

Alger metro inaugurated

ALGERIA: President Abdelaziz Bouteflika officially inaugurated the country's first metro line on October 31, paving the way for the start of revenue operation the following day.

Under construction for almost three decades, the 9.2 km first phase of Alger Line 1 links Haï el Badr in the southeast to Tafourah Grande Poste in the city centre. Developed by Entreprise Métro d'Alger, the line is managed by RATP El Djazaïr under an eight-year operating contract.

The first tunnels were excavated by local firms, and a €380m turnkey contract for completion of civil works, E&M systems and fitting out was awarded in January 2006 to a Siemens-led consortium including CAF and Vinci Construction.

As well as project management and overall delivery planning, Siemens has been responsible for supplying Trainguard MT CBTC, Airlink radio communications and Digiloc train location

systems. It also provided telecoms and power supply networks, the track and fare collection system, and equipped the operations control centre. CAF has supplied 14 six-car trains, while Vinci Construction was responsible for the 10 stations, tunnel ventilation and Bachdjarah depot.

Serving a city with more than three million inhabitants, the line is expected to carry 300 000 passengers per day in the medium term. EMA is currently planning a 3.5 km extension of Line 1, as well as two further routes to create a three-line network.

At Hussein Dey the metro will provide interchange with EMA's 23 km tram route serving Bab Ezzouar, Bordj El Kiffan and Derana, which is being built as a turnkey project by the Méditerranail consortium of Alstom, ETRHB and Todini. Revenue services began on the initial 7.2 km section of this line between Bab Ezzouar and Bordj El Kiffan earlier this year. 