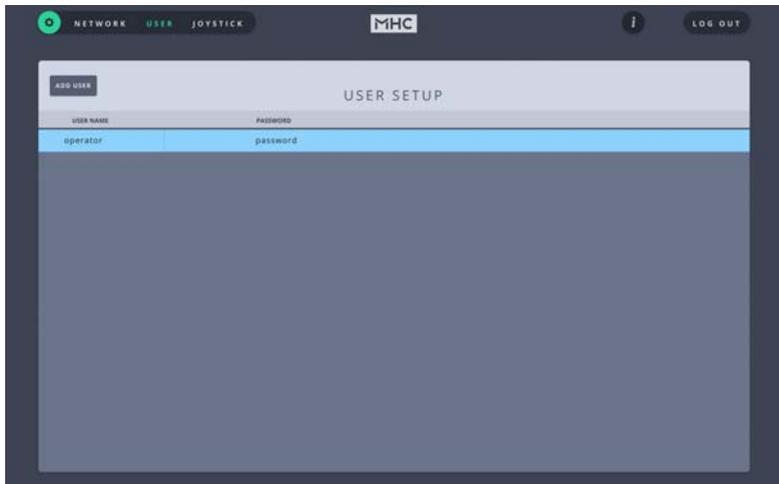> You must be logged in as Administrator to change network settings on the Pod.

Adding users

By default, there is one User account added to the system. However, if you require you can add more Users. To do this:

1. Click/tap Settings (⚙) > **User**.

2. Click/tap **ADD USER**.

3. Enter the username and password that you want to assign to the user.

4. Click/tap **Save**.

Once user(s) are added, the Pods each of them can see can be assigned.

Logging in as a User

Once robots are added, accounts are created and robots are assigned to users, log out of the Administrator login and log in as a User.

The default user credentials are:

- username: operator

- password: password

Testing the Head Connectivity

Logging on as a user will take you to the MHC Main Page. You should be able to move the robot now with either the on-screen controls or the joystick if you have one connected. Check the pan and tilt are working now, just to check if the head is connected properly.

For details on how to use the MHC interface, use the MHC Quick Start Guide.

Triggering the camera

Your Pod could have been configured by MRMC with the D5 camera either in Stills mode or Video mode depending on your preferences. If the

D5 is set to Stills mode, triggering the camera either using the on-screen controls (if available on the MHC skin) or using the external joystick will capture a still photo. If the D5 is in video mode, triggering the camera first time after a power up will display a video image in SDI monitor. (Triggering the camera again will start recording the video.)

Tools tab

The TOOLS tab allows resetting of the head and exporting and importing MHC settings.:
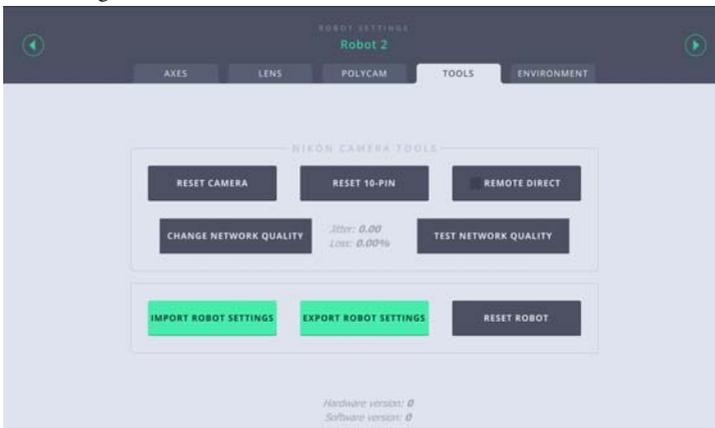
EXPORT ROBOT SETTINGS

Use this button to store all the settings in MHC to an XML file which you can import later. This can be used to copy settings to another robot or save the factory settings to be restored later.

