

CONSULTANT & CONTRACTOR NEWS

An Aecom joint venture (JV) has secured the design contract for the new Terminal 4 (T4) at Bao'an International Airport (SZX) in Shenzhen, China. The company won the contract after securing the first position in the competition along with its partners China Northeast Architectural Design and Research Institute, Shenzhen (CNADRI), Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners (RSH-P), and China Railway No.2 Group. In the design competition, Aecom worked on aircraft apron planning and the passenger terminal.

Aecom Asia regional CEO, Ian Chung, said: "Throughout the Greater Bay Area, Aecom has brought together technical leaders from across our business to provide unparalleled expertise with a strong track record of technical excellence demonstrated in multiple projects, including a number of significant projects at Hong Kong International Airport." The new 400,000-m² T4 building will be situated towards the north side of the current T3 area. With a land area of 365 ha, the new terminal is anticipated to accommodate around 31 million passengers annually.

T4 will be constructed on a constrained site, under which a rail interchange station is located. Major work on this station has been completed and it is partially in operation. Initially, the station was not designed to handle any added structural loading. The new terminal building was planned after considering the complex construction interface while deploying integration solutions for reducing operational disruption. #1145.CON1

The Maryland Aviation Administration (MAA) which owns and operates Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport (BWI), and Martin State Airport (MTN) has selected HNTB to continue serving the agency as consultant for environmental planning services. The selection is an extension of the ongoing partnership between HNTB and MAA, with the firm being the provider of on-call environmental planning services to the agency since 2011 and exclusively since 2016. Under the five-year agreement HNTB is responsible for contract and task management, National Environmental Policy Act documentation for proposed improvements in addition to a variety of technical analyses, and on-call environmental services at BWI and MTN. Since becoming an on-call consultant to MAA, HNTB has performed critical tasks to help the agency advance and meet goals in connection to a variety of facilities improvements. This includes assisting in gaining necessary environmental federal and state approvals and permits, NEPA documentation as well as augmenting staff in various roles including supporting the agency's noise office.

HNTB leads complex aviation infrastructure projects and programmes throughout the US, including providing programme management services for John F Kennedy International Airport's (JFK), NY, redevelopment programme; programme management and construction management services at Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport; serving as architect-of-record on South Terminal C at Orlando International Airport, and on Denver International Airport's Concourse A West and B West expansions as designer/architect-of-record. #1145.CON2

The Civil Aviation Authority of Vietnam (CAAV) has rejected proposals from five localities to build their own airports. In the report on the evaluation of airport planning submitted to Vietnam's Ministry of Transport in early May 2021, the CAAV suggested keeping the current number of airports, both planned for construction and fully operational, of 28 by 2030 and adding just one more airport in the northern province of Cao Bang by 2050. The proposals for building five airports in the northern provinces of Bac Giang, Ha Giang, Ninh Binh, central Ha Tinh Province and southern Binh Phước Province were rejected.

The Transport Ministry's Department of Planning and Investment said that there were six main criteria for airport construction including the future forecast demand for passenger volume, evaluating its role in promoting socio-economic development, ensuring national defence and security, emergency relief, natural conditions, and access to a city centre. Of these, the demand for passenger volume and natural conditions were the most important criteria.

In the report, the CAAV has asked the ministry to keep the planning for Hai Phong international airport in Tiên Lang District to be a substitute for Noi Bai and Cat Bi airports by 2050. Tien Lang District has a land fund of up to 6,000 ha, ensuring the construction of an airport with a capacity of more than 100 million passengers per year. #1145.CON3

Korea Airports Corporation (KAC) will participate in the Luang Prabang International Airport (LPQ) development project in Laos, according to official sources. According to KAC, the Laotian Ministry of Planning and Investment selected it as the provider of feasibility studies for the aforementioned project.

