

PRESS RELEASE

Diagnosis: Multiple challenges – 13 WOLFF cranes construct a new US hospital in Weilerbach

Weilerbach – January 2024. **It will become the largest US-military hospital outside of the USA: In close proximity to Ramstein Airbase in Weilerbach near Kaiserslautern in Rhineland-Palatinate, a modern replacement hospital is currently being constructed for the US-Army hospital in neighboring Landstuhl, which was built in 1953. With its strikingly curved facade, designed to resemble the flag of the United States, the new building will house more than 4,000 rooms, 120 treatment rooms, and nine operating theaters across approximately 90,000 square meters of floor space. 13 WOLFF cranes are working on the mega project on behalf of the ARGE US-Klinikum Weilerbach, a construction consortium consisting of Ed. Züblin AG and Gilbane. By mid-May 2023, when all the cranes were finally in place, the first major project milestones had already been achieved.**

“Even before the crane foundations could be planned, numerous bureaucratic hurdles had to be overcome,” says work planner Daniel Rüttinger, who is responsible for process planning and construction operations at Ed. Züblin AG. Because the construction site is located in the flight path of Ramstein Airbase, every building construction site and mobile crane requires an aviation permit from the German Armed Forces Aviation Office and must also be equipped with special lighting.

Surprises underground

Another challenge in the construction preparation was the foundation of the cranes. “Due to the highly heterogeneous subsoil, consisting of several soil layers, exploratory drilling was carried out at each crane site,” explains Daniel Rüttinger. The buoyancy caused by rising groundwater, existing pipes, and the compatibility of the concrete foundations with naturally occurring radon in the ground also had to be taken into account when laying the crane foundations.

In order to cover all sections of the building, some cranes had to be positioned at particularly low points, where they were set up on foundations up to 2.4 meters high. Because these areas will be backfilled with soil during construction, the lower tower sections were encased in crane shoring. This allowed the surrounding building foundation components to be erected, the working area to be backfilled, and the crane to be completely dismantled again later.

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A combination of classics and new additions

ARGE is deploying a WOLFF 8033.16 Cross, a 7534.16 Clear, a 7032.12 Clear, three 6031.12 Clear, three 6031.8 Clear, two 5014.6 City, a 262 SL as well as a 6522 FL 12 at the construction site. The cranes have lifting capacities of between 6.0 and 16.5 tons and peak load capacities of between 1.8 and 7.0 tons. The tallest cranes stand on towers almost 70 meters tall.

“Ten WOLFF cranes come from the Züblin Group fleet,” says Thomas Odenbreit, Wolffkran Sales Executive Germany. “As our long-standing business partner, we are delighted that Züblin has once again acquired three WOLFF cranes (WOLFF 6031.12, 7032.12 and 7534.16) for this outstanding project. It is also pleasing to see a true classic supporting the pack. The WOLFF 262 SL was built in 1989 and has been part of the customer portfolio for 34 years. This is ‘living proof’ of the durability of a WOLFF,” says Thomas Odenbreit.

Until the end of 2024, the cranes will be moving reinforcement and formwork, semi-prefabricated parts, concrete buckets, and prefabricated staircases weighing up to ten tons. Five of them will remain on the construction site after completion of the structural work to support the further construction of the building. The first patