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FUTURE READY

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P30

LEGAL UPDATE

PROPOSED LAW REFORMS COULD IMPACT PROCUREMENT IN SAUDI
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SIZE MATTERS

LUXURY PROPERTIES CONTINUE TO DOMINATE DUBAI'S DEVELOPMENT LANDSCAPE, BUT DOWNSIZING MAY HOLD THE KEY TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE EMIRATE



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@CWMIDDLEEAST



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The most important project,
contract, and tender information,
updated every week



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CONSTRUCTIONWEEK

PO Box 500024, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
TEL +971 4 444 3000
WEB: www.itp.com
Offices in Abu Dhabi, Dubai, London & Mumbai

ITP MEDIA GROUP

CEO Ali Akawi
MANAGING DIRECTOR Alex Reeve
GROUP PUBLISHING DIRECTOR Ian Stokes
GROUP EDITORIAL DIRECTOR Greg Wilson

EDITORIAL

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR robert.willock@itp.com
CW EDITOR neha.bhatia@itp.com
CW DEPUTY EDITOR oscar.rousseau@itp.com
CW REPORTER fatima.delacerna@itp.com
ONLINE EDITOR jumana.razzaq@itp.com
SUBEDITOR sarah.massey@os.itp.com
FM EDITOR nikhil.pereira@itp.com
MEP EDITOR rajiv.pillai@itp.com
PMV EDITOR dennis.daniel@itp.com
MEA EDITOR rima.alsammarae@itp.com
CID EDITOR shweta.parida@itp.com

ADVERTISING

SALES DIRECTOR Mark Palmer
TEL +971 4 444 3398, EMAIL mark.palmer@itp.com
SALES EXECUTIVE Tom Martin
TEL +971 4 444 3465, EMAIL tom.martin@itp.com
SALES EXECUTIVE Shelley-May Jennings
TEL +971 4 444 3834, EMAIL shelley-may.jennings@itp.com

ITP LIVE

GENERAL MANAGER Ahmad Bashour
TEL +971 4 444 3549, EMAIL ahmad.bashour@itp.com

ONLINE ADVERTISING

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR Riad Raad
TEL +971 4 444 3319, EMAIL riad.raad@itp.com

STUDIO

HEAD OF DESIGN Genaro Santos
SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHERS Rajesh Raghav, Efraim Evidor, Richard Hall
STAFF PHOTOGRAPHERS Lester Apuntar, Aasiya Jagadeesh, Ausra Osipaviciute,
Grace Guino, Fritz Asuro, Ajith Narendra

PRODUCTION & DISTRIBUTION

GROUP PRODUCTION & DISTRIBUTION DIRECTOR Kyle Smith
PRODUCTION MANAGER Basel Al Kassem
PRODUCTION CO-ORDINATOR Mahendra Pawar
SENIOR IMAGE EDITOR Emmalyn Robles
IMAGE EDITOR Ismail Aboobacker

CIRCULATION

HEAD OF CIRCULATION Vanessa D'Souza
CIRCULATION EXECUTIVE Loreta Regencia

MARKETING

DIRECTOR OF AWARDS & MARKETING Daniel Fewtrell
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ITP GROUP

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Dubai South's Residential District is expected to house around 35,000 people comprises a range of villas, townhouses, and apartments that are set to be ready by 2020.

Contract of note: US architect named for LRED homes in Dubai South district

UAE-based Lootah Real Estate Development (LRED) has appointed global architecture firm Gensler to manage the master plan development for its 106,889m² project in Dubai South's Residential District.

Under the agreement, Gensler will be responsible for the visioning, strategic planning, urban design frameworks, design guidelines, and innovative solutions of the project, the developer said.

Dubai South's Residential District will include 10,000 villas, townhouses, and apartments by 2020. It is expected to house an estimated 35,000 residents. Saleh Abdullah Lootah, executive director of LRED, said that

by partnering with Gensler, the developer hoped to deliver "the highest levels of quality and innovation" in the array of real estate.

Dubai South's Residential District will include schools, nurseries, hospitals, retail outlets, food and drink options, a post office, a swimming academy, and a sports centre.

The Dubai South Residential District project is being co-developed by a joint venture of LRED and Dubai South.

The 50:50 agreement was signed in August 2017 by executive chairman of Dubai Aviation City Corporation, HE Khalifa Al Zaffin, and LRED's executive director.

Abdullah said the project's proximity to notable Dubai construction projects, such





For up-to-the-minute tenders log on to constructionweekonline.com

TOP TENDERS

Furnishing works for emergency buildings

Country: Saudi Arabia
Closes: Mar 16, 2018
Category: Buildings
Issuer: Prince Sultan Medical Military City

Gardens and parks in Khormah

Country: Saudi Arabia
Closes: Mar 26, 2018
Category: Infrastructure
Issuer: Municipality of Khormah

Building maintenance in Al Qassim Province

Country: Saudi Arabia
Closes: Apr 2, 2018
Category: Buildings
Issuer: Secretariat of Qassim – Municipality of Asyah

Restoration of the clinic of flight institute of land forces (Qassim)

Country: Saudi Arabia
Closes: Apr 4, 2018
Category: Buildings
Issuer: Medical Services of Armed Forces

Completing the last phase of Khamis Mushait road

Country: Saudi Arabia
Closes: Apr 8, 2018
Category: Infrastructure
Issuer: Saudi's Ministry of Transport

Construction and development work for garden, yard, and sidewalk projects in Harjah

Country: Saudi Arabia
Closes: Apr 8, 2018
Category: Infrastructure
Issuer: Municipality of Harjah

Completing Bahr Abu Sokainah Haridah Road – Phase 2

Country: Saudi Arabia
Closes: Apr 9, 2018
Category: Infrastructure
Issuer: Ministry of Transport

Irrigation of centres and villages in Bisha – Phase 3

Country: Saudi Arabia
Closes: Apr 9, 2018
Category: Power and Water
Issuer: Directorate of Water



as Expo 2020 Dubai, Al Maktoum Airport, as well as the free zones and Business Park in Dubai South, factored in his decision to partner with Dubai South.

This was coupled with what he described as “strong growth potential and investor confidence” in the company.

Two months after the accord was struck, LRED begun to invite bids for the master plan of its 106,889m² project. The company said it was looking for “inventive planning and design” from a potential architecture partner.

California-based Gensler boasts a wealth of project experience when it comes to the UAE’s built environment,

and is associated with a number of projects in the country.

These include Currency House, a sculptural, 50-story, glass-and-metal tower, in the Dubai International Financial Centre, and in the capital, the National Bank of Abu Dhabi, and Saadiyat Island.

Gensler is also involved in a host of other GCC projects.

This January, LRED completed the acquisition of a B+G+7 residential building in Phase 3 of Dubai International City.

The company revealed in a statement that the move supports its 2020 strategy of growing its existing assets portfolio and expanding its regional market share.

Elaf Group opens five-star city hotel in Jeddah

The Elaf Group has opened The Hotel Galleria by Elaf, a five-star city hotel in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

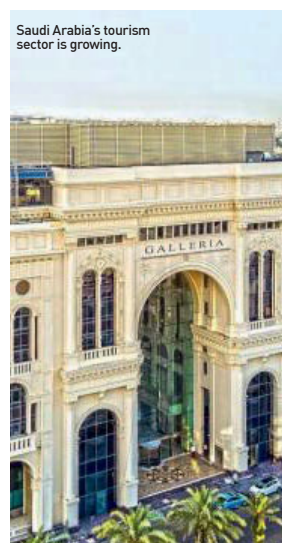
Inspired by the famed Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II in Milan, the hotel features 364 rooms spread across seven floors.

The building comprises two separate wings that are enclosed by a vaulted glass and metal roof. The property also features banquet and events facilities, an executive lounge, a health club, and a high-end spa.

Restaurants inside the hotel include The Kitchen, El-Vaquero, The Birdcage, Milano, and Aqua.

Ziyad Bin Mahfouz, CEO, Elaf Group said: “The opening of Hotel Galleria by Elaf in Jeddah is in line with ongoing efforts to strengthen our leading presence in KSA and the rest of the GCC.”

The soft opening of The Hotel Galleria comes amid a surge in hotel building in the country, with more than 80 hotels set to open in 2018.





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TOP TENDERS

Irrigation of the Kingdom's western coast

Country: Saudi Arabia
Closes: Apr 9, 2018
Category: Power and Water
Issuer: Directorate of Water

Lighting towers for sports club

Country: Saudi Arabia
Closes: Apr 15, 2018
Category: Power and Water
Issuer: Public Authority of Sport

Repair works for the current lanes of Jazan roads (Group 3)

Country: Saudi Arabia
Closes: Apr 17, 2018
Category: Infrastructure
Issuer: Ministry of Transport

Repair of Jazan roads – Group 3

Country: Saudi Arabia
Closes: Apr 17, 2018
Category: Infrastructure
Issuer: Ministry of Transport

Improvement and development of entrances

Country: Saudi Arabia
Closes: May 1, 2018
Category: Infrastructure
Issuer: Municipality of A'Rayn

Construction of roads and yards at the University of Kuwait

Country: Saudi Arabia
Closes: May 6, 2018
Category: Infrastructure
Issuer: University of Kuwait

Supply and installation of safety systems

Country: Saudi Arabia
Closes: May 12, 2018
Category: Infrastructure
Issuer: Armed Forces Hospital in Taif

Furniture for students' housing

Country: Saudi Arabia
Closes: Jan 9, 2019
Category: Buildings
Issuer: Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islamic University



Dubai's Art of Living Mall, located on Umm Suqeim Road, will feature porcelain flooring imported from Spain.

Dubai's Art of Living Mall 70% complete

The Art of Living Mall, the region's first complex dedicated to homeware, is now around 70% complete. Located in Dubai, the 4.7ha project will be the only dedicated homeware and furniture hub when it officially opens in September 2018.

Developed by MMS Global, the mall is progressing on schedule with most of the concrete and construction works completed, officials close to the project told *Construction Week*.

