

This summer, Toulouse-Blagnac airport began work on a programme to upgrade its No.2 runway, to enable flight testing of the new Airbus A380. AMEC SPIE Sud-Ouest and AMEC SPIE Belgium were heavily involved in the work.

> The airfield lighting work package

➤ The lighting package entailed supplying and installing 70 km of MV cable and 60 km of LV cable, supplying and installing 750 transformers and light fittings, and fitting out 300 manholes. In all, the work required an investment of €1.64 million.

Airfield lighting at Toulouse-Blagnac air

A seamlessly or

➤ Built in 1968 to satisfy the requirements of the Concorde programme, runway No. 2 at Toulouse-Blagnac airport is the nearest to the aircraft manufacturers' facilities. In preparation for the arrival of the A380 in the spring of 2005, major works have been conducted on the runway, including upgrading the runway lights, widening the runway shoulders from 7.5 m to 15 m, to protect the engines on the new aircraft (which features an extraordinary 78 m wingspan), and resurfacing the runway proper. This upgrade programme was conducted in July and August, at a cost of €13 million financed jointly by Toulouse's Chamber of Commerce and Industry and by Airbus France. The main contractor, Aéroports de Paris Ingénierie, awarded the lighting package (see inset) to

a consortium of three companies, including AMEC SPIE Sud-Ouest (consortium leader) and AMEC SPIE Belgium.

Complementary expertise

In order to secure the contract, two units combined their specific skills: AMEC SPIE Sud-Ouest's Midi-Pyrénées Sud office contributed its in-depth knowledge of the customer, and AMEC SPIE Belgium's airfield lighting department leveraged its airfield lighting replacement expertise. "Our strategy consists in teaming up with an AMEC SPIE regional office in order to address a customer's needs jointly" explains Michel Wautelet, who manages AMEC SPIE Belgium's airfield lighting department. "Although we have the necessary technical

Toulouse airport's No. 2 runway is 3.5 km long and 45 m wide, with hard shoulders on either side of the runway and taxiways.



port

orchestrated project

expertise, we are rarely familiar with the local economic environment. For the Toulouse project, we are working closely with the main contractor, Aéroports de Paris, but Toulouse's Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the airport are longstanding customers of AMEC SPIE Sud-Ouest. These complementary skills played a vital role, allowing us to win the order together in a highly competitive situation."

Franco-Belgian synergies

AMEC SPIE Sud-Ouest involved several local offices in the work. "We called on people from Bègles, Périgueux and Agen to work alongside the Toulouse team" recalls Alain Paluskiewicz, AMEC SPIE Sud-Ouest's project manager. "It was a very satisfying experience, and I was particularly impressed with the dedication shown by everyone involved. I should also mention the excellent working relationship with our Belgian friends, Jacques Petitjean and David Flament, which enabled us to share our respective know-how very productively."

In the field, AMEC SPIE Belgium's specialists removed the existing runway lighting, dug pits and sealed the housings for the new lights. They also sawed the ground over a distance of 5 km for the shoulder widening work. AMEC SPIE Sud-Ouest's electricians handled all the wiring work and installed the new lights.

Co-working and time management

A team of 60 people worked on the lighting package for the consortium. However, at certain times during the early weeks, over 500 people were present on the runway at the same time. This was because the access road, resurfacing and utility installation work was performed in parallel to the runway lighting work. AMEC SPIE Sud-Ouest's

Midi-Pyrénées Sud office was involved in this package as a subcontractor for the utility installation work.

"25 of the office's employees were involved in this job" notes Pierre Albasi, the office manager.

"The first obstacle to be overcome was managing the co-working arrangements between the civil engineering contractors and our own personnel" explains Alain Paluskiewicz. "We were also aware of the increased risk of accidents. We introduced some very strict, or even draconian, safety instructions, thanks to which the work was completed with no accidents." Another major exploit was to meet the schedule. The team did whatever it took in order to hand over the project on time, including cancelling leave and working through the night and at weekends. "Without such fantastic team spirit and unshakeable motivation, and without Alain, the consortium's project manager who withstood a great deal of pressure, we would not have succeeded" concedes Pierre Albasi. "We are extremely grateful to everyone for going the extra mile." ■



A new runway light.



Topographical chart.

Sawing the ground for the runway shoulder widening operation.