1.   Clicking the button will open a dialog box, enter the name of the XML file.
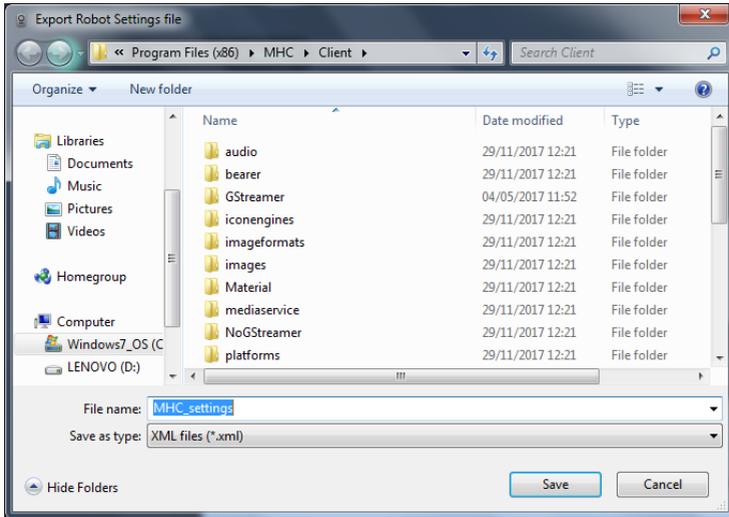
2.   Click **Save**.

IMPORT ROBOT SETTINGS

Use this button to import MHC settings from an XML file.

Reset Robot

Clicking **Reset Robot** resets the axes (Hex) board in the head. Use this option when the camera has crashed/frozen or a power cycle is required.

Reset Camera

Clicking **Reset Camera** resets the Nikon camera as-though you power-cycled it.

Remote Direct Toggle

Checking this option resets the camera to be connected to the PC via USB. This is useful when you want to transfer images to the PC via USB or use certain options in the **Robot Settings** > **Colour** page. (Other names for Remote Direct are USB Direct or USBtoIP.)
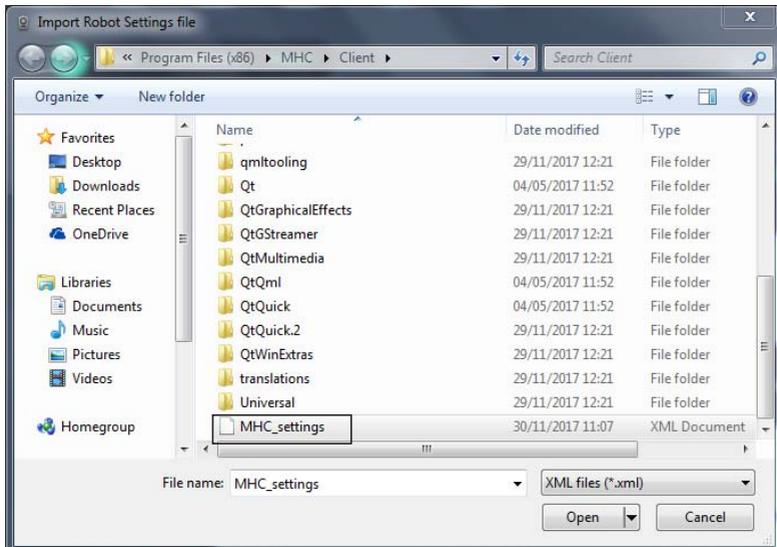

Important

If you have enabled Remote Direct connection, ensure that you turn it off after you have finished using it. If left on for too long, you might need to reset head to reconnect.

Reset 10-Pin

Clicking **Reset 10-Pin** reinitialises the 10-Pin board.

Change Network Quality

Clicking/tapping this option gives you a message with instructions on how to change the resolution of the imagery from the REP camera. You might need to do this if your bandwidth is limited and you want to reduce the traffic on the network.

To change the network quality please follow these steps:

1. Enter the username & password (root/password)
2. Click on 'Streams' button.
3. Make sure 'Stream 1' is selected.
4. Change the resolution until a reliable image is shown.

OK

Test Network Quality

This button displays the percentage values of Jitter and Loss in the network.

Environment tab

This tab gives you the information about various environmental factors, such as the temperature of the Pod, moisture in the Pod, and others that allow you to level the Pod.
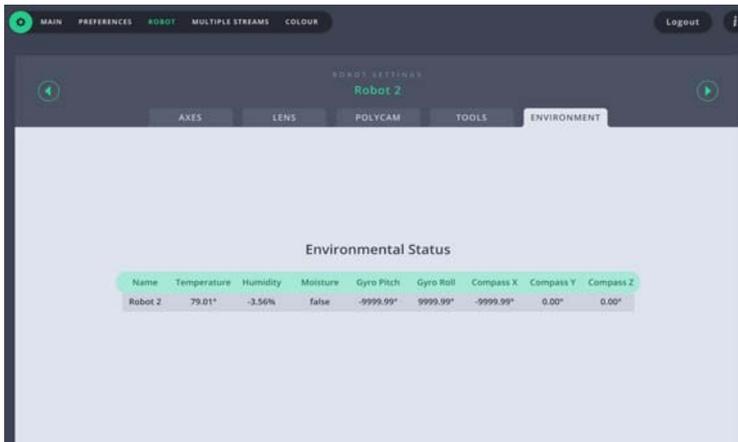
Subsequent sessions

After you have initially set up the system for your pod head and preferences, subsequent sessions take less time to set up, especially if you have not disconnected control cables or moved sites. For subsequent sessions at the same site you typically need to do the following at the start of every session.

1. Attach the power cables to the head and PC.

2. Launch the MHC server.

3. Launch the MHC client on each user PC.

4. Home the zoom and focus axes.

5. Use MHC interface or connected joystick to control the Pod.

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Appendix 1 **Troubleshooting**

Typical symptoms, causes, and actions

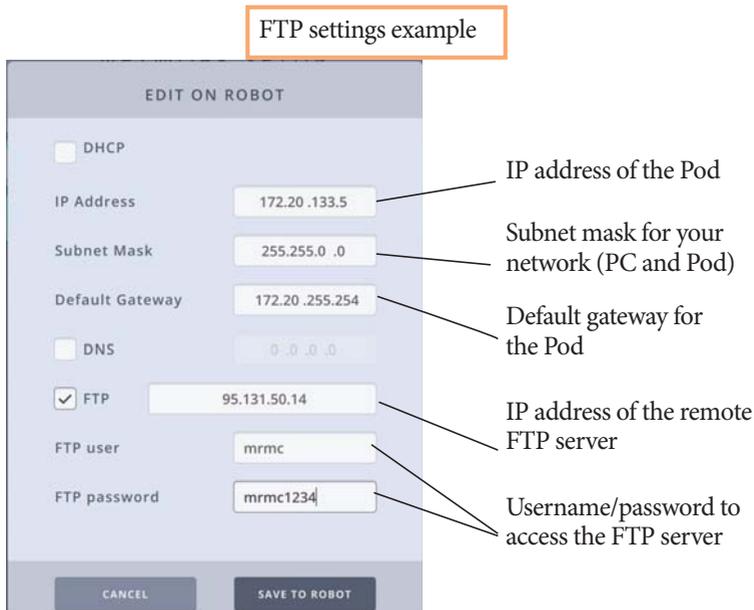| Symptoms	Cause and/or action
Pod head did not appear connected in MHC The LEDs on the Pod head did not light up.	Check that all cables are connected, and all devices have power. Check you have added the correct IP address of the Pod head in MHC. If you have connected more than one Pod heads, connected the MRMC system to another local network, or moved the Pod head between networks, check that correct addresses have been entered in MHC.
A '!' appears with the Pod head icon in the MHC Main screen.	Click the spanner( ) icon appearing below the Pod head icon to allow MHC to correct the error.
Pod tracking is not accurate	Ensure that the PTA is installed perfectly levelled to the ground. Ensure that you have checked this with spirit level.
While tracking the camera is pointing in the wrong direction.	The Pan axis must move to the left when position is moved positively. If it is incorrect, then scaling for the axis will need its sign changing. The Tilt axis must move up when position is moved positively. If this is incorrect, then scaling for the axis will need its sign changing.

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Appendix 2 **FTP Setup in MHC**

1. Login in to MHC client using the Admin username and password.

2. Click the **IP address** of the Pod for which the FTP server needs to be added.

3. Check **FTP server** and specify the IP address or the network name of the FTP server in the box. Specify the other IP addresses as shown in the example below. Your Network Administrator will be able to provide the values in these fields.