"We are now in the process of finalising the steel structure for the skylights, which are nine in total," project manager, MMS Global, Nour Alhoda Alsoori, said, adding: "It [is] a fast-track project."

Mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP) works are now 90% complete on the ground level, and have commenced

on the upper floor. The façade is expected to be completed in the next two months. Construction is expected to be completed by the end of June 2018.

The Art of Living Mall is being developed under a lump-sum contract with Airolink as the main contractor and Lacasa as the project's main consultant.

Design director – interiors at Lacasa, Patick Bean, described the aesthetics of Dubai's Art of Living Mall as "contemporary". The facility, which broke ground in January 2017, will host around 100 stores and will include more than 500 parking spaces.

It will also feature art exhibition space, restaurants and cafes, a cigar lounge, free valet parking, kids' clubs, a spa, and a gym, project officials revealed.

Good Week/Bad Week



Empower investors

Shareholders were paid \$109m

SNC-Lavalin

Net income for 2017 rises by 50%

AGMC

Breaks ground on new Dubai facility

Middle East VRF sector

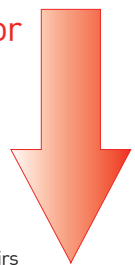
Experts: Lack of data delaying growth

Raysut Cement

Rising costs cause revenue dip

DXB airport

South runway to close in 2019 for repairs





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FINANCIALS

Raysut revenue cut by 22% amid UAE competition

Heavy competition from cement producers in the UAE, and higher energy costs, have affected sales revenues and net earnings of Omani cement producer Raysut Cement Company.

The company's revenue reduced by 22% to \$187m (OMR71.87m) in 2017, from \$240m (OMR92.59m) the previous year. According to the company's annual report, severe competition across regional markets, "coupled with socio-political disturbances in Yemen", and "unabated supply" of cement from the UAE due to surplus capacity and price declines, "caused a dent in prices and volume of sales in the northern markets of Oman".

In addition, Raysut Cement said the demand for cement in Oman fell as a result of a decline in construction activities.

The report further stated: "This is because of a lower volume of sales, both in local and export markets. A declining market (21%), lower price realisation,



Oman's Raysut Cement said its new packaging plant would be completed this quarter [representational image].

lower production, higher costs resulting from higher energy prices, raw material cost, and maintenance costs have impacted the group's bottom line."

Raysut Cement's board of directors has proposed a cash dividend of 29%

of the paid-up capital, subject to the approval of shareholders at an upcoming annual general meeting.

Meanwhile, the company's new packaging plant is expected to be completed in this quarter.

Expert Views

GCC project pipeline valued at \$2.4tn: Construction tops total regional budget

GCC nations boast a pipeline of construction, transport and energy projects worth \$2.4tn, according to figures referenced in Deloitte's *GCC Powers of Construction 2017* report.

The pipeline of infrastructure works planned in countries such as Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE is strong, according to Deloitte's report.

Construction accounts for most of the trillion-dollar pipeline, comprising more than \$1tn-worth of projects. The transport sector came in second, with regional projects worth \$447bn planned.

The power and energy industry ranked third, with around \$224bn-worth of projects under development in the GCC.

Commenting on these figures, the report's author, partner and construction leader at Deloitte Middle East, Cynthia Corby, said: "The regional projects pipeline is forecast to be over \$2tn of projects currently in the planning stage [...], indicating there is still a strong need and demand for the core capital expenditure with a focus on transport, housing and social infrastructure."

She continued: "Dubai will continue to be an event-driven market, focussed on the core infrastructure required to make Expo 2020 Dubai a success, whilst there are a number of large-scale mixed-use developments to be delivered in Saudi Arabia. The key to these projects coming to fruition is that the funding for each should be clearly earmarked and the projects should be assessed for their feasibility and whole life cost to ensure these investments can produce the desired return on investment and will be built at a sensible capital cost."

SNC-Lavalin recorded a

50%

hike in its 2017 net income

The contractor spent
\$2.6bn
to acquire Atkins last year

SNC-Lavalin's 2017 income grows by 50%

Canadian contracting giant SNC-Lavalin Group's 2017 net income increased by 50% to \$382m, according to the company's full-year financial results.

The Montreal-based infrastructure business posted a significant increase in net income attributable to shareholders for 2017. President and CEO of SNC-Lavalin Group, Neil Bruce, said the company was "very pleased" with the financial performance, which also saw the firm close its \$2.6bn acquisition of UK-based engineering consultancy Atkins.

"Through the acquisition of Atkins, the largest and most transformative in our history, we continued to deliver on our strategic growth objectives while positioning the company for future opportunities," he continued in a company statement.

SNC-Lavalin's takeover of Atkins gave the firm a stronger presence in the Middle East, as Atkins' regional portfolio included the Riyadh Metro, Dubai Metro, Burj Al Arab, and Doha Metro Red Line South.

Empower paid dividends worth

\$109m

for 2017

The firm posted
\$210m
as net profit for last year

Empower pays \$109m as dividend for 2017

Dubai-based district cooling company Emirates Central Cooling Systems Corporation (Empower) announced it had paid \$109m (AED400m) as dividends to its shareholders for 2017.

The company had previously declared a net profit of \$210m (AED772m) in 2017, an increase of 20% over the year 2016. Empower's total revenues in 2017 amounted to \$534m (AED1.96bn), an increase of 6.1% compared to the last year.

Chief executive officer of Empower, Ahmad Bin Shafar, commented: "We are proud to declare and pay a significant amount of dividends to our shareholders in 2017, which is made possible through various positive factors, including a robust strategy and its effective implementation."

Empower currently operates facilities comprising 1.34 million refrigeration tonnes, providing district cooling services to real estate developments such as Jumeirah Group, Business Bay, Jumeirah Beach Residence, Palm Jumeirah, Discovery Gardens, and Dubai Healthcare City.

BAHRAIN TO LAUNCH VAT BY END OF 2018, MINISTER CONFIRMS

Bahrain is expected to introduce value-added tax (VAT) by the end of 2018, the country's finance minister announced.

"We will be working with the parliament on VAT and aim to have everything set up by the end of 2018," said Sheikh Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa at an investment conference in Manama, according to *Reuters*.

Bahrain, along with Kuwait and Oman, was due to introduce VAT at the same time as Saudi Arabia and the UAE, but delayed the implementation of the new tax until 2019.

Earlier this year, market analyst BMI Research said the introduction of VAT in the kingdom was unlikely to have the same fiscal benefits as in the UAE and Saudi Arabia due to elevated government spending.

"Elevated spending, in a bid to limit social instability, will severely constrain improvements in Bahrain's fiscal position, even as VAT is introduced," the firm reported.

Sheikh Ahmed also stated that Bahrain would introduce further cuts to subsidies on fuel, food, and services.

A total of \$9.3bn (SAR35bn) in revenue is expected to be generated in the first year of VAT implementation in Saudi Arabia, an expert said this January. The introduction of VAT would help to raise tax revenues of the Saudi government to be utilised for infrastructure and developmental works, the project manager of VAT at the General Authority of Zakat and Tax, Hamoud Al-Harbi, told *WAM*.

Hamoud added that VAT would help address challenges and sustain growth in the kingdom in the long-term.

Depa cancels London Stock Exchange listing

Depa Limited, the Dubai-headquartered firm that provided fit-out services for the world's tallest building, Burj Khalifa, announced the cancellation of its listing on the London bourse.

In a statement, Depa said that it had cancelled its global depository receipts (GDRs) traded on the London Stock Exchange (LSE).

The cancellation of the listings and the admission of the GDRs' trading took effect at 8am on 26 February, 2018.

According to a statement by the firm, the delisting was carried out because "the volume of [GDRs] traded on the LSE was negligible and did not, in Depa's view, justify the related expenses of the listing".

The company is also listed on Nasdaq Dubai. Last month, Depa announced that it would change its listing currency on Nasdaq Dubai from US dollars to UAE dirhams. The company said its last day of trading in US dollars would be 6 March, 2018. It will halt trading from 7-8 March, before commencing trading in UAE dirhams on 11 March.

REAL ESTATE

A third of real estate in Dubai is owned by women

Around a third (30%) of real estate in Dubai is owned by women, according to the Dubai Land Department (DLD).

The director general of DLD, HE Sultan Butti Bin Mejren, confirmed in a speech last month that around three in every 10 properties in Dubai are owned by women.

Speaking at the First Arab Land Conference, which ran from 26 to 28 February in Dubai, Mejren pointed to the sweeping changes in urbanisation and property ownership in Dubai in recent decades, and expressed his pleasure at number of female homeowners in the emirate.

Mejren said he was “proud” of the role DLD played in safeguarding the rights of investors, including women, who now own about 30% of Dubai’s properties. He added that 16 real estate development laws and amendments had been created in recent years to protect both real estate investors and developers in Dubai.

By 2020, DLD hopes to launch a self-registration system for property ownership that customers will be able to use from anywhere in the world. The system, which registers around 75,000 real estate transactions per year, was equipped with blockchain technology, providing more security and transparency of real estate data.

However, although property ownership among women in Dubai is high, they continue to be underrepresented in the Middle East’s construction sector. Many women in the regional construction industry have previously called for greater efforts to achieve gender parity in the sector.

In October 2017, human resources director at Al Naboodah Construction Group, Emma Seymour, spoke about the issue at *Construction Week’s* Leaders in Construction UAE Summit. She said there was a growing number of young women who were keen on entering the region’s construction industry.



Three in 10 Dubai properties are owned by a women.

In Quotes

“In November 2017, we experienced our highest sales for the year. We almost tripled sales.”

KARIM ELSHAFIE,
MVL Firestop



“Using established fire engineering principles [...] would improve our fire-protection market.”

JASON HIRD,
Saint-Gobain Gyproc ME



“We have finished structural works on [One Palm] and are now working through the façade and finishes systems.”

PETER STEVENSON,
Omniyat





AluFix hand-set formwork for walls and columns on residential building in Hor Al Anz.



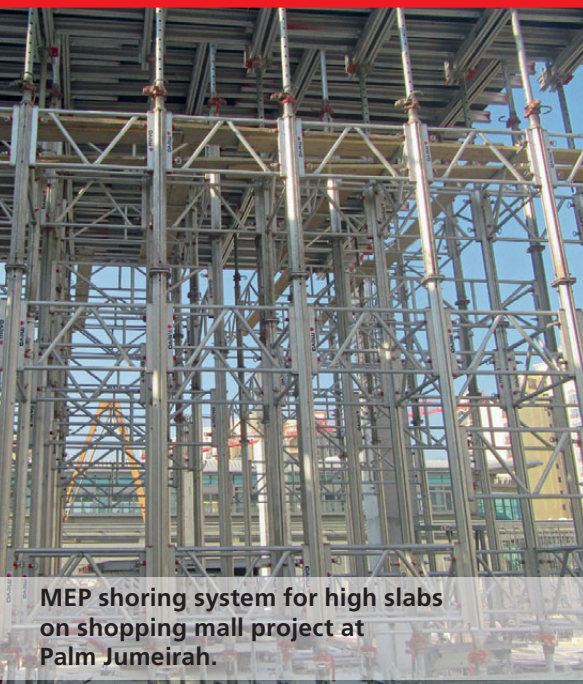
Wall formwork Mammut 350 with support frame STB 300 for mixed-use project in Mankhool area.



Wall formwork Mammut 350 with support frame STB 450 for mixed-use project in Mankhool area.



MevaDec slab formwork on residential multi-storey building in Jumeirah, Village Circle.



MEP shoring system for high slabs on shopping mall project at Palm Jumeirah.

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BUSINESS

MANUFACTURING

EGA to further reduce PFC emissions after record low in 2017

Emirates Global Aluminium (EGA) has signed an agreement with the University of New South Wales for continued research into the reduction of perfluorocarbon emissions, after the company achieved a record low in its own emissions last year.

Perfluorocarbons (PFCs) are a group of greenhouse gases that have thousands of times more global-warming potential than carbon dioxide. Reducing PFC emissions is an important environmental goal of the global aluminium industry.

EGA's emissions of PFCs were 22kg per tonne of aluminium produced in 2017, compared to a global average of 380kg per tonne in 2016, the most recent year for which figures are available from the International Aluminium Institute.

EGA's work to reduce PFC emissions is led by its executive vice president, Dr Ali Al Zarouni, who said: "Reducing PFC emissions in the aluminium industry is a matter of fundamental environmental responsibility. Unfortunately, no single factor provides the solution. Rather, we have achieved our reductions by developing our own smelting and pot control technology, continuously



EGA will carry out research into PFC emissions, in partnership with scientists from the University of New South Wales.

improving our operational processes, and rigorously monitoring the quality of our raw materials."

BUILDING PERMITS

Abu Dhabi hosts workshop on unified permit system

Abu Dhabi City Municipality (ADM) recently hosted an engineering workshop on the emirate's unified building permits electronic system.

ADM said the workshop focussed on the improvements that have been made to Abu Dhabi's Municipal Electronic Permitting System.

The event was attended by contractors, consultants and developers. All of the the participants were reportedly asked to assess the system's performance and identify how it could be improved in the future.

MATERIALS

Conformity certificates for Dubai gypsum board products

Dubai Municipality has announced the launch of a conformity service for gypsum products.

The certification process will involve a factory inspection, during which the quality management systems, raw materials, and production processes put in place by the factories will be evaluated by officials.

In a statement, Dubai Municipality said that the product conformity assessment division of its Dubai Central Laboratory Department would be delivering the service and issuing the conformity mark certificates.

All products would have to be certified according to BS EN 520 and ASTM C1396 standards for a range of different gypsum board products.

EQUIPMENT

Terex completes delivery of two Demag cranes in Kuwait

Kuwait-based Integrated Logistics Company (ILC) announced it had taken the delivery of the first two Demag AC 300-6 all terrain cranes from Terex Cranes.

The new, six-axle Demag AC 300-6 all-terrain crane, with a 300t classification, features an 80m main boom that can perform jobs at heights up to 78m – or a 74m radius – without rigging a jib.

Commenting on the order, Salah Al Huwaidi, chief executive officer of Integrated Logistics Company, said: "We selected the brand new Demag AC 300-6 because it combines long reach with a strong load chart to give us the perfect fit for efficient work at heights, and offers interchangeable components as well." 



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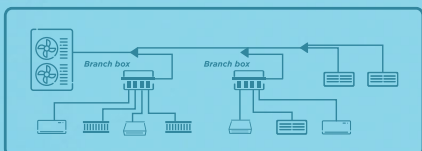
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BIG WINNERS

Ranganatha RP, executive director of general contracting at S&T Interiors and Contracting – the CW Oman Awards 2018's Platinum Sponsor – reveals the secrets behind the firm's Contractor of the Year honours in 2017

S&T Interiors and Contracting was crowned Contractor of the Year at the *Construction Week Oman Awards 2017*. The trophy was one of two secured by the Oman-headquartered contractor at the event's grand finale last year.

One member of *Construction Week's* panel of industry judges praised the company for having consistently delivered high-quality work, both within Oman and on the international stage. The accolade followed a particularly active year for S&T, both in the sub- and main-contracting segments. In addition to supporting a selection of high-profile projects in Oman,

the company completed its London-based development with the Q1 2017 launch of The Lalit, a five-star, Grade II-listed hotel located in the city's South Bank district.

To learn more about the *Construction Week Oman Awards 2018*, log on to www.constructionweekonline.com/cwawardsoman/.

How did being named the Contractor of the Year at the *Construction Week Oman Awards 2017* impact S&T's prospects and performance last year?

The *Construction Week* award has been a great honour. It recognised all S&T's hard work, and has raised the company's





brand profile within the market. Previously, S&T's reputation relied on word-of-mouth. But our market visibility witnessed a manifold rise after the award. In a way, this has helped us to win repeat orders from our esteemed clientele. It has also helped to boost the morale of our employees.

Various strategic facilities in Oman, and large-scale projects such as the renovation of Al Bustan Palace Hotel in Muscat, are among the project wins that showcase our civil; mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP); and fit-out contracting capabilities.

How has the size and type of projects within S&T's portfolio changed since the company won the award?

S&T has transformed from being an interior fit-out company into a total turnkey solution provider, which authenticates our farsightedness in terms of adapting to changing market scenarios.

Anantara Al Jabal Al Akdhar, a five-star hotel that S&T and ALEC worked on in a joint venture, is one project that has already been completed by us, and is now operational.

Two other projects of ours – one, a high-end seafront-facing commercial turnkey project, and the other a five-star hotel in the capital region of Oman – are slated for completion in 2018 and 2019. The projects are respectively pre-certified for LEED Gold and Silver certifications.

This portfolio establishes the extent of the progressive transformation that S&T has undergone.

What is S&T's forecast for the Omani construction market in 2018, and what does the company have planned for this year?

Oman's economy is going through one of the most challenging times it has ever faced, due to global economic factors and the deficit budget of the government. His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said's vision to generate non-oil revenues, and diversify into sectors such as tourism and logistics, will certainly boost S&T's business prospects in the coming years. The future looks very positive.

The present climate in the construction sector is such that it will be a case of survival of the fittest, and S&T is geared up to meet this challenge. We anticipate that our business will continue to grow, and expect to post some of our maturing



“The present climate in the construction sector is such that it will be a case of survival of the fittest, and S&T is geared up to meet this challenge.”

talent in Kenya, and possibly Tanzania, to deliver services there.

What kind of projects is S&T planning to work on this year?

Hospitality, commercial, housing, and infrastructure projects are among the sectors we intend to focus on.

Duqm is an upcoming area where development is currently gaining momentum, and I think that S&T should focus more on that market, particularly in light of a commercial accommodation megaproject for a private client that we handed over recently in the governorate. We have been awarded additional work from the same client, and we intend to continue to grow our Duqm presence in the future.

S&T is also focusing on public-private sector projects, in line with the Tanfeedh initiative of the Omani government.

What are your top tips for the nominees of the Construction Week Oman Awards this year?

Believe in what you do, and do what you believe in. Putting across the facts and ascertaining leadership qualities are the best ways to showcase your projects. **CW**



JOB OF THE WEEK

Project Manager | Drees & Sommer



Dubai, UAE

Project management

Full time



Drees & Sommer is seeking a project manager with a construction client-side background to join its office in Dubai. To be considered for the position, interested candidates must have a bachelor's degree in a construction-related discipline and at least 10 years of technical delivery experience gained in a global construction environment, as well as experience working on development projects in the Middle East, preferably in the UAE.

Candidates should also possess the ability to manage commercial aspects of projects, in addition to general project management skills. Those with commercial and cost management awareness and technical writing, client-facing, and communication skills will be given preference.

The successful candidate will support project leaders in meeting high standards for service delivery, achieving successful outcomes for clients, capturing and sharing knowledge across projects, enhancing the company's culture of innovation, and reinforcing its reputation as a preferred service provider.



Construction Week's 2017 Salary Survey attracted 688 responses from construction professionals, with more than half coming from the UAE

48%

of those that responded to the survey said they were optimistic about getting a pay rise this year

26%

described their salary as below average when viewed within a regional context

52%

said that they intended to change jobs within the next 12 months

APPOINTMENTS

HE Jassim Alseddiqi



has been named the new chairman of Bahrain-headquartered GFH Financial Group.

Alseddiqi, chief executive officer of Abu Dhabi Financial Group (ADFG), takes on the role vacated by HE Sheikh Ahmed Bin Khalifa Al-Khalifa, who has been appointed the board chairman of GFH-Capital.

In his new role, Al-Khalifa will oversee the continued expansion of GFH-Capital's investment activities. [image: ADFG]

David Dudley



has joined Abu Dhabi-based Aldar Properties as its new executive director for investments and partnerships.

Before joining Aldar, Dudley worked with JLL, where he served as director of operations for the Middle East and North Africa region for nine years. During his time with JLL, Dudley was responsible for its regional offices in Abu Dhabi, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt.

