



RWE's expertise more than doubles the availability at Kosovo B power station

CASE STUDY

RWE's expertise resulted in the dramatic availability improvement of Kosovo power station unit B2, which has risen from under 30% to greater than 75%.



The need for our expertise

The Kosovo B power station was commissioned in 1985 to exploit the huge lignite resources of Kosovo. The electricity produced supplies the SE Europe grid. In 1990, availability at the station was 75%.

During the long period of conflict in and around Kosovo, the power station fell into disrepair and the station was inadequately maintained. By 1998, availability had fallen to less than 30% and power cuts of up to 6 hours a day were common. In a region where winter temperatures can dip below minus 30°C, these interruptions in supply created conditions of hardship and suffering among a population whose civil structures were still fragile after years of strife in the region. Rehabilitation of the plant had become a humanitarian and political priority and a prerequisite for commercial and industrial regeneration.

The European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR) invited tenders for the rehabilitation of Kosovo power station unit B2. In June 2000, the contract was won by an RWE-led consortium

including ALSTOM, the supplier of the original equipment for the station. A condition of the contract was that availability at the plant should rise sharply before the onset of the worst winter weather.

Putting our expertise into action

As consortium leader, RWE deployed an experienced team of engineers to the site, working in close co-operation with local KEK (Korporata Energjetike E Kosoves) staff, ALSTOM and other suppliers.

The programme of works included boiler auxiliaries and pressure parts, turbine and feed system, generator, switchgear, instrumentation and actuators.

There was also extensive work on materials handling and main unit control systems. All this had to be managed by our team to ensure the completion of outage works within tight deadlines and with due regard for safety and environmental factors.

Within five months, all of the major elements of the first stage of refurbishment had been carried out. An independent financial and

technical audit was conducted by EAR and confirmed successful completion of the project, to time and cost. Availability at the station was now evaluated at 75%, taking it back to the levels achieved 12 years before.

A planned second stage of refurbishment in the following year was again put out to competitive tender and won by the RWE-led consortium. This contract paved the way for a programme of Operations and Maintenance support, building on the productive relationships already established between RWE and KEK. Working with local engineers on more sophisticated monitoring and maintenance systems has now helped increase availability to more than 75%, matching the performance of power stations across Western Europe.

The difference we made

RWE's speed and experience resulted in a dramatic improvement in the condition of the power station, reflected in the substantial improvement in availability, which rose from under 30% to greater than 75%.

The project was completed on time and to budget and returned Kosovo power station unit B2 to reliable power generation in time for winter.

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