FTP settings example

EDIT ON ROBOT

DHCP

IP Address   172.20 .133.5   IP address of the Pod

Subnet Mask   255.255.0 .0   Subnet mask for your
                                     network (PC and Pod)

Default Gateway 172.20 .255.254   Default gateway for
                                     the Pod

DNS   0 .0 .0 .0

☑ FTP   95.131.50.14   IP address of the remote
                                     FTP server

FTP user   mrmc

FTP password mrmc1234   Username/password to
                                     access the FTP server

CANCEL   SAVE TO ROBOT

Note

If your FTP server is in the same network as the Pod and the MHC PC, then IP address of the FTP server should be in the same network range. If the FTP server is outside the network of the Pod and MHC PC, contact your Network Administrator for the values in fields on this screen.

Also, you can specify the name of the FTP server instead of the IP address. If you do this, ensure that you check **DNS** and specify the IP address of the DNS server in the box.

EDIT ON ROBOT

IP Address	172.20 .133.5
Subnet Mask	255.255.0 .0
Default Gateway	172.20 .255.254
✓ DNS	172.20 .255.8
✓ FTP	bsnet.hu

DNS server to resolve name addresses (if required)

Name of the remote FTP server

CANCEL   SAVE TO ROBOT
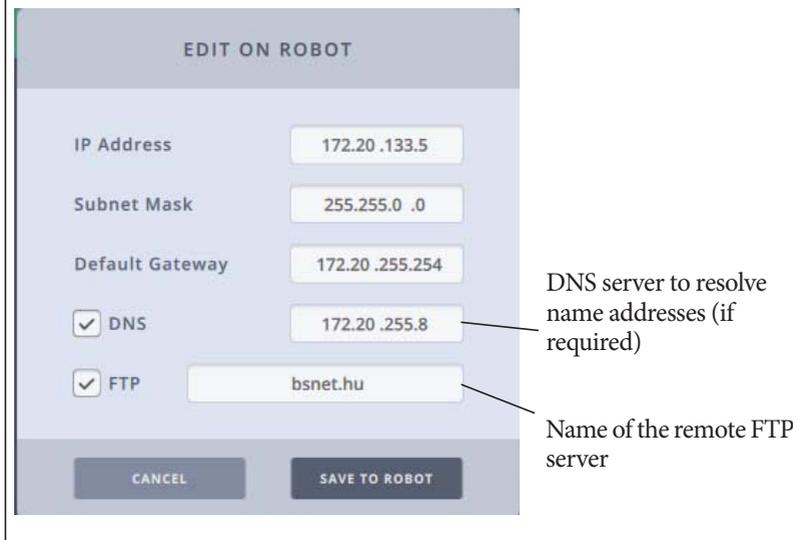
4. Click **SAVE TO ROBOT** to save these settings for the Pod in MHC client.

5. Choose **Settings** >**Robot** and select the **Tools** tab. Click the **Reset Robot** button. The Pod might take up to 60 seconds to appear connected in MHC.

6. Log out and log in as a user. Once the Pod is successfully connected to an FTP server, a **solid** (stable) **network icon** would appear below

the LiveView in MHC. The captured pictures would be transferred to the FTP server depending on the settings in the FTP server.
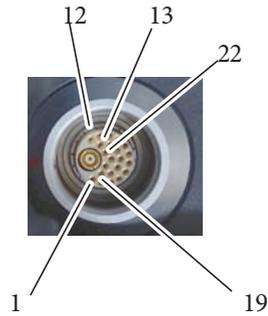

Solid network icon

Notes

Appendix 3 **Pod connectors**

Connector pin-outs

Panel mount connector

Panel mount connector is the 22-way (female) connector of type
EGG.3K.822.CLL1 on the POD and on the PTA.

1. 24V
2. GND
3. 24V
4. GND
5. 24V
6. GND
7. Ethernet 1
8. Ethernet 2
9. Ethernet 3
10. Ethernet 4
11. Ethernet 5
12. Ethernet 6
13. Ethernet 7
14. Ethernet 8
15. CANL
16. CANH
17. Motor+ (ROLL)
18. Motor-
19. Encoder A
20. Encoder +5V
21. Encoder B
22. Motor Limit (detect if motor is connected)