Elmutaz Elrabaa



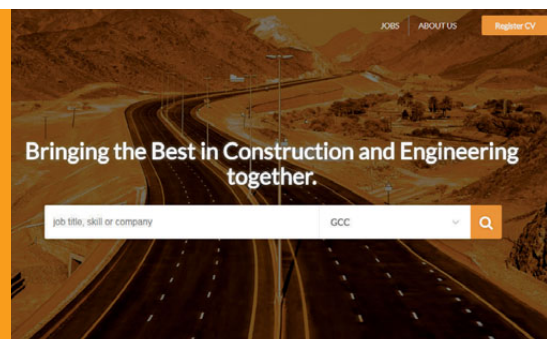
has been appointed by Perkins+Will Dubai as healthcare director for its Middle East operations.

Before joining Perkins+Will, Elrabaa served as director of healthcare at B+H Architects, a Canadian firm based in Toronto, where he was responsible for delivering healthcare projects in Asia, as well as in Ontario, Canada, for seven years.

Elrabaa has a Master of Architecture degree from the University of Waterloo.

ABOUT BUILDINGMENA.COM

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RECRUITER PROFILE

Daniela Hassan, Drees & Sommer

Director of HR, marketing, and finance

How long have you been in your current role and where did you work before?

I joined Drees & Sommer (D&S) as director of human resources (HR), marketing, and finance in February this year. Prior to joining the business, I worked for the European utility company RWE, in London.

What are the key challenges that you face in your current role?

With an annual revenue of almost \$490m (AED1.8bn) and 3,000 employees in 42 locations worldwide, D&S consults public and private clients and investors on all matters related to construction and maintenance.

D&S Middle East is in the fortunate position of experiencing rapid growth, in a highly volatile market. To develop

a successful corporate practice while maintaining the high standards set globally, both internally and externally, in a challenging environment like this, is what I anticipate as my biggest challenge.

That said, being successful at this is the differentiating factor in being a successful enterprise.

What do you love most about your job?

That so many different cultures, personalities, and market characteristics are prevalent. Keeping to the above-mentioned high standards brings daily challenges and adjustments, on both personal and professional levels. In order to meet these challenges, you have to be all in, every moment, which can be quite demanding, but it's definitely the thing I love the most.

How do you see the regional construction job market shaping up this year?

In recent years, the Middle East's construction market has undergone a significant restructuring of its financial priorities to achieve long-term objectives, mostly as a result of the gradual decline in oil prices. A transition period like this brings challenges to businesses' cores, including cash flow, as well as a shift from an employee-driven market to an employer-driven one. Candidates' interpersonal, digital, and commercial skills are becoming more important.

Companies, meanwhile, are starting to place more focus on offering long-term security, career growth opportunities, and a healthy work-life balance in order to become more attractive to top talent. It's an interesting time.



Companies are now focusing on career growth possibilities and work-life balance to become more attractive to top talent."

DANIELA HASSAN, DREES & SOMMER

TIPS FOR JOB-SEEKERS

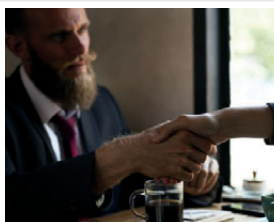
Building rapport: the need for boundaries

The ability to build rapport is an important skill to display during an interview. However, be careful not to get carried away in your attempt to establish a connection with the interviewer(s). Personal details, particularly eccentricities that are not relevant to the position you are applying for, are best not shared during the job application process.

Remember that the Middle East is home to

many expats. In the GCC alone, there are more than 200 nationalities of various faiths, views, and traditions, so you have a lot of positive things to learn and relations to build upon. Thus, try to cultivate an image of being someone who will get along well with others in a multicultural team.

Also, bear in mind that having a strong character is not the same as being stubborn or inflexible. Of course you would want



to demonstrate that you have the know-how and the experience required to do the job, but it would not help your application if you exhibit bullheadedness or an inability to consider alternative ideas, approaches, and opinions. Show that you are willing to learn and adapt.

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THE NUMBER OF MINUTES IT
WILL TAKE TO TRAVEL FROM
DUBAI TO ABU DHABI USING
HYPERLOOP TECHNOLOGY



Details about a hyperloop technology transport project's feasibility, as well as its interior designs, were revealed by Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) and Virgin Hyperloop One. Pictured here is a prototype transport pod unveiled in the emirate last week. To read more about this story, log on to constructionweekonline.com.

NEHA BHATIA

 WHATS YOUR VIEW? COMMENT ONLINE @CWMIDDLEEAST


Steady in Saudi

Despite some understandable trepidation caused by market externalities, Saudi Arabia is not only developing landmark projects, but also improving operational efficiencies

The Middle East's construction industry may not be entirely tech-savvy or youth-oriented just yet, but it is extremely resilient. Time and again, regional construction leaders from both the public and private sectors have shown how societies can be built and enhanced, even in the face of market challenges, and this is certainly the case in Saudi Arabia.

The kingdom's construction sector has grown remarkably – if somewhat quietly – in the past few years. Just a few years ago, in 2015, the country's Ministry of Finance, spurred by budgetary setbacks caused by fluctuating oil prices, called a halt on projects, appointments, and promotions planned for Q4. According to an *Arabian Business* report in October 2015, two sources said the ministry told government departments to not contract any new projects and to freeze appointments and promotions in the fourth quarter.

Some months later, property consultancy Knight Frank said that institutional funds were hard to attract in Saudi Arabia's "opaque" real estate market. At the time, associate partner for commercial valuations at Knight Frank, Alexandros Arvalis, said: "The market here is [...] opaque; information is not openly shared and institutional investment is relatively rare due to land ownership structures and lack of planning controls."

Fast-forward to 2018, and the kingdom's investment landscape appears vastly different in terms of not only its construction products, but processes as well. For one, the kingdom's marquee projects, such as Riyadh Metro and Jeddah Tower, are progressing as planned,


despite the oil-related economic challenges that the country has faced since 2015.

UAE-based sub-contractor, Tecon Specialized Engineering Solutions, won a \$6.7m (SAR25m) contract to provide emergency lighting services for three Riyadh Metro lines, the firm's chief executive officer (CEO), Naveed Ansari, told *Construction Week* in February (issue #685). In the same month, Mounib Hammoud, CEO of Jeddah Economic Company, told *Reuters* that construction of the 1km-tall Jeddah Tower had reached the 63rd floor.

However – and perhaps, more importantly – the kingdom is in the midst of an operational overhaul that will undoubtedly reel in judicious investors. According to Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince, Mohammed Bin Salman, the anti-corruption drive launched in late 2017 is the "shock therapy" his country needed to root out economic malpractices.

Last week he told the *Washington Post*: "You have a body that has [...] the cancer of corruption. You need to have chemo, [...] or the cancer will eat the body."

This new perspective appears to be influencing the kingdom's construction sector as well, as Haroon Niazi, partner at HKA Middle East, explains in this week's issue (p34). In his article, Niazi describes how reforms proposed to the Government Tenders and Procurement Law will make procurement more competitive in the kingdom.

There is little doubt that Saudi Arabia's construction sector is changing with a view to the future. Regional construction leaders would do well to keep an eye on the kingdom as it charts its new journey. 



"There is little doubt that Saudi Arabia's construction sector is changing with a view to the future. Regional construction leaders would do well to keep an eye on the kingdom as it charts its new journey."



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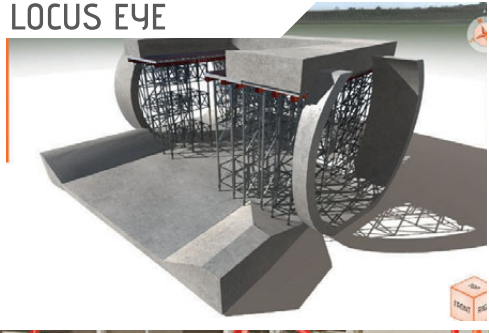
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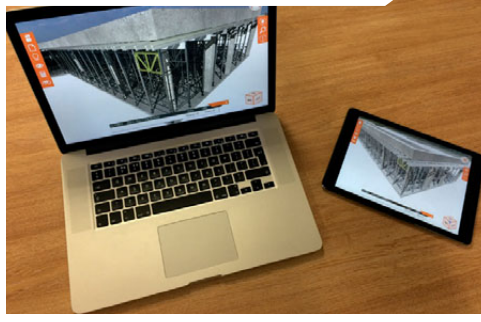
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A new dawn

The development of affordable housing is a priority in Dubai, and industry experts say realistic expectations about unit size are necessary if low-cost homes are to become a reality

WORDS BY JUMANA ABDEL-RAZZAQ



ANALYSIS

Now that luxury homes have firmly established their roots in the region, affordable housing are a hot topic in the Gulf's real estate and construction sectors. The last few years have seen increased demand for cost-effective homes in key regional property markets such as the UAE's.

It would be fair to assume that regional demand for affordable homes echoes the concerns of a segment that feels left behind as developers pursue extravagant projects offering lush amenities. However, experts say that defining – and demystifying – the parameters of 'affordable' homes is necessary in order to satiate the appetite for low-cost units, particularly in Dubai.

Chief executive officer of UAE-based Aurora Real Estate Development, Cian Farah, explains why this distinction is necessary. "When we talk about affordable housing, we have to distinguish between social housing – which requires government subsidies – and housing that is affordable for a specific income bracket," he tells *Construction Week*.

"When discussing affordable housing in the UAE, we typically refer to the latter. However, if we look at the UAE housing market, we find that unfortunately, the majority of the houses available to rent do not fall into the 'affordable' bracket."

Farah explains that one way to define affordability is through a globally accepted standard that states only 30% of one's income should be spent on housing and utilities. Sole earners seeking independent units typically struggle the most to find affordable units, but demand from this



Cluttons says Dubai's mandates to promote affordable homes are a 'watershed moment' for the emirate.

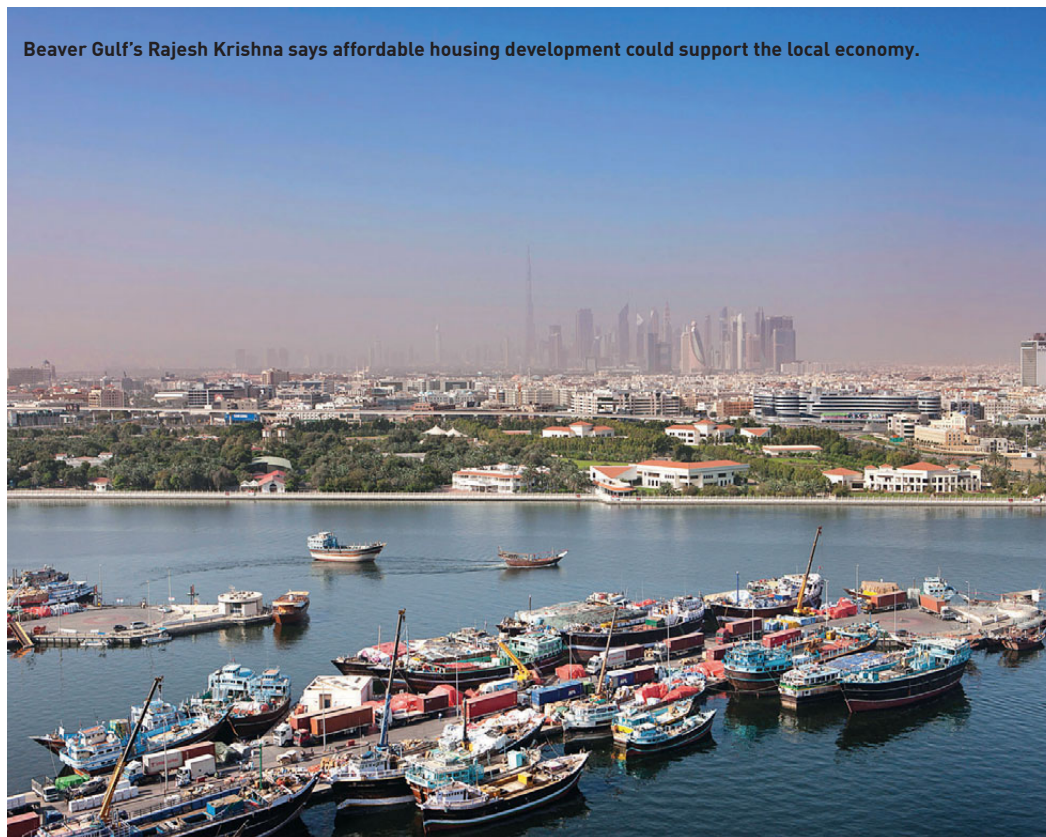
"WHAT IS BEING BUILT RIGHT NOW IS NOT AFFORDABLE. [CHEAPLY PRICED] LAND TO DEVELOP AFFORDABLE HOUSING IS SCARCE. UNIT SIZES MUST BE BROUGHT DOWN TO LESS THAN 750SQFT."

RAJESH KRISHNA, BEAVER GULF GROUP





Beaver Gulf's Rajesh Krishna says affordable housing development could support the local economy.



segment is likely to increase as more jobs are created in both Dubai and the UAE.

“If you analyse the monthly wage groups as divided by the Dubai Statistics Centre, a single person earning less than \$2,700 (AED10,000) will spend roughly 33% on the least-expensive studios in the city. If you start looking at joint earners in the same earning bracket, then the amount spent on rent drops to between 20% and 30%.”

Language appears to be a decisive factor in the affordable housing sector, and industry experts agree with Farah's view that the term ‘affordable’ is sometimes used for developments that may not provide adequate low-cost residential options.

ANALYSIS

The major factors causing this trend, according to CEO of UAE-based contractor Beaver Gulf Group, Rajesh Krishna, are the high price and low availability of land. “What is being built right now is not actually affordable. [Cheaply priced] land to develop affordable housing is scarce,” he tells *Construction Week*.

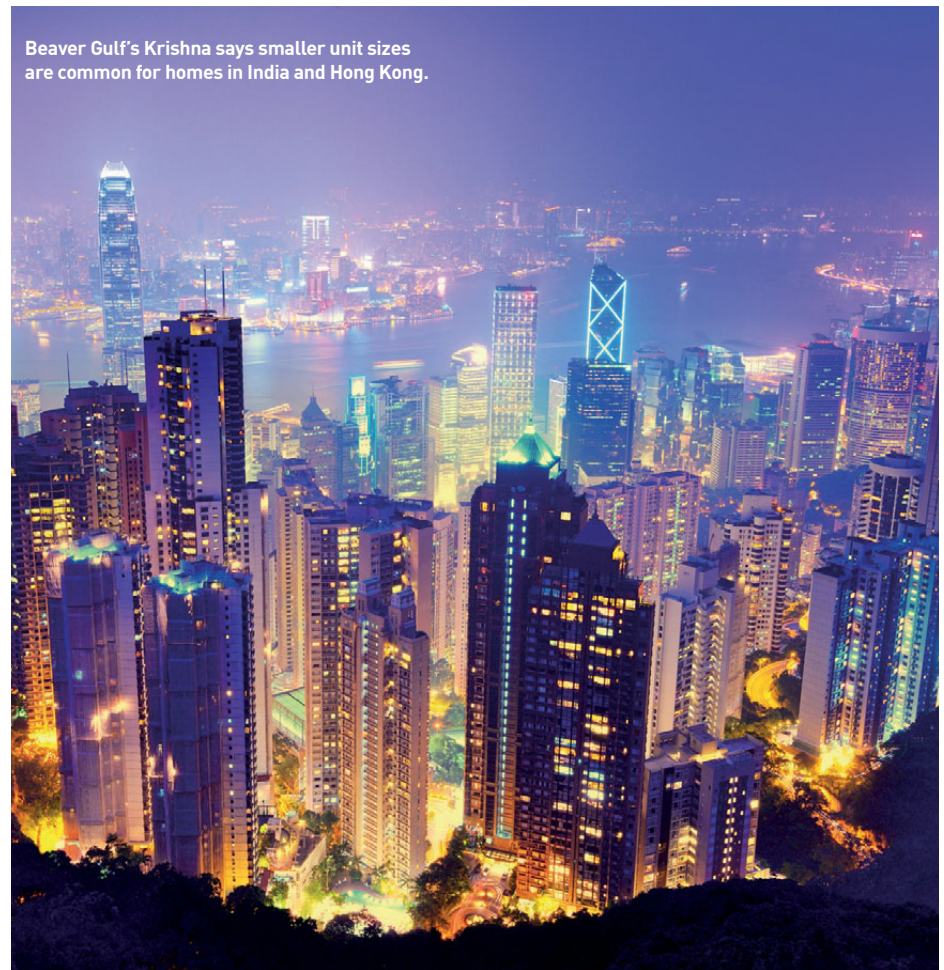
One way to overcome this hurdle, and develop low-cost properties, is to downsize homes, Krishna says, adding that developers must be realistic about apartment sizes. According to the contractor, unit sizes must be brought down to less than 750sqft (69.7m²), and “ideally to under 400sqft (37.2m²)”, to develop affordable homes.

While these numbers may surprise some of Dubai’s real estate professionals and investors, Krishna says that these sizes are common around the world, especially in places such as India and Hong Kong. He adds that the only realistic way for tenants to pay less is for developers to build smaller.

He explains: “Essentially, these units would be built for the middle to lower-middle class, or small families, who often have very hectic lives, numerous work obligations, and spend very little time at home.”

According to Aurora’s Farah, his company is ahead of the curve, and is developing a residential project in Dubai’s Jebel Ali neighbourhood that will tick these boxes. The project’s units start at around 28m², and are aimed at the temporary tenant segment.

While downsizing is an effective – and perhaps even easy – way to build



Beaver Gulf’s Krishna says smaller unit sizes are common for homes in India and Hong Kong.

affordable units, the road ahead for their developers is not without challenges, says head of research at JLL Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Craig Plumb. He tells *Construction Week* that the list of challenges surrounding affordable housing development includes the “prohibitively high” land costs, and “restrictive planning policies that impose high costs on

developers with respect to parking and other requirements”. Plumb also points out the need for more public transport facilities, as “many lower-income families do not have access to private cars”.

Despite a decline in sale prices and rental values in Dubai in the past year, developers can still achieve high financial

“IF WE LOOK AT THE UAE HOUSING MARKET, WE FIND THAT, UNFORTUNATELY, THE MAJORITY OF THE HOUSES AVAILABLE TO RENT DO NOT FALL IN THE AFFORDABLE BRACKET.”

CIAN FARAH, AURORA REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT





“[IF HIGH LUXURY YIELDS CONTINUE], THE MARKET WILL CONTINUE TO DELIVER UNITS THAT ARE NOT AFFORDABLE.”

CRAIG PLUMB, JLL MENA

JLL MENA's Plumb says high luxury residential yields may slow affordable home development.



return from developing units that would not count as affordable homes, Plumb explains: “[As long as] this is the case, the market will continue to deliver units that are not affordable to many families, [especially if] the government does not intervene to stimulate the delivery of lower-cost units,” he adds.

Government regulations may well be on their way. Aurora's Farah says Dubai Government is aware of the difficulties faced by players in the affordable housing sector, and is expected to actively introduce changes this year.

“In March 2017, a low-income housing policy was approved in Dubai, with the expectation that it would require developers to dedicate a certain percentage of their developments to low-cost homes,” Farah says.

“Discussions are also underway to incentivise building low-income housing in central locations, a concept similar to the density bonuses provided in California in the US.”

Plumb says Dubai's low-income housing policy will address the needs of both low-income Emiratis and non-Emiratis in the city. While additional details about the legislation are yet to be provided, Plumb believes that headway

will be made on the policy in the city this year.

