

# The Peninsula Business

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## Construction of new international airport platform on schedule

DOHA: In one of the most ambitious projects ever undertaken in the Middle East, the construction of the platform of the new international airport in Doha, Qatar, is on schedule, thanks to the vital groundwork laid by the reclamation joint venture under the leadership of Qatar Dredging Company (QDC).

The new airport is currently under construction on reclaimed land, four kilometres east from the existing airport. As part of the first phase of the development a platform of 22 km<sup>2</sup> is to be constructed – half of which is reclaimed from the sea – requiring in total a massive movement of 62 million m<sup>3</sup> of rock and sand. The execution time for this enormous platform reclamation project is 24 months,

with a completion date set at December 1, 2006.

The platform reclamation contract was awarded in December 2004 by the NDIA Steering Committee at a sum of QR1.559 bn to a consortium under the lead of QDC, a Qatari registered company with shareholders that include United Development Company (UDC), the Government of Qatar and DEME (Belgium). Other consortium partners are Dredging International (Belgium), Great Lakes Dredging & Dock Company (USA), and Boskalis Westminster Middle East (the Netherlands).

"In order to allow large, high capacity dredging vessels to approach the project site it necessitated a 6km access channel to be cut by the QDC-owned

'Al Mahaar', which is among the 10 most powerful rock cutter dredgers in the world," Marc Stordiau, Vice Chairman of QDC and Chairman of the consortium board, said.

Since then, an extensive fleet of vessels has been deployed to create and deepen this channel. The capacity of the fleet was increased to 11 dredgers: four heavy duty rock cutter dredgers and a number of medium size hopper dredgers, and four booster stations at a time have been deployed to widen and deepen the channel over the full length to the required depth of -13.9m.

QDC is deploying its own fleet as well as vessels chartered from the joint venture partners.

—THE PENINSULA