In January 2021, the Government of Laos launched the bid for the first stage of the feasibility study as a public-private cooperative investment programme to upgrade the air terminal in its former capital. The South Korean company guaranteed that it has experience in overseas airport development projects, and that it has the support of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport and the Overseas Urban Development and Infrastructure Support Corporation.

As its first mission, KAC will conduct an airport development feasibility study, such as aircraft demand forecasting, airport operating system improvement plan and environmental impact assessment. Subsequently, the company's leaders noted that they plan to boost the improvement and expansion of airport facilities on a large scale through the formation of a Consortium. The plan is scheduled to last 15 years in accordance with the feasibility study and investment decisions in Laos, at a cost of approximately KRW 100 billion (about USD 89 million). However, KAC members stated that the organisation and the size of the project may change according to the feasibility study. #1145.CON4

NACO Netherlands Airport Consultants has joined ACI-LAC's World Business Partners as an affiliate member. With a track record of assisting more than 600 airports globally in some 100 countries, NACO's range of services extends to all aspects of airport development. Rafael Echevarne, director general of ACI-LAC, commented: "We are confident that the vast experience in key airport development issues will be of great support and benefit to our airport members. Now more than ever it is important to strengthen safety, sustainability and profitable operations in Latin America and the Caribbean." Esther Kromhout, recently appointed NACO director and business unit director of aviation at Royal HaskoningDHV, said: "As ACI WBP for almost two decades, NACO appreciates the invaluable impact of ACI as the voice of the world's airports and we are keen to contribute to its mission." Kromhout added on the ACI-LAC affiliate membership: "We are delighted to join ACI-LAC, particularly in pandemic recovery times, when our decision to expand our ACI footprint to better reach Central and South America has never been more relevant. NACO has experience in Latin America and the Caribbean as we have delivered numerous airport projects in the region. We are here to assist airports in shaping a future that ensures safe, resilient, sustainable and profitable operations for years to come." #1145.CON5

As countries across the globe begin to lift national travel restrictions for vaccinated travellers, IATA has called for the rest of the world to follow suit. IATA has applauded the growing number of countries that are making data and evidence-driven decisions to open their borders to vaccinated travellers. The latest data collected by IATA, including its Timatic service, shows that more than 20 countries have wholly or partially lifted restrictions for vaccinated travellers. IATA supports

unrestricted access to travel for vaccinated travellers. In cases where vaccination is not possible, access to quarantine-free travel should be provided through Covid-19 testing strategies based on widely available, free-of-charge tests.

Germany is among the latest countries to make quarantine alleviations for vaccinated travellers. Vaccinated travellers are no longer subject to quarantine measures (except from certain high-risk countries). Germany has also removed quarantine requirements for travellers with a negative Covid-19 test result (except from certain high-risk countries). The German government's decision followed a review of scientific advice from the world-renowned Robert Koch Institute (RKI), which concluded that vaccinated travellers are no longer significant in the spread of the disease and do not pose a major risk to the German population. Specifically, it stated that vaccination reduces the risk of Covid-19 transmission to levels below the risk from a false negative rapid antigen test. The implementation of this policy aligns Germany with recommendations from both the European Commission (EC) and the European Parliament, based on similar scientific advice from the European Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (ECDC). In its interim guidance on the benefits of full vaccination, ECDC said that "based on the limited evidence available, the likelihood of an infected vaccinated person transmitting the disease is currently assessed to be very low to low."

Similar conclusions are being reached in the US. The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has noted that "with a 90% effective vaccine, pre-travel testing, post-travel testing and seven-day self-quarantine provide minimal additional benefit. A safe opening of borders to international travel is the goal." Scientific evidence and data – such as that presented by RKI, ECDC and the US CDC – should be the basis for the decision-making needed to achieve that. There is increasing scientific evidence that vaccination is not only protecting people but also dramatically reducing the risk of Covid-19 transmission. "This is bringing us closer to a world where vaccination and testing enables the freedom to travel without quarantine. Germany and at least 20 other countries have already taken an important step forward in re-opening their borders to vaccinated travellers. These are the best practice examples for others to quickly follow," said Willie Walsh, IATA's Director General.

According to the US CDC, alleviations from Covid-19 restrictions are a powerful motivator for vaccination, particularly in communities where vaccine hesitancy is prevalent. This is an additional and important benefit of restriction-free travel for those vaccinated. IATA polling indicates that 81% of international travellers are willing to get vaccinated in order to be able to travel. Moreover, 74% of people in the same poll agreed that those vaccinated should be able to travel by air without restrictions. #1145.CON6

In Australia, Sydney Metro has shortlisted two companies for a civil works contract as part of the new 23-km metro line that will serve western Sydney and the new Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport (SWZ). CPB Contractors and Acciona Construction Australia have been shortlisted to build 10 km of viaducts, bridges and embankments for track and associated infrastructure. The project will support 14,000 construction jobs, including 250 apprentices. The contract is expected to be awarded in Q1 2022. Sydney Metro said that the contract will employ a range of civil engineering trades and specialist services including drainage and ground workers, steel-fixers and concrete workers, earthmoving plant operators, truck drivers, piling contractors, crane operators, general labourers, pre-cast operators, surveillance officers and security guards. The Australian and New South Wales governments are jointly delivering the 23-km Western Sydney Airport Line, with six stations between St Marys and the Western Sydney Aerotropolis, including two stations at the airport. #1145.CON7

Environment & Sustainability News

At the second ACI Europe Aviation Sustainability Summit on 20 May 2021, the airport trade body made a series of announcements reaffirming the commitment of Europe's airports to climate action. ACI Europe also reaffirmed its ambition to achieve Net Zero CO2 emissions under its control by 2050 at the latest. That commitment was initially launched in June 2019. Based on Europe's airports 2019 traffic volumes and estimated carbon footprint, this Net Zero commitment will eliminate a total of 3.14 million t of annual CO2 emissions as of 2050. Some 235 airports run by 63 operators across 29 countries have now backed this industry commitment - thus individually committing to the same objective. In addition to all 211 airports that had done so before the Covid-19 crisis and that continue to stand by their pledge, a further 24 airports have joined the European airport industry commitment to Net Zero today. These 235 airports accounted for 68% of European passenger traffic in 2019. Reflecting stepped up ambitions, 91 airports run by 16 operators are set to deliver on their Net Zero commitment already by 2030.

This includes 10 airports operated by Swedavia (including Stockholm-Arlanda), which have recently become the first ones globally to become Net Zero. Athens International Airport should follow as of 2025, with Aéroports de la Côte d'Azur (3 airports including Nice), Aeroporti di Roma, Amsterdam Schiphol, AVINOR (44 airports including Oslo), Copenhagen, Eindhoven, EuroAirport Basel-Mulhouse-Freiburg, Finavia (21 airports including Helsinki), Luxembourg, Lyon-Saint Exupéry, Marseille-Provence, SEA Milan airports and Tallinn all targeting 2030. #1145.CON8

Edmonton International Airport (EIA) and Air Canada have signed a new partnership to reduce carbon emissions and advance a green and sustainable aviation sector. The EIA-Air Canada Sustainability Partnership aims to reduce the carbon impact of air travel with both organizations working together to test emerging green technologies at EIA's Airport City Sustainability Campus, an ecosystem that EIA created to foster environmental innovation. The partnership reflects both corporations' pledges to sustainability and reducing carbon emissions to a net-zero future.

The EIA-Air Canada Sustainability Partnership will focus on initiatives that will promote a cleaner environment and include the following: Electrification of aviation equipment; Hydrogen fuel cell technologies; Green power generation using Airport City Solar, the world's largest airport-based solar farm; Development and usage of sustainable aviation fuels, biofuels and hydrogen; Replacement of single-use plastics with plant-fibre materials; Drones for e-commerce and cargo delivery; and other initiatives in industries such as agriculture and forestry to offset carbon emissions.

