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# Tower crane town

Cranes dominate the skyline in Torre de Moncorvo, Portugal, following the deployment of 15 new Linden Comansa tower cranes to the Baixo Sabor Hydroelectric Plant project, **Sheryl Lafferty** reports.

The \$650 million project, being delivered by Portugal's largest utility company, Energias de Portugal (EDP), brought in the 15 flat-top tower cranes to assist in the construction of two new dams, as well as essential onsite facilities including a new bridge and administration building.

Undertaken by the debrecht/Bento Pedroso Construções and Lena Construções consortium, onsite work will see the excavation of close to three million cubic metres of material, before over 1.1 million cubic metres of concrete is poured to form the dams.

The main plant, comprising a double-curvature dam, will stand at a height of 123m and total 505m in width, while the second plant dam will be 45m high by 315m wide.

Together, the dams will flood an area in excess of 50sq.km, creating the third-largest lake in Portugal.

Supplied by IBERGRU, Linden Comansa's distributor in Portugal, the five largest tower cranes will work on the downstream element, while the others will be utilised upstream.

At the main plant, four 10LC140 tower

When flooded, the power plant's two dams will create the third largest lake in Portugal.

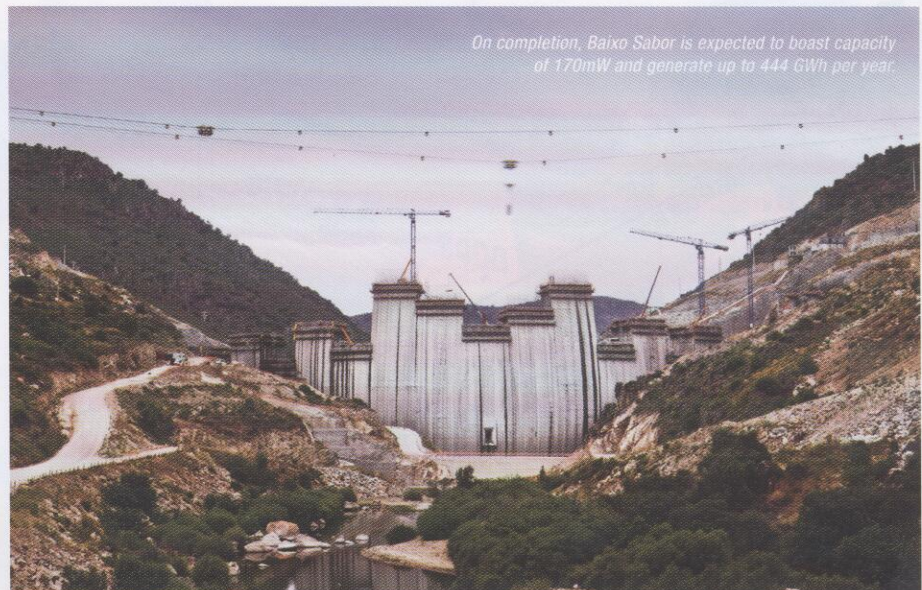


cranes with a maximum load capacity of 8t are leading the construction charge.

Despite initial challenges surrounding limited space and access, project managers successfully assembled the cranes onsite utilising the blondin system – a type of aerial ropeway consisting of one or two stationary ropes for support and a third moving rope for propulsion. Typically used for transporting material in quarries as well as during concrete pours, the adoption of the technique was controversial but crucial, saving time and money, according to Linden Comansa.



Ranging in maximum load from 5 to 48 tonnes, the onsite cranes are assisting with dam and bridge construction, as well as the erection of an administration building.



On completion, Baixo Sabor is expected to boast capacity of 170mW and generate up to 444 GWh per year.

“The assembling of two of the 10LC140 cranes was a challenge due to the difficult accessibility,” the company said.

“To pour large amounts of concrete many dams use blondin – an air transport system with cables, very similar to the cable car.

“IBERGRU proposed to the site managers the utilisation of these blondins in the assembly of the two 10LC140 cranes – a solution that was not only successful, but also cost-effective.”

In addition, a LC5211 5t tower crane is in use at the main plant, constructing the building that will house part of the administrative facilities for the dam. Two 5LC5010 models also remain permanent fixtures at the primary site, operating as service cranes for warehouse and workshop requirements.

The secondary site hosts two 21LC750 and three 21LC550 cranes with maximum load capacities of 18t and 48t respectively. A further

5LC5010 is also proving vital, helping in the management of a broad range of machinery and materials.

As well as this, two 21LC290 cranes with a maximum load capacity of 18t per crane have been tasked with assisting on the construction component of the new bridge – a 40m high by 268m long structure.

Located near the downstream plant, this bridge will allow the EN102 road to cross the river, following the sinking of the current Portela Bridge when the dams are flooded.

Under construction since 2008, the plant is expected to become fully operational in August 2014.

On completion, the facility will boast an installed capacity of 170mW and generate up to 444GWh per year.

It is estimated that the jobsite will employ close to 1675 people.