



09/25/09 ARTBA presents award for Best Project 2009 to ACS

ARTBA (the American Road and Transportation Builders Association), made up of the main construction and engineering companies and transport departments for the USA's various authorities, awarded ACS several prizes at the 21st edition of its conference held in Washington. The event, aimed at the majority of the companies in the sector, awarded ACS Infrastructure Development, Iridium's US concessions subsidiary, the Best Project 2009 prize for the I-595 interstate expressway in Florida. Likewise, ARTBA presented Juan Santamaría, ACS Infrastructure Development's concessions development director, with the award as "Private Sector entrepreneur 2009".

During the presentation ceremony for the "Best Entrepreneur" award, ARTBA Chairman Charlie Potts reviewed ACS' achievements in concessions in the USA over recent years and highlighted the comments and praise given by representatives of Florida, Texas and North Carolina Governments on ACS' presence and consolidation in North America, which have made it one of the region's leaders in Infrastructure concessions.

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) granted ACS Infrastructure Development, the North American concessions subsidiary of the ACS Group, the concession for the I-595 interstate expressway over 35 years, the first ever availability payment Contract in the United States as well as the first PPP in Florida. This project constitutes one of the main infrastructure arteries in Southern Florida as it links Fort Lauderdale and Miami with the State's west coast and currently carries 130,000 vehicles per day, which will need to be maintained while the construction work proceeds.

The Florida Transportation Department's own authorities declared that the expansion, improvement and modernisation work on the expressway should be carried out in just five years, thanks to which they opted for the concession formula and private operation.

The 1.7 billion US dollars contract, consists of the financing, design, construction, operation and maintenance of the road infrastructure for the next 35 years. The construction period will last approximately 5 years and operation 30, meaning that ACS will operate the expressway until the year 2044.

Dragados will take charge of the construction work, including the execution of three reversible lanes in the centre of the current expressway and the renovation of nine interchanges.

ACS has raised 1.46 billion US dollars Debt between Bank Debt and TIFIA Loan. Around the fifty percent is financed with a credit from Federal Government from its funds for transport infrastructure development (TIFIA Program), with maturity in 2044, and the rest from a Club Deal that is comprised of 12 different banks including, Santander, Calyon New York Branch, La Caixa, Société Générale, Dexia Credit Local, New York Branch, Caja Madrid, National Australia Bank Limited, Banco Popular Español, BBVA, Banco de Sabadell, WestLB, and Caixa Nova.

The ACS Group already has a significant presence in the field of public works in the United States through Dragados, the head company in its Construction area, since the time in 2005 when the first expansion of the New York Subway was awarded. This was a grand engineering project to link Manhattan's Grand Central Station with the Queens neighbourhood under the East River at a value of over 400 million dollars. Later, the Spanish construction company took on new projects in the north east of the country to improve roads, dams and subways and was recently awarded the construction of a dam in Puerto Rico and the first contract for the expansion of Miami airport.

In turn, Iridium, ACS' concessions company, has for the last ten years been the largest private transportation infrastructure investor in the world, with promoted investments exceeding 26,000 million euros. The infrastructure and public equipment company participates in the management of more than 60 companies with these characteristics, encompassing the entire concessions business value chain.