

# perfect preparation

Careful program management is the cornerstone of opening a new passenger terminal facility on time and within budget

IATA predicts that, worldwide, 7.3 billion air passengers a year will be flying by 2034. This is more than double the current number of passengers, and has prompted a dramatic demand for new and bigger passenger terminal facilities. However, the bigger the project, the higher the risk and cost of failure.

Key to a successful terminal opening are solid operational and technical functionality. All required approvals should be received on time. The whole project itself should also be delivered on time and budget. In addition, the new facility should be of an appropriate size to accommodate future traffic for at least the next 5 to 10 years.

The success of a terminal project strongly depends on these criteria. If, for example, a new passenger facility is heavily delayed due to lack of technical functionality, then the project will not only run out of budget, but consequently the operational functionality will also suffer. Adjusting these criteria adds even more delays to the project, eventually leaving a terminal with a capacity that will soon be too small for the growing mass of passengers.

## What are the main causes of failure on new terminals?

One of the first steps of a project is functional design. On-Block is convinced that the stakeholders who operate the new facility need to be engaged in the project from the very start. They are the functional local experts who know all the specifics of their airport's operations. It would be too late to only take them on board for the operational trials, which take place at the end of the project.

Another cause of failure is when the opening date is, or becomes, unrealistic. In this situation,



## ORAT PIONEER

Having developed the international ORAT business for Munich Airport Company, Reinhard Zeiler is now known as the pioneer of ORAT. In 2013, he founded his own company, On-Block, in Austria, which guides and supports new passenger terminal openings around the globe. Throughout his career, Zeiler has been involved in around 20 new airport/passenger terminal projects. On-Block will also soon open an office in the UAE.

I Prabhakara Rao, CEO, Delhi International Airport Limited/GMR, says, "We have known Reinhard Zeiler since GMR Group's successful entry into the airport business with our first project – the new Hyderabad Airport. His expertise has always been important to us, and we are keen on learning new approaches to airport program management from On-Block."



contractors have no target to which they can lock their schedules. The situation becomes as if no opening date had been given at all, and the project spirals out of control.

It is a big problem when the construction management and operational readiness and airport transfer (ORAT) are not closely coordinated. ORAT depends heavily on construction, and vice versa. Besides the required detailed information concerning the new facility, the training,

ABOVE: Rajiv Gandhi Hyderabad International Airport opened successfully on time and on budget in 2008

BELOW: Reinhard Zeiler, founder, On-Block

familiarization and the trials themselves have to be organized together with the construction management. This close coordination not only ensures operational readiness on the opening day, but can also reduce the length of the whole project.

Together with its partners, On-Block uses a holistic program management approach that encompasses all the important steps required by a new passenger terminal project.

Pilots say that a good approach makes a good landing. In a similar way, On-Block believes that an effective integrated program management approach will fulfill the criteria for a successful passenger facility opening.

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