

GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY?

ANDREW J WIGHT EXPLAINS HOW BOGOTÁ'S EL DORADO AIRPORT IS GETTING A MAKEOVER TO DEAL WITH RAPIDLY RISING DEMAND.

El Dorado International Airport (IATA: BOG) may be named after the mythical city of gold, but the interior design of its latest terminal expansion skews towards a sleek, silver-trimmed look. Even though the new facility was only opened in December 2017, airport authorities are already looking ahead to their future growth plans for the airport, city and wider Latin American region.

Following the most recent expansion which was designed by Bogotá-based architects Consorcio GCCA, El Dorado has more than 2,407,866sq ft (223,700m²) of terminal space and 516,668sq ft (48,000m²) of commercial areas.

It now has the theoretical design capacity to serve 40 million passengers annually – 50% of the country's air traffic.

To help increase that capacity, German multinational ThyssenKrupp was tasked with manufacturing and installing new jetways, as well as the new elevators and escalators for the project.

Germany's BEUMER Group subsidiary, Crisplant, designed, manufactured and integrated the energy-efficient, high-speed automated baggage handling system.

According to Mauricio Ossa, the President of Odinsa, the company responsible for the expansion, El Dorado generates more than \$US7 billion dollars in economic activity per year and processes nearly 70% of the country's total air freight (more than 670,000 tonnes in 2016), which has made it the number one cargo mover in Latin America and the third for passenger traffic, exceeding 31 million during the same period.

Outside the new-look corridor connecting the International and Domestic terminals of the El Dorado Airport in Bogotá. Some of the new escalators installed by German multinational ThyssenKrupp AG are visible inside.



"We are proud to have delivered the expansion of El Dorado in a shorter time than expected, and operate an airport at the forefront, which offers the best experiences to the more than 100,000 users who travel through it daily," he told *Airports International*.

New technologies drive growth

The look isn't the only modern aspect of the airport. Johnson Controls was tasked with the installation, support and maintenance of the field advanced display (FAD), building management systems (BMS) and CCTV systems. Common Use

The upgraded domestic passenger concourse at Bogotá's El Dorado Airport, designed by local architects Consorcio GCCA.





Last September an historic peace accord was signed that brought an end to 50 years of armed insurgency, allowing the government to focus on building and upgrading the nation's infrastructure.
(All images: Odisna)

Northern Wing Extension

Total area: 175,667sq ft (16,320m²)

New commercial areas: 80,837sq ft (7,510m²)

Boarding bridges: four additional contact positions for Category C aircraft.

Two new lounges: Lounge El Dorado and Copa Club.

Concessions: Food Court (Amazonia Café, Guy Fieri, The Market Place, Gaira Café), Dufry Duty Free (including Hudson, Tech on the Go, North Mall, Collection), Attenza Duty Free and Carolina Herrera.

Terminal Equipment (CUTE) provided by SITA drives the check-in and passenger processing systems.

In addition to the works to expand the terminals, in December Colombia's Aeronáutica Civil announced a new Category III ILS system was in use. It was installed by the Spanish company Indra in a deal worth close to \$US 10 million.

Growth in Colombia

According to Colombia's National Infrastructure Agency, the air terminal has maintained constant traffic growth between 2014 and 2016 when flights rose by 3.6%. The figures for 2017 were not available as this edition went to press.

Tourism to Colombia has increased more than 250% since 2006 when 1 million foreigners visited the country. Of those, an impressive 46% visit Bogotá.

The flip-side of this explosive growth is that infrastructure has to keep pace. The government is in the process of reaping the benefits of a US\$2.9 billion plan to upgrade 52 airports around the country. Over a two-year period through to the end of this year, ➡

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improvement work will have been completed at Medellín’s José María Córdova (MDE), Barranquilla’s Ernesto Cortissoz (BAQ), Cali’s Alfonso Bonilla Aragón (CLO) and Cartagena’s Rafael Nuñez (CTG) airports.

In September 2017 an historic peace accord was signed that brought an end to 50 years of armed insurgency and now the government can focus on building and upgrading infrastructure.

Mr Ossa commented: “The Colombian government is promoting the development of infrastructure through different programmes that promote the construction and operation of roads, ports, railways and airports. Investments that will promote local development and regional interconnection for the country’s competitiveness at the international level.”