Moreover, in December 2017, Dubai's plans to legislate the provision of affordable homes in the city's core locations were revealed in the *Dubai Property Market Outlook Winter 2017* report by international real estate consultancy Cluttons.

The report said the move would help Dubai avoid some of the mistakes made by other cities around the world, especially with regards to curtailing the emergence of poorly connected low-income neighbourhoods that tend to be segregated from the rest of a city. Commenting on the policies, head of research at Cluttons, Faisal Durrani, said: “While exact details around the legislation are yet to be confirmed, we expect to see a balanced approach between the presumed establishment of quotas around the provision of affordable housing that is both built-to-rent and built-to-sell, so that both aspiring buyers and tenants, priced out of city centre locations, can benefit.”

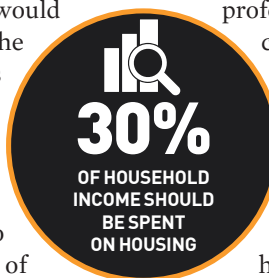
He continued: “We believe that Dubai Government's initiative to focus

on affordable housing is extremely positive and is a watershed moment for the emirate.”

Beaver Gulf's Krishna and his contemporaries view the implementation of these policies as beneficial, if not crucial, for economic prosperity and market growth in the emirate. For instance, many of Dubai's professionals travel between the city – a hub for commercial activity – and Sharjah, its neighbouring emirate that offers economical residential options. Krishna says that stronger and more affordability-oriented housing policies would help to cut such costs and expenses.

“As contractors, we have also seen a decline in contract awards within the luxury property sector of late,” Krishna continues, alluding to a concurrent waning of the appetite for high-cost units in the market.

It appears that policy developments are driving market reforms and natural price corrections. For investors in affordable units, the good news is that this trend may well continue as new legislation is unveiled in Dubai. 



FACE TO FACE



READY FOR TOMORROW

MEP companies need to adapt to new technological developments, says CEO of AE Arma-Elektropanç, *Burak Ç Kizilhan*

WORDS BY RAJIV RAVINDRAN PILLAI

When Burak Ç Kizilhan took over as chief executive officer of the Turkey-based mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP) company AE Arma-Elektropanç in June 2017, he had developed a wealth of experience studying and working in the UK.

After his studies, Kizilhan worked for Schneider Electric UK in London for two years as a project manager. He then returned to his family business at AE Arma-Elektropanç. He says: “I became the business development manager responsible for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region’s operations of the company [based in Dubai]. I returned to AE Arma-Elektropanç’s headquarters located in Istanbul, Turkey, in January 2014, and became the deputy general manager and a board member of the company.”

More recently, AE Arma-Elektropanç announced that it had

been awarded a \$159m (AED580m) contract for the Dubai Hills Mall Project by ALEC. The company also secured a contract for MEP works on Dubai’s \$52m (AED191m) WOW Hotel and Hotel Apartments.

Currently, 80% of AE Arma-Elektropanç’s operations are outside of Turkey, and the firm has activities in the markets of Europe, MENA, Russia, and Commonwealth of Independent States. However, Kizilhan says that the UAE is one of the most important countries for the company’s international operations.

“Since 2002, the UAE has played an important role for our growth strategy. We always make long-term plans for UAE operations and our diversified customers, including contractors and employees from Europe, America, Asia and the Middle East, which enable us to provide the best quality services in international standards.



WOW Hotel and Hotel Apartments, Dubai.



Burak Ç Kizilhan,
AE Arma-Elektropanç.

“THERE ARE MANY COMPANIES THAT PROVIDE CHEAP PRICES, WHICH IS AFFECTING THE INDUSTRY.”

“We always provide the best services by following new technology and innovation –that distinguishes us from other companies. We also provide customer satisfaction and our commitment to finish on time makes us a more consistent and demanding company in the marketplace,” Kizilhan says.

AE Arma has completed projects in the UAE such as Legoland Dubai (Package 2 and 3), Dubai Parks & Resorts’ Riverland Dubai the five-star Bab Al Qasr Hotel & Residence in Abu Dhabi, and the University of Dubai.

The company also has several ongoing projects. Besides WOW Hotel & Hotel Apartments and Dubai Hills Mall, seven of the 18 ongoing projects are located within the boundaries of the UAE. These are Bluewaters Wharf Retail, Al Seef (Phase 4), Marina City – Plot B, Wasl District and Al Maktoum International Airport – Passenger Terminal Building Extension. The Bluewaters Wharf Retail project is in progress on a newly constructed man-made island off the Jumeirah Beach Residence coastline in Dubai. Al Seef (Phase 4), meanwhile, will be part a shopping and dining destination for tourists located on the banks of Dubai Creek.



Dubai Hills Mall is one of AE Arma’s projects in the UAE.

AE Arma’s scope of work covers electrical and mechanical engineering solutions of all sizes, such as energy management and distribution, measuring and control technologies, and integrated security and building management, as well as air, climate and energy solutions. The company applies the latest technologies, particularly in energy saving and green buildings.

THE MARKET

Kizilhan says the global economy and international trade are growing. “International investors are focussing on making investments in developing countries,” he adds.

“Turkey and the UAE [...] will attract more investors in 2018. The rise in oil prices will have a positive impact on Middle East investments, as well as on investments in Russia. The 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia and Expo 2020 Dubai are important investment and contracting opportunities.”

He goes on to say that the African market is also on the rise. “Although Africa lacks financing and is facing some security problems, its rich underground resources and its need for basic investments such as energy and water

supply, will attract many investors and contractors in 2018.

“The major threat to real estate and construction industry in the Middle East region is the possible negative effects of the global political developments and their impact on regional political conflicts. Despite these risks, we believe 2018 will be better than 2017.”

MEP AND TECHNOLOGY

According to Kizilhan, the future of the MEP sector will be dictated by developments in engineering and technology. He explains: “The the new industrial revolution 4.0 is increasing the importance and the shares of electromechanical services in the investments. Smart cities, smart homes, energy-efficient buildings, and the Internet of Things are just a few examples of where MEP services are being used widely.

“It is hard to follow the speed of development of technology,” he adds. “The materials and equipment, the design methods, engineering solutions, and the entire system are changing in accordance with the technological developments. Companies have to adapt themselves to these new technological changes very quickly. That requires additional and continuous investment.”



AE Arma's portfolio includes the Bab Al Qasr Hotel and Residence project.



He adds that a main challenge facing the sector is the current level of competition. "Although MEP services require high-tech engineering and technology, there are many companies that provide cheap prices," he explains.

"Clients should be aware of the value added by experienced engineering companies and should have different evaluation criteria when selecting MEP companies," he adds.

Technological investments such as data centres, hospitals, high-security buildings such as airports, underground transportation systems, and energy and industrial investments are all key drivers for the MEP sector, Kizilhan says.

"Today, [vast amounts of] data are being produced and [...] need to be stored securely," he says.

"Moreover, projects that require high-tech and secure [solutions], such as airports, are another important trend for the MEP sector. There are many countries that are investing in tourism facilities and airport projects are a must for the development of tourism. In the next few years, the Industry 4.0 revolution will increase demand for good MEP companies that have adapted to new technologies," he adds.

"There will also be a need to renewing the infrastructure of cities, [in order for them] to be compatible with the new technologies. Ongoing real estate investments that include high-rise offices, residences, malls, logistics and tourism facilities, as well as education facilities, are the secondary drivers of the industry.

Kizilhan points out that "the more technology develops, the more the MEP sector will grow", adding that this will bring with it new security problems.

"The MEP sector should find solutions to provide more secure technologies for the end users," he says.

"Energy efficiency is also an important driver for new and existing buildings and investments. The projects that produce their own energy from renewable

resources by using photovoltaic panels, wind turbines, and other clean energy sources will also shape the future of the industry," he predicts.

STRATEGISING

To stay ahead of the game, AE Arma-Elektropanç has set long-term goals. Kizilhan says. "Our operations are integrate with enterprise resource planning systems, and our top management have more than 40 years of regional and international experience.

By following trends and using technologies such as building information modelling, the company strives to provide economic solutions to its customers. "We always add value to the projects we carry out by providing value engineering," says Kizilhan. "We follow international quality standards, and safety is our first concern in all our projects."

He continues: "We manage our projects by using international project management principles. When expanding into new markets, we aim to become the MEP contractor on important projects by [...] establishing partnerships with global players in the sector and carrying out sustainability work with risk-and cost-control.

"Our board of directors and senior management are constantly monitoring activities," he adds. "During the frequent management meetings, the performance of the company is kept under control and new targets and strategies are developed."

AE Arma-Elektropanç has a flexible decision-making system, and the values and principles of the company are always prioritised by management, Kizilhan says.

"We always build good relationships and trust with our clients. The quality of our work, and customer satisfaction and feedback, are our references for future jobs," he points out, adding: "We have a dynamic risk-management system, and we have diversified our operations in different regions. This mitigates the risks and allow us to protect our company from regional negative effects."

Kizilhan concludes by saying that the company's primary objective is to leverage the experience it has gained over the course of many years to render client-oriented services, continuously increasing value as it delivers MEP works for high-quality projects. **EW**

Burak Ç Kizilhan, CEO and board member

Number of years in role: 5

Number of years with the company: 10

Total number of years working in the

Middle East market: 10

Updates to Saudi's GTPL

Haroon Niazi, partner in the Middle East at construction, manufacturing and technology consultancy **HKA**, explains how proposed changes to Saudi Arabia's Government Tenders and Procurement Law will impact procurement in the kingdom

Saudi Arabia's government plans to amend the Government Tenders and Procurement Law (GTPL), which was issued by royal decree over 10 years ago.

Last year, the Ministry of Finance issued its first draft of changes to the GTPL, and invited comments from interested parties and the public.

The purpose of the changes is to improve the government's procurement process. Taking into consideration the underlying principles of Vision 2030, the proposed changes introduce more rigor to the procurement process. The aim is to ensure a robust process is in place throughout the procurement life cycle that is both transparent and sufficient to meet the objectives of the procuring entity.

