



Press release

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GCC infrastructure projects now worth US\$119.6 billion

UAE and Saudi Arabia dominate spending on rail, road and public transportation projects – regional transportation network to be in place by 2020

According to a recent study by research company Business Monitor International (BMI), the GCC countries will invest over US\$119.6 billion in infrastructure projects over the next ten years, of which rail projects account for over 90% of the investment.

“Regional government policy and spending over the next ten years will define the region’s transport infrastructure. The amount allocated for investment in rail projects clearly demonstrates the region’s strategy for mass transit,” said Richard Pavitt, Exhibition Director of the Roadex-Railex exhibition.

The biennial Roadex-Railex event, the largest exhibition for the road, rail and public transport sectors in the Middle East, takes place in Abu Dhabi this year. Transport infrastructure specialist from all over the world will converge on the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC) on 28 – 30 November 2010 to participate in the event which focuses this year on road and rail infrastructure, public transport and parking.

Leading the Gulf in terms of investment, Saudi Arabia is spending US\$25 billion on its rail network adding 3,900 kilometres of track through three major projects.

The first of which is the Saudi Landbridge project, a 950 kilometre railway which will connect Jeddah and Dammam. Secondly the 450 kilometre Haramain high-speed which will connect Mecca and Medina via Jeddah and finally the North South Railway which joins the northern mineral belt with Riyadh and the industrial city of Jubail.

The UAE has already committed US\$7.6 billion in Dubai on the Metro (red and green lines) and another US\$3.26 billion on several major road projects which is addition to a public-private partnership (PPP) with Italian construction and infrastructure company Salini Costruttori, to overhaul sections of the UAE-Saudi Arabia Highway.

“In the UAE capital, there are plans for a US\$7 billion 131 kilometre monorail track, most of which will be underground. Further funds are budgeted for a high-speed rail link with Dubai, freight rail corridor and new roads all scheduled for completion within the next five years,” said Richard Pavitt.

Elsewhere in the Gulf, significant amounts are being invested in infrastructure projects, in Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar, notably the US\$4 billion Qatar-Bahrain causeway which

although currently delayed due to design, financial and technical issues, plans are at an advanced stage.

“In addition to all of this is the proposed GCC railway project. That alone according to Mohammed Obaid Al-Mazrouie, the assistant secretary general for economic affairs in the GCC, could be worth between US\$20 – US\$25 billion, which may not account for the extension from Oman to Yemen announced last year. Although unlikely at this stage, the project is scheduled to start before the end of 2011 and would take six years to complete,” added Pavitt.

Running in parallel with the exhibition will be a conference, addressing topical industry issues from planning and finance to development and maintenance.

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Photo caption:

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