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In the event of large crises (earthquakes, typhoons, floods, ...), a primordial task of the fire and rescue services is the search for human survivors on the incident site. This is a complex and dangerous task, which - too often - leads to loss of lives among the human crisis managers themselves. This book explains how unmanned search can be added to the toolkit of the search and rescue workers, offering a valuable tool to save human lives and to speed up the search and rescue process. The introduction of robotic tools in the world of search and rescue is not straightforward, due to the fact that the search and rescue context is extremely technology-unfriendly, meaning that very robust solutions, which can be deployed extremely quickly, are required. Multiple research projects across the world are tackling this problem and in this book, a special focus is placed on showcasing the results of the European Union ICARUS project on this subject. The ICARUS project proposes to equip first responders with a comprehensive and integrated set of unmanned search and rescue tools, to increase the situational awareness of human crisis managers, so that more work can be done in a shorter amount of time. The ICARUS tools consist of assistive unmanned air, ground, and sea vehicles, equipped with victim-detection sensors. The unmanned vehicles collaborate as a coordinated team, communicating via ad hoc cognitive radio networking. To ensure optimal human-robot collaboration, these tools are seamlessly integrated into the command and control equipment of the human crisis managers and a set of training and support tools is provided to them in order to learn to use the ICARUS system. The research leading to these results has received funding from the European Community's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) under grant agreement number 285417. The publishing of this book was funded by the EC FP7 Post-Grant Open Access Pilot programme.

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Search and Rescue Robotics

This book contains papers on a wide range of topics in the area of kinematics, mechanisms, robotics, and design, addressing new research advances and innovations in design education. The content is divided into five main categories headed 'Historical Perspectives', 'Kinematics and Mechanisms', 'Robotic Systems', 'Legged Locomotion', and 'Design Engineering Education'. Contributions take the form of survey articles, historical perspectives, commentaries on trends on education or research, original research contributions, and papers on design education. This volume celebrates the achievements of Professor Kenneth Waldron who has made innumerable and invaluable contributions to these fields in the last fifty years. His leadership and his pioneering work have influenced thousands of people in this discipline.

From Theory to Practice