"Finding good partners who share our core values is critical. Air Canada is passionate about reducing its environmental impact and our partnership shows how airlines and airports can work together to promote a sustainable future. This is only the beginning as we know that there are tremendous opportunities to lead in both an environmentally and economically sustainable way," said Myron Keehn, Vice President, Air Service and Business Development, Edmonton International Airport.

"This partnership with Edmonton Airports is an important step towards our midterm 2030 objectives that roll up into our overall net zero by 2050 emissions goal. We look forward to working together in developing innovative, long term, sustainable airport and ground operations emission reductions that could potentially be scaled at other airports in Canada and internationally," added Samuel Elfassy, Vice President, Safety at Air Canada.

These commitments will create highly skilled jobs, stimulate economic development, and help attract more investment to the Edmonton Metropolitan Region as it transitions to a greener economy. [see also related item #1144.CON3 in previous issue] #1145.CON9

Ryanair and its university partner, Trinity College Dublin, are beginning what will be 12 to 24 months of work to establish a roadmap for Europe's largest low-cost carrier to achieve a newly announced commitment to power up to 12.5% of its flights with sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) by 2030, according to the airline's Director of Sustainability, Thomas

Fowler. Ryanair made the commitment while unveiling the launch of the Ryanair Sustainable Aviation Research Centre in a "landmark initiative - the first of its kind in Ireland", with a EUR 1.5 million donation which Trinity will use to seed a team to research SAF, zero carbon aircraft propulsion systems and noise mapping. "This new knowledge will inform the policies of both EU and international governments on making aviation environmentally and economically sustainable, as well as harness future investments by the aviation industry towards sustainability," said Ryanair. The project, which will employ six people, is due to begin in summer 2021.

"Given the Ryanair brand and our size in Europe, we wanted to give a commitment to do something that would make the industry stand up and take note of," said Fowler. "It's a demand signal."

Ryanair has already been using SAF on a regular basis in Norway, where since 2020 there is a requirement for 0.5% of all fuel usage to be SAF. The carrier has been discussing SAF with major fuel suppliers for a couple of years and will most likely start off taking SAF under any European blending rules as and when they come in, said Fowler. Ryanair will carefully consider its SAF offtake strategy as it has 84 bases around Europe, with its largest markets being Spain and Italy. #1145.CON10

German federal and state governments and industrial leaders have agreed on a roadmap aimed at establishing climate-friendly power-to-liquid (PtL) aviation fuel production.

The PtL roadmap is intended to create the basis for the annual production of at least 200,000 tonnes of sustainable kerosene for German air traffic by 2030. This corresponds to a third of the current fuel requirement for domestic German air traffic. Electricity-based, sustainably produced fuels are a key element in making CO₂-neutral flying a reality. The plan aims to produce PtL fuels from green hydrogen and sustainable carbon dioxide. The carbon can be obtained from unavoidable CO₂ sources, such as bioenergy plants and industry, therefore drastically reducing the overall amount of air traffic CO₂ emissions, according to the plan. While the manufacturing processes are technically proven, PtL fuels have not yet been produced in relevant quantities or at market prices due to the lack of industrial-scale production facilities, according to the environment ministry. The roadmap illustrates how a market ramp-up for sustainable PtL fuel can succeed. Peter Gerber, president of the German Aviation Association (BDL) and CEO of Brussels Airlines, said industry and government would "work together on the basis of the PtL roadmap to ensure that these sustainable fuels are available in sufficient quantities and at competitive prices". Gerber added that the aviation industry could participate in the construction of industrial plants for the production of sustainable aviation fuels through the purchase guarantees. The German government has increasingly sought to make emissions-free aviation a part of the country's energy transition, although industry experts have also warned that sustainable fuels alone are not enough to make air traffic climate neutral. #1145.CON11

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