PUBLIC PROCUREMENT UNIT

Firstly, under the proposed changes to the GTPL, a strategic procurement unit will be created. The powers of this unit remain unclear, but the current drafting suggests that they will be wide-ranging. It appears that the unit will work closely with the various government entities seeking to tender new projects, and help these entities identify their requirements.

It is clear that one of the underlying aims of the unit will be to prevent unnecessary – or perhaps, projects of lesser public importance – from going out to tender. This is in line with the strategic spending envisaged in the current budget and Vision 2030. For certain projects, the unit will actually be responsible for the public tender,

and will take a leading role in evaluating tenders, as well as supporting government entities during the negotiation process.

The unit will aim to unify the approaches taken by different government entities. In this regard, the unit will also take responsibility for ensuring the technical documents comprising the tender are sufficient for the project.

The strategic objectives that have been set for this unit are admirable, as one of the primary challenges with projects tendered in the kingdom has often been with respect to supporting technical documents. Over the years, I have come across a number technical documents for projects that would have benefitted from further development. For example, the project may have been tendered with an incomplete design, there might have been inadequate ground surveys and reports, or the contract conditions may not have been properly developed and coordinated or were ambiguous.

Issues of this type usually lead to myriad problems during the execution phase. It is presumed that the new unit will assist in resolving such problems.

Clearly, the unit will have a challenging role, and it will be interesting to witness the development of the relationship between the unit and various government entities.

CONTRACTOR SELECTION

The draft law confirms that the Bid Examination Committee has the power to correct bids and estimate prices. The

A strategic change:

The proposed updates to GTPL will support the goals of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 programme.



rules for this are to be set out in the Implementing Regulations document, which will accompany the new law. As yet, the details of the Implementing Regulations have not been issued, so it is not possible to determine how some of the provisions will actually take effect.

GTPL has always allowed for the procuring entity to evaluate bids without necessarily appointing the lowest bidder. However, generally speaking, experience shows that the procuring entity has, more often than not, selected the lowest bidder.

HKA has witnessed contractors being appointed when their bids were as much as 40% lower than the next bidding contractor. This is not necessarily the right decision



Haroon Niazi, HKA.

for the project, and some projects have failed for this very issue.

It appears that under the proposed changes, the procuring entity and the unit will increase the level of scrutiny in comparison to current practice.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Article 95 of the new law introduces arbitration as a valid dispute resolution forum for government disputes. This is a significant and welcome change for the kingdom, where previously, a dispute in relation to a government project could only be resolved through litigation in the Board of Grievances.

With fairly new arbitration laws in place, it is envisaged that parties will

look to arbitration as a viable option to resolve disputes.

The new law will apply to all entities in which the state owns 51% of the contracting entity. This is an important change, and is likely to have a significant impact.

Previously, GTPL was not applicable to projects procured by the likes of Saudi Aramco, SABIC, and the Public Investment Fund. However, with the change now in place, it is likely that the law will apply to this type of company, in addition to a number of companies being created as part of the country's National Transformation Program.

A significant change that is proposed includes increasing the delay penalty from the current maximum amount of 10–20% of

the contract sum. This change will introduce further risk for the private sector bidder.


For new contracts, it is likely to lead to an increase in tender pricing, as contractors attempt to mitigate delay risk by pricing the penalty as part of their tender. It is not clear how the change will affect contracts currently in place with the 10% penalty.

FURTHER IMPACT

From an administrative perspective, there will be a greater onus on contractors to ensure they have robust record-keeping procedures in place, to ensure they are able to substantiate any entitlement they may have to an extension of time.

The law does not contain provisions in relation to public-private partnership (PPP) provisions. A number of projects are currently being evaluated for procurement on this basis, and it is envisaged that laws relating to PPP projects will be released later this year.

Overall, I would say that there are some welcome changes proposed as part of the new law. However, a number of provisions that have always caused challenges – such as the 10% additional work limitation – remain unchanged. This limitation will certainly have a significant impact on some of the complex oil and gas projects procured in the kingdom.

Without seeing the detail within the Implementing Regulations, the real impact of the proposed changes remains unclear. It is important, however, that those affected by the law promptly participate in the consultation process. 

Breaking the mould

To boost their performance in a highly competitive market, formwork companies operating in the GCC region are changing the way they do business by adopting a more sustainable and consultative approach

In Deloitte's *GCC Powers of Construction 2017* report, Cynthia Corby described the region as having a "solid" projects pipeline with more than \$2tn worth of developments in the planning stage, adding that construction is the largest sector, with a project pipeline valued at more than \$1tn.

Corby, who is audit partner and infrastructure and capital projects leader at Deloitte Middle East, stated: "Whilst business conditions are tougher today and project activity has been slowing down since 2015, the construction industry in the [...] region will sustain its workflow going forward. This will be driven by economic and demographic needs, initiatives associated with the Saudi Vision 2030, Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030, [and] Dubai Plan 2021 [...], as well as tourism-related projects and the commitment from governments towards infrastructure investment."

She went on to point out that in the Gulf, Dubai – driven by efforts towards building a tourism industry and delivering Expo 2020 – continues to be regarded by contractors as a "bright spot", owing to having more projects either under development or in the pipeline than other markets.

Although being seen as the "bright spot" in the regional construction industry reflects well on the city, its appeal as a market is said

to be posing as a challenge to companies in the formwork sector.

At an industry roundtable hosted by *Construction Week* in Q4 2017, Chris Jardine, managing director for the UAE at RMD Kwikform Middle East, said: "Contractors in the UAE seem to be picking up work with small profit margins, and I think that's compounded by other regional markets – such as Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Kuwait – being down. This situation has created excess capacity in the formwork supply chain.

"I read somewhere that the Dubai property market has been a 'shining light' in the region, but I think it's been more of a beacon, attracting regional suppliers into the market."

Steven Magowan Robinson, business development manager for the Middle East region at MFE Formwork Technology, expressed his agreement with Jardine at the event, explaining: "There are now so many competitors in the market, even in our niche section [of residential developments].

"When we're pricing projects, we're up against five or six aluminium formwork companies, which [wasn't the case] in the past. But there's really only Dubai in the UAE that is [pushing ahead with high volumes of] building work. The market is tight for us



all. The days of big margins are long gone, and will probably never return."

To stay competitive in what is fast becoming a saturated formwork market, MFE is "now focussing on the reusability of [its] products".

"Contractors are trying to cut their overheads so that they can price to win projects," said Robinson. "As such, we're trying to help them to reduce their outgoings so that they can [succeed] and, in turn, give us work. This means working in a more consultative capacity than we have in the past. The sales focus has changed from quality and speed to reusability and long-term returns on investment. That seems to be where [market requirements] have migrated over the last couple of years."

Echoing Corby's assessment of the different Gulf markets, Joe Farina, general manager of Meva-KHK Formwork systems,



Demand for formwork systems and services was "positive and strong" in 2017, according to Farina.



Joe Farina, Meva KHK.

“The GCC [...] market is steadily moving towards more sophisticated formwork systems.”

These challenges notwithstanding, the region offers growth opportunities, especially to companies that can adapt to changing market demands, says Farina.

“The GCC construction market is steadily moving towards more sophisticated formwork systems that not only offer both time and genuine labour-saving benefits, but also comply with the environmental requirements demanded by government bodies, clients, and contractors alike,” he says. “If compliance to these requirements can be achieved, then real opportunity can be realised in terms of generating increased business levels.”

It is within this context that Meva-KHK is developing its growth strategies, which includes the construction of new offices and yard facilities, reveals Farina, concluding: “The new facility will be customised to act as a central hub, to service and support the needs of its branches, logistics centres, and team members throughout the GCC region, providing Meva-KHK clients with consistent support, service, and solutions.” 

tells *Construction Week*: “The UAE remains the busiest market in terms of gross domestic product. However, each country within the GCC has its own medium- to long-term economic strategy, such as UAE Vision 2021 and 2030, and Saudi Arabia 2030.

“The common goal in all these countries’ strategies is diversification, [which will] in turn create opportunities for the construction industry, with growth of leisure and tourism being a good example.”

Also acknowledging the significant impact of Expo 2020 Dubai on the industry, Farina notes that the upcoming mega event is creating “a lot of focus on deadlines and completion dates across the construction and infrastructure landscape”.

Meva-KHK, according to Farina, witnessed “positive and strong” demand for formwork systems and services in 2017, specifically in the market sectors it operates in. But, like

his peers, he recognises that the GCC market is not without its share of challenges.

Indeed, he identifies three issues that he thinks are affecting formwork companies doing business in the GCC: political instability, disagreements over payment terms, and the teething troubles of a new tax system.

“Political stability is important to enable businesses to operate effectively and to plan long term,” says Farina, adding that when it comes to the second issue, industry stakeholders need to work better at making payments “against contract terms and conditions in order to sustain supply of products and services to the client”.

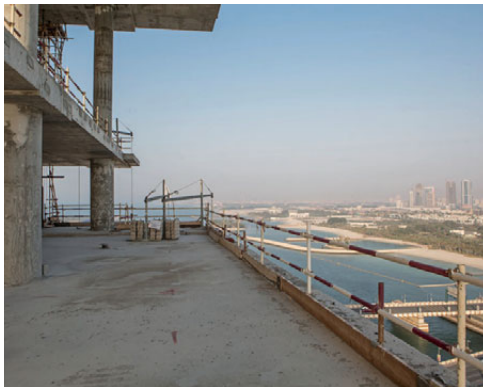
Elaborating on his point about value-added tax, Farina explains that companies currently have to contend with initial set-up costs, in addition to the ongoing administration requirements of the new tax system.

