

ANYmal takes the elevator instead of stairs (you showoff)

November 9 2017, by Nancy Owano



(Tech Xplore)—So what is the latest quadruped gee-whiz from those who learned serious ropes at ETH-Zurich? ANYmal, a quadrupedal robot, is now using an elevator. The Robotic Systems Lab video makes you wonder if you are watching a cartoon or actually a real scene involving a robot. The latter is correct.

[ANYmal's](#) engineers can boast of its "precisely torque controllable actuators"; the fact that ANYmal has proven capable of running and climbing; its laser sensors and cameras, to size up surroundings, localize and plan a navigation path; and the way it selects footholds while walking.

These functions were achieved over time and the [robot](#) is at a level where it can move and operate autonomously and interact with the environment.

It has just the kind of features that seem suited for search missions, and other real-world scenarios calling for help in hazardous areas.

How real-world, though, is making a robot that marches up to an [elevator](#), then? The video is sped up 4x. (But even that is enough for us to realize it is not so uncanny to expect a world where humans and autonomous robots share everyday space.)

In the video, we can watch ANYmal making good use of its range of motion to reach up and press the elevator button. Before you can say what-the- you may consider James Vincent in *The Verge* with his own take: very real-world.

He said, "it seems odd to laud a 12-second video, creating robots that can navigate indoor spaces is pretty essential. We shouldn't have to build an entirely new infrastructure for future robots doing things like making deliveries in buildings, or helping the elderly. They should [adapt](#) to our environments, not the other way round."

[Rich Haridy](#) in *New Atlas*: "So for future nightmare-inducing reference, when you're being chased by one of these things, remember it can now follow you virtually anywhere, including between the floors of a skyscraper. There is nowhere to hide."

David Grossman, *Popular Mechanics*, said, "to get to the real world, you often have to take an elevator." In this case, said Grossman, the QR code beneath the elevator door was [helpful](#).

"But the real world sadly lacks QR codes," said Grossman, "and ETH Zurich wants the ANYmal to be useful in complex operations like search and rescue and industrial inspection of oil and gas sites. Which is why it also carries optical and thermal cameras, microphones, gas-detection sensors and active lighting, along with a 2 hour battery life."

Don't even try laughing at the idea that in the real world, the elevator would be broken and the robot would be stuck. In case the elevators are broken, ANYmal can also take the stairs.

More information: www.anymal-research.org/

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