

ACS Group inaugurates its first toll motorway in Ireland

Open to traffic five months before the term agreed to by contract

ACS will be submitting bids for three future concessions called by Ireland's Department of Transport

ACS Group has inaugurated the Dundalk Western Bypass toll motorway, its first concession in Ireland, five months ahead of schedule. This infrastructure will be operated by the company Dragados Concesiones de Infraestructuras during the next 30 years.

The consortium headed by Dragados Concesiones de Infraestructuras, called Celtic Roads Group (CRG), with the participation of the companies National Toll Road, HBG Ascon Limited and Edmund Nuttal Limited, was chosen by the Department of Transport of Ireland, by way of the National Roads Authority (NRA), for the award of this concession at the beginning of 2004.

The contract comprises the project of financing, designing, constructing and operating this new infrastructure in eastern Ireland under a 30-year concession, with the right to charge a toll, included in an important corridor joining Dublin and Belfast.

The Dundalk Bypass Motorway is now a part of the PPP (Public Private Partnership) Program for the improvement of Irish roads included in the NDP (National Development Plan), which entails a substantial development of infrastructures in Ireland over the coming years with the support of private initiative.

In fact, within this plan, Dragados Concesiones de Infraestructuras is bidding for the construction of three more toll motorways in different areas of Ireland, representing an investment of over 1,200 million of euros and currently in different stages of the bidding process arranged by the Irish authorities. ACS Group's new concession includes the Dundalk Western Bypass, which is newly built, plus three roads that were already in operation: Dunleer-Dundalk (15 km), the Dunleer Bypass (6 km), and the Northern Motorway M1 (21 km).

The construction of the Dundalk Western Bypass has required 12 new structures, one of which is a crossing below the Dublin-Belfast railway. The investment going into the project totalled €150 million, of which 110 million went to the construction of the new motorway. Traffic is controlled by a teletoll system and it amounts to 20,000 vehicles a day, 13% of which are heavy vehicles.

ACS Group is the world's foremost developer of Infrastructure Concessions, with over 40 road, tunnel and motorway concessions; five airport concessions including 16 airports; two railway concessions and one underground concession. NTR is an Irish company operating in the motorway sector and in power, waste and water. Ascon is an Irish construction company and Nuttal is a British construction company.