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OPENING OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST BIOCLIMATIC AIRPORT BUILDING IN A TROPICAL ENVIRONMENT :

**Reunion Island's Roland Garros Airport
reinforces its sustainable development strategy
in the Indian Ocean.**

Reunion Island's Roland Garros airport is redefining sustainable air travel with the opening of its bioclimatic Arrivals Hall on March 26, 2024. This 13,000-square-meter extension boasts a sophisticated bioclimatic design, paving the way for the airport to handle up to 3 million passengers by 2030. Reunion's Roland Garros Airport reaffirms its ongoing commitment to environmental responsibility with this groundbreaking achievement, consolidating its position as a key European hub in the Indian Ocean and contributing to the island's connectivity.

On March 15, 2024, Claire Dreyfus-Cloarec, Chair of the Supervisory Board, and Guillaume Branlat, Chair of the Airport Company Management Board, welcomed partners and press to celebrate the opening of the new Arrivals Hall. Attendees included Richard Nirlo, Mayor of the municipality of Sainte-Marie, Huguette Bello, President of Reunion's Regional Council, Slawomir Tokarski, representative of the European Commission, and Jérôme Filippini, Prefect of Reunion Island.

The construction of the new Arrivals Hall received co-financing from the European Union under the ERDF-ESF+ Reunion program, managed by Reunion's Regional Council, and from the French government. The €65 million investment includes the acquisition of state-of-the-art hold baggage screening equipment that complies with strict European regulations.



The building is a bioclimatic innovation of an unprecedented scale, a French and European showcase in the Indian Ocean region

Much more than just an extension, this pioneering infrastructure marks a milestone as the world's first bioclimatic airport building on such a scale in the Tropics. It is a technically complex feat of engineering accomplished on an island particularly vulnerable to increasingly extreme weather events. This ambitious and innovative design capitalizes on Reunion's strong expertise in bioclimatic construction, with 91 % of the work contracted to local companies.

Low-carbon architecture shaped by the trade winds

The design integrates innovative principles, including harnessing natural ventilation through a central "canyon" feature, and automated louvers controlled by a weather station. The presence of endemic plants as well as extensive use of natural materials, particularly wood, further underscore the environmental commitment of the Airport, which has already been recognized for its carbon reduction efforts. The project was made possible thanks to a collaboration between AIA Life Designers, Olivier Brabant Architecte (OBA) associate architect, and their partners.

« This building is a manifesto of committed architecture demonstrating the project owner's unwavering ambition. By fine-tuning the aerodynamic system during wind tunnel testing, this project has reconnected us with the core principles of engineering: suggesting, observing, analyzing, and refining. It transcends conventional notions of comfort, challenging passengers with its scale and the emotion it evokes. »

Eric Bussolino, architect of record, AIA Life Designers project management consortium



Key facts

- ▶ **1st bioclimatic arrival/departure hall of this size in the Tropics**
- ▶ **€65 million investment**
- ▶ **21/2 years to build (2021-2024)**
- ▶ **91 % of contractors were local companies**

A unique arrival experience

With its new Arrivals Hall, Roland Garros Airport welcomes passengers by immersing them in the beauty of Reunion's natural landscapes. Featuring large, solar-controlled glass facades and abundant greenery, combined with natural ventilation, the new building invites passengers to create a seamless transition from air to ground by offering a sensory journey that is both architecturally stunning and warmly welcoming. In addition, a new baggage handling system has been implemented to process checked baggage, complying with the latest European regulations on explosive detection.

Promoting sustainable local development

Reunion's Roland Garros Airport serves as a catalyst behind local economic growth, supporting more than 18,000 jobs on the island and contributing 4 % to its GDP. The projected growth in air traffic leading up to 2030 will bolster this positive impact, and help create more than 1,000 new jobs. Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, this project has injected €65 million into the local economy, generating more than one hundred jobs between 2021 and 2024.

« The design is not only aesthetically pleasing but also showcases cutting-edge technical prowess. It offers passengers a truly unique experience, while prioritizing the highest standards of safety and security, making the Arrivals Hall stand out as the new emblem of Reunion Island's Roland Garros Airport. Today I am honored to celebrate the completion and opening of such a remarkable project ! »

Guillaume Branlat, Chair of the Management Board.



French Overseas Territories' expertise in the face of climate change

Airports in the French Overseas Territories play a key role in adapting to the realities of climate change. The principle of natural ventilation reduces energy consumption and reliance on air conditioning, positioning Reunion Island and France at the forefront of sustainable construction practices. The new Arrivals Hall at Reunion's Roland Garros Airport not only symbolizes the excellence of French and European airports in the Indian Ocean, but also demonstrates the island's steadfast commitment to building a more sustainable future.

Reunion Island's Roland Garros Airport at a glance

- ▶ **2,7 million de passagers (2023)**
- ▶ **1st airport in French Overseas Territories to reach the 2.5 million passengers per year milestone in 2018**
- ▶ **165 destinations served in less than 3 hours**
- ▶ **1st airport in French Overseas Territories to achieve Level 3 of the Air Carbon Accreditation label in 2021**

- Download press kit [here](#)
- Download new Arrivals Hall's pictures in full resolution [here](#)

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