Panel mount connector

Panel mount connector is the 22-way (female) connector of type EGG.3K.822.CLL1 on the Pod base and in the power supply box.
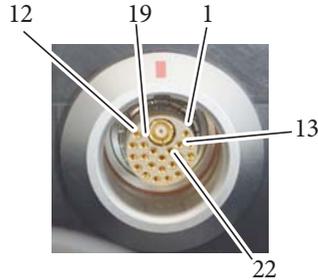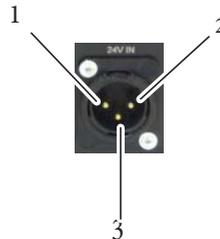
1. 24V
2. GND
3. 24V
4. GND
5. 24V
6. GND
7. Ethernet 1
8. Ethernet 2
9. Ethernet 3
10. Ethernet 4
11. Ethernet 5
12. Ethernet 6
13. Ethernet 7
14. Ethernet 8
15. Not assigned
16. N/C
17. N/C
18. N/C
19. N/C
20. N/C
21. N/C
22. N/C

Power In connector

Power to supply the head and the power output connector. It is a XLR 3-Way (Male) connector. The Pod can run from 12-35 Volts DC.
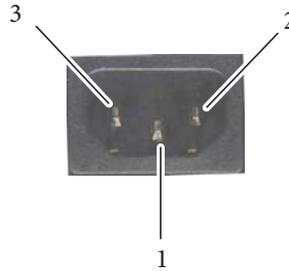
1. GND
2. N/C
3. +24V

Mains In connector

Power input connector for the Pod head. It is a 3-Way (Male) C14 IEC connector. 240 Volts AC.

1. Earth
2. Live
3. Neutral

SDI Out Connector

Connector for SDI Video signal from the camera.

1. Video Out (HD or SD)
   Centre
2. GND
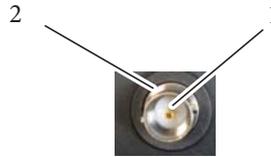
Notes

Appendix 4 **Specifications**

There are five types of robotic Pods based on the camera lens within.

24-120mm   24-70mm   70-200mm   80-400mm   200-500mm

Size	Total height	52cm-58cm
	Total width	58cm
	Operational space	$\sim 1.2m^3$

Weight	Robotic Pod	Between 7-10kg depending upon the unit
		24-120mm RP: 8.4kg
		24-70mm RP:
		70-200mm RP:
		80-400mm RP: 9.7kg
		200-500mm RP: 10.5kg
	Arm	11.8kg
	Roll	4.71kg
	Connection cable (long)	5m: 1.10kg
		10m: 2.10kg
		15m: 3.10kg
		20m: 4.10kg
		30m: 6.10kg
	Connection cable (short)	0.30kg
	Breakout Box	4.00kg
Connections	RJ45 (1000base-t)	
	SDI (3G, Maximum output 1080p 50/60 fps)	
	Fibre (Optional plug in SFP for optical SDI output)	

Power requirements	24 Volts DC 16A	
Temperature range	0-45 °C (32-113 °F)	
Humidity tolerance	0% to 85% relative humidity, non-condensing	
Maximum speed	135 ° a second	
Axes	Pan (max 180° a second, infinite movement) Tilt (max 180° a second/340° movement) Roll (max 90° a second, infinite rotation)	
Accuracy of playback (angular resolution)	Better than 0.0001°	

Stills	Image sensor	FX, CMOS, 35.9 mm x 23.9 mm
	Total pixels	21.33 million (20.8 million effective pixels)
	Frame advance rate	12 fps
	ISO sensitivity	ISO 100 to 102400, with a Hi 5 setting of EV (ISO 3280000 equivalent) above ISO 102400
Video	Movie frame size (pixels) and frame rate:	3840 x 2160 (4K UHD): 30p (progressive), 25p, 24p; (internal recording) 1920 x 1080: 60p, 50p, 30p, 25p, 24p; 1920 x 1080 crop: 60p, 50p, 30p, 25p, 24p; 1280 x 720: 60p, 50p;
	Actual frame rates for 60p, 50p, 30p, 25p, and 24p are 59.94, 50, 29.97, 25, and 23.976 fps via SDI All tri-level sync standards, cross lock compatible (exceptions 1080p 50/59.94/60Hz)	

82mm

344mm

Radius 175mm

240mm

Notes

Mark Roberts Motion Control Ltd.
Unit 3, South East Studios, Blindley Heath, Surrey RH7 6JP
United Kingdom
Telephone: +44 (0) 1342 838000
info@mrmoco.com
www.mrmoco.com