Ignacio Cueto, CEO of OneWorld airline LATAM, said in November that he saw Bogotá developing into a key hub in the future, despite the numerous bottle-necks that exist.

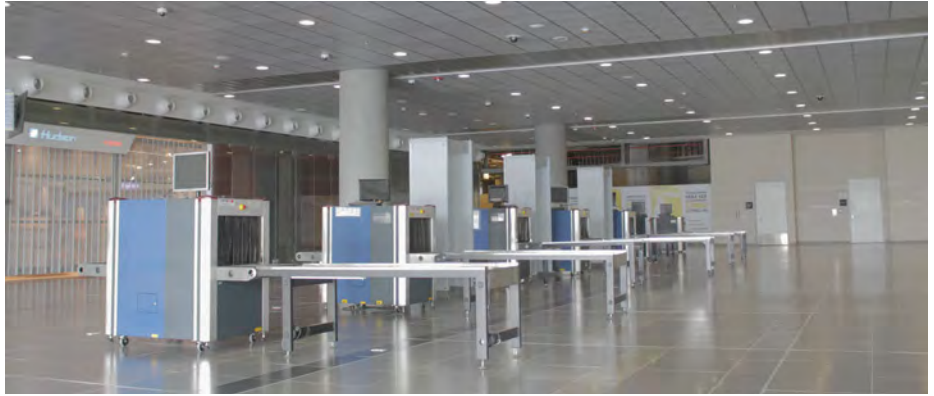
“Colombia, like many other countries in the region, is aware of the [capacity] issue. The speed of the solution is much slower than the growth of the rates of increase in the number of passengers,” Mr Cueto said.

He continued: “In Colombia, the indicator is a little lower, but it remains double digits, which implies that in a few years it is 50% and, in seven years, it can double the number of users now. Seven years is not much time to build an airport. It is very important that you become aware and move forward as quickly as possible.

“We [LATAM] are continuing to grow in places like Colombia, and having that growth will make it more important to develop international business from Bogotá, mainly. We believe that, for the moment, it could become a mini ‘hub’, but in the future, we are looking very closely at what else we can develop there.”

Looking to the future: El Dorado II

Bogotá is located at the northern end of the Andes, making it a key transfer hub, linking Latin America and the Caribbean to Europe and the US. It is



New security checkpoint at the International Terminal of the El Dorado Airport in Bogota. This is in addition to more than 700 security cameras installed by Johnson Control Systems.



Chilean Airline LAN operates the new El Dorado Lounge at the International terminal of the El Dorado Airport in Bogota.

Southern Wing Extension

Total area: 337,633sq ft (31,370m²)

New commercial areas: 199,670sq ft (18,550m²)

New boarding bridges: two additional contact positions for Category C aircraft.

New VIP rooms for Avianca

New tenants for the commercial areas include: Archie’s, Andrew’s Square, Wing Stop, Starbucks, Burger King, Paris Croissant, Papa Johns, Inkanta, Montblanc, Dufry Duty Free, Juan Valdez and The Pub.

serviced by 25 international airlines, six domestic and 24 cargo carriers (domestic and international).

The city of Bogotá is also the administrative and political capital of Colombia, a tourism destination in its own right and home to eight million people.

The airport’s location within the suburbs of a growing megacity means that upgrades alone are not going to be enough to meet future demand, although a third runway has been

suggested for El Dorado. The solution is to build a second airport, close to the current one, to provide additional capacity.

Back in January 2015, in acknowledgement of capacity constraints at the existing El Dorado site, the Colombian Transport Minister said that a second airport would be developed for Bogotá. At the time, it was thought demand would outstrip capacity at El Dorado by 2019. In May last year, it was announced the tender process for the new airport construction would be opened by this August.

The initial plan is for a single 12,467ft (3,800m) runway and a 645,84sq ft (60,000m²) passenger terminal with 11 airbridges and 22 remote boarding positions. The airport would eventually expand to three runways. It is expected to cost US\$447 million and by 2022 the new airport will handle 4.5 million during that year, with the original El Dorado processing 35 million passengers. The two are intended to be linked by a mass-transit system.