PROJECT UPDATE



ON SITE CW provides a collection of its most recent site and plant visits to keep you up-to-date with project progress

WANT TO UPDATE YOUR PROJECT'S PROGRESS, OR HAVE IT INCLUDED HERE? Email the editor: neha.bhatia@itp.com



ONE PALM

Location
Dubai, UAE

Visited
February 2018

Dubai-based developer, Omniyat, is building the One Palm residential project on Palm Jumeirah. Ground was broken for the 100m-tall tower in 2016, and the 84,541m² development will be the tallest residential structure on the man-made island. The project, for which Multiplex is the main contractor, topped out in September 2017 and, at the time of CW's site visit, 60% completion had been recorded. Designed by New York architect Soma, the building's exterior is a complex scheme of varyingly stacked apartments, resembling a Jenga puzzle. Project completion is due in Q4 2018.



TOPAZ RESIDENCE 2

Location
Dubai, UAE

Visited
February 2018

Gulf General Investment Company (GGICO) is developing Topaz Residences Towers. The Dubai Silicon Oasis project spans a total built-up area of 64,839m², and comprises 448 units within three buildings. One of the towers that was under construction at the time of the site visit was Topaz Residence 2, a G+8+R building that includes 200 one-bedroom apartments, with unit sizes ranging from 93m² to 111m². At that time, the project was more than 55% complete. The high-rise development is being built by Reem Capital Contracting and was designed by Incorporated Consultants.



NOVOTEL SHARJAH EXPO

Location
Sharjah, UAE

Visited
January 2018

The Novotel Sharjah Expo hotel is being developed by an entity called Sharjah Expo Hotel LLC, and Klampfer Middle East (KME) is involved in the project through a design-and-build contract. The development vehicle is owned by Basma Group, which awarded KME the hotel's contract, worth almost \$34.6m (AED127m), in 2016. The property's floor plan features 200 units in three categories – standard rooms, club floor rooms, and executive suites – as well as a business centre, food and beverage outlets, and two meeting halls, one of which spans approximately 200m².

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MOHAMMED BIN RASHID LIBRARY

Location
Dubai, UAE

Visited
December 2017

The \$272.3m (AED1bn) Mohammed Bin Rashid Library project was unveiled in February 2016 by HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, in support of President HH Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan's declaration of 2016 as the Year of Reading. Construction of the library commenced in October 2016, with ASGC winning the main contract, valued at \$245m (AED900m). The project's sub-contractors include Al Shafar Steel Engineering, Emirates Beton, and Al Shafar United.



ICD BROOKFIELD PLACE

Location
Dubai, UAE

Visited
November 2017

The \$408.4m (AED1.5bn) ICD Brookfield Place's (ICDBP) project site is currently home to the world's largest luffing jib tower crane, the Favalle Favco M2480D. A partnership between Investment Corporation of Dubai (ICD) and Brookfield Property Partners is leading the project's development. Designed by Foster + Partners, ICDBP features 9ha of Grade-A commercial space. The 55-storey building offers column-free units, with floorplates ranging from 1,579m² to 2,787m². Multiplex and Ssangyong are working in a joint venture as the project's main contractors.



GLITZ

Location
Dubai, UAE

Visited
November 2017

Located in Dubai Studio City, Danube's Glitz residences have a combined construction value of \$89.5m (AED328.8m), with the main contracts awarded to Naresco Contracting. EDMAC Engineering was brought in as consultant for all three projects. The main contracts for Glitz Residence 1 and 2 were awarded in July 2015, and the contract for Glitz Residence 3 was awarded in February 2016. Naresco expected to have completed the delivery of all three projects by the end of 2017, since Glitz 1 and 2 were already complete when *CW* visited the site in November.



ALOFT DUBAI CITY CENTRE

Location
Dubai, UAE

Visited
October 2017

Spanning an area of 28,800m², Aloft Dubai City Centre Deira is being built by Majid Al Futtaim. Once complete, this four-star hotel will feature 304 guest rooms and 29 suites, and will be directly connected to Majid Al Futtaim's flagship City Centre Deira mall. At the time of *Construction Week's* site visit, work was progressing on schedule for a Q1 2018 completion and opening. Wall cladding work was underway and was due to be followed by fit-out and finishing works. Mechanical, electrical, and plumbing works were also ongoing at that time.

PROJECTS



THE WAVES

Location
Dubai, UAE

Visited
October 2017

Lootah Real Estate Development is developing The Waves, a mid-rise residential project in Dubai's Al Barsha locality. The 1.6ha project is being built in Al Barsha South's Jumeirah Village Circle neighbourhood, and features two four-storey apartment buildings. Ground was broken on the project in September 2016, and overall completion is due in Q4 2018. OST Constructional Projects is the main contractor for The Waves, while Arif & Bintook is providing architectural and electromechanical consulting services for the development.

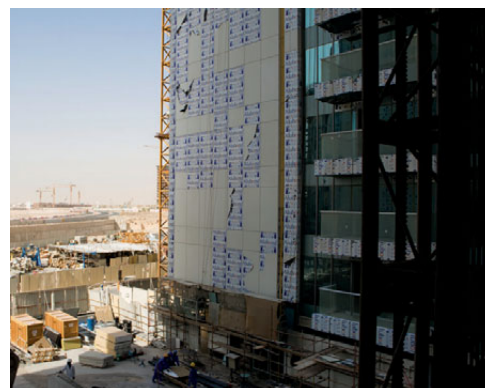


ONE CENTRAL

Location
Dubai, UAE

Visited
September 2017

One Central is a mixed-use master development worth \$2.2bn (AED8bn), which is being developed by Dubai World Trade Centre. The development's commercial component comprises five buildings, each of which will feature four levels of underground parking, integrated retail offerings on the ground level, open-plan office spaces, and access to rooftop gardens. Phase 2 of One Central was 91% complete at the time of CW's visit, and work on Phase 3 – which was awarded to Al-Futtaim Carillion – comprises the Offices 4 and Offices 5 buildings.



MONT ROSE

Location
Dubai, UAE

Visited
September 2017

UAE-based Deyaar Developments is nearing completion on its three-building development, Mont Rose. With a total built-up area of nearly 79,000m², the \$117m (AED430m) project comprises two residential towers and a hotel apartment building. The residential buildings, Towers A and B, will have 146 one-bedroom, 144 two-bedroom, and seven three-bedroom units. The hotel apartment tower comprises 126 studios and 72 one-bedroom apartments, all boasting a contemporary interior design and furnished by luxury brand, Aati.



MEERA

Location
Abu Dhabi, UAE

Visited
September 2017

Aldar Properties' \$148.6m, G+27 Meera project boasts a total built-up area of 76,328m² and consists of two identical towers, each comprised of 204 apartments. Meera is located at Shams Abu Dhabi and is the developer's inaugural mid-market development. Construction on the project started in August 2016 and is expected to complete in Q3 2018. Fibrex was awarded the main construction package, worth \$70.2m, and Aecom is providing consultancy services. When CW visited the site, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing, and finishing works were underway.



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MOTORSPORT BUSINESS PARK

Location	Visited
Dubai, UAE	August 2017

Designed to serve as a hub for the Middle East’s motorsports community, Dubai Autodrome’s under-construction Motorsport Business Park was scheduled to be handed over in December 2017. Developed by UAE-based Union Properties (UP) and valued at approximately \$4.3m (AED15.8m), the 5,600m² facility

will offer a space for businesses operating within the region’s motorsports industry, company officials said.

UP awarded the development’s \$3.4m (AED12.5m) main contract to Multilink Contracting, and Design House Engineering Consultancy is acting as the project’s consultant.



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EVENTS CALENDAR



For up-to-the-minute conference and events information, log on to constructionweekonline.com/conferences

CONFERENCES & EVENTS



The Big 5 Saudi

Date: 5-8 March, 2018
Venue: Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Construction Week Oman Awards

Date: 12 March, 2018
Venue: Muscat, Oman

The Big 5 Heavy

Date: 26-28 March, 2018
Venue: Dubai, UAE

Smart Skyscrapers Summit

Date: 23-24 April, 2018
Venue: Dubai, UAE

Smart Landscape Summit

Date: 7-8 May, 2018
Venue: Dubai, UAE

Middle East Stone

Date: 4-6 September, 2018
Venue: Dubai, UAE

Leaders in Construction UAE

Date: 12 September, 2018
Venue: Dubai, UAE

Leaders in Construction Kuwait

Date: 17 October, 2018
Venue: Kuwait City, Kuwait

Construction Week Awards

Date: 5 December, 2018
Venue: Dubai, UAE



Awards news

Seats to the *Construction Week* Oman Awards 2018 ceremony are sold out. The awards presentation and gala dinner ceremony will be held in Muscat's Grand Hyatt hotel on Monday, 12 March, 2018.

More than 200 professionals from the sultanate's construction sector are scheduled to attend the awards ceremony.

Shortlisted nominees in line to win a prize were revealed earlier this month, and winners are currently being selected by a panel of industry judges.

Construction companies and professionals active in Oman were invited to submit nominations in 13 awards categories, which were designed to recognise and reward individual excellence, corporate prowess, and project success.

The categories in which companies and individuals can scoop top prizes include Contractor of the Year, Consultant of the Year, Hospitality Project of the Year, and CSR Initiative of the Year. A new category, Rising Star of the Year, has also been introduced for this

year's ceremony. Check out the full list of this year's *Construction Week* Oman Awards shortlisted nominees on www.constructionweekonline.com, and follow live updates on Twitter by following the handle, [ICWMiddleEast](https://twitter.com/ICWMiddleEast).

For more information about the ceremony, please contact Teri Dunstan on +971 4 444 3227, or teri.dunstan@itp.com. For partnership opportunities related to the *Construction Week* Oman Awards, please email mark.palmer@itp.com.



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NOMINATION ENQUIRIES

NIKHIL PEREIRA
DEPUTY EDITOR
Phone: +971 4 444 3447
Email: nikhil.pereira@itp.com

SPONSORSHIP ENQUIRIES

VINAY RAVINDRAN
SALES MANAGER
Phone: +971 4 444 3155
Email: vinay.ravindran@itp.com

EVENT & BOOKING ENQUIRES

SOPHIE MCHUGH
EVENT MANAGER
Phone: +971 4 444 3223
Email: sophie.mchugh@itp.com

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TERI DUNSTAN
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Direct: +971 4 444 3227
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