



New Denver runway awaits big bird

Changes are on the horizon for the aviation industry with the prospect of the largest commercial airliner, the Airbus 380, a double-decked, 555-passenger plane due to enter airline service in 2006. In order to accommodate this new generation of mega-aircraft, Denver International Airport turned to CH2M HILL.

CH2M HILL had already designed two runways during the airport's initial construction and had provided other services, all to the client's satisfaction. So the City and County of Denver selected the company to design the new, 16,000-foot-long Runway 16R-34L and taxiway complex.

It is one of the longest commercial runways in the world and the longest at DIA. The new runway and taxiway system will allow DIA to accommodate larger aircraft in the future and, with several high-speed exit taxiways, it will increase the efficiency of current operations.

"The CH2M HILL team was excited to have this opportunity to design a state-of-the-art runway complex at one of the world's leading airports," said Dean Rue, CH2M HILL's project manager. "We were involved with the original design of the airport, and we're glad the City and County of Denver has continued to enlist our services as the airport evolves and expands."

Construction began in February 2001, and the runway was completed in September 2002. The remaining portions—the taxiways and connectors—are scheduled to be completed in September 2003. CH2M HILL has been providing shop drawing reviews and responding to contractor questions during construction.

Runway facts

16,000 feet long x 200 feet wide

17-inch-thick concrete (866,000 square yards), or the equivalent of 15 football fields covered 15 feet deep in concrete

North-south running runway

Construction on a "greenfield" site adjacent to existing airfield

Full edge and centerline lighting system for low-visibility operation

Earthwork: 7.5 million cubic yards, or the equivalent of 28 football fields covered 150 feet deep

