

CONSTRUCTION GROUP NEWS



POWER TO THE EMPTY QUARTER

For the last two years, the Medium Speed Engine Group at Zahid has been involved with the development of a power plant in the middle of one of the most inhospitable parts of the world - The Empty Quarter. Located at the village of Al Khakhair the nearest tarmac road is over 550 kms away at Sharourah.

Although the contract was originally awarded to a competitor, Zahid Tractor was able to overturn the decision in their favour on the basis that in-Kingdom support was vital for a project of this kind. Zahid was eventually awarded a sub contract to supply 3 CAT3608 Gensets rated 1.8MW / 900 RPM generating 13,800 volts.

Having won the contract, another challenge which had to be faced was transporting the heavy loads across the desert. A weight limit of 20 tons is imposed on the route, which meant that the generators that exceed 30 tons each had to be broken down into manageable pieces.

Getting equipment there is not the only problem. One option for personnel is to fly down to Sharourah and then face a 10-hour trek across the desert in 4WD vehicles; another is to link up with the military transport to the region, which of course does not operate to a fixed schedule, or operate any in-flight service!

Life on site is not a piece of cake even once you get there. Every basic necessity required for living as well as for construction has to be taken in as well. Accommodation is extremely basic and with a constant risk from scorpions, spiders and snakes one of the provisions included was anti-snakebite venom.

Thanks to Graham Turner of Zahid Tractors for supplying the info and the photographs for the above. Graham can be contacted on Tel: Riyadh 231 9984

WATER MORE VALUABLE THAN OIL?

This may be debatable at today's prices however the water market is looking very robust this year with new projects from government and the private sector being awarded and tenders being announced everywhere from Jeddah to Jubail. Unfortunately these projects will take some years to be completed.

The outlook is still of shortages for the near future, Jeddah in particular will still face shortages and it is expected that some private water plants will be built. But they are not expected to meet the growing demand.

The Eastern Province is still very much reliant on the very brackish municipal supplies and small private compound plants the demand is generally met with poor quality water.

In Jubail the water supply meets demand and an interim plant is being tendered to give a supply until a large seawater desalination plant is commissioned which is planned in about 5 years.

Yanbu is tendering a large seawater Reverse Osmosis plant to enable the Royal Commission to continue to meet the growing demand.

The Riyadh network leaks profusely and a large percentage of the supply is still lost, water is turned on and off which exacerbates the leakage problem. One brackish water supply project is ongoing and should be finished in about 5 years, I do not believe this will make a big difference to Riyadh's supply considering the rapid growth in the city. ...DL



DEPARTING FOR ENGLANDS GREEN AND PLEASANT LAND

The Construction Group is once again changing, I am regrettably departing for the UK; Devon to be precise. My position is being taken over by Brian Suggitt who has been an active member of our group for over 10 years. Brian intends to have the group get together frequently, which I am sure will be appreciated. If you are in Devon look in to see us. Valerie and I are taking over a Holiday Cottage Complex between Hatherleigh and Holsworthy. Meanwhile I can be contacted at: Getco on 4023722 ext. 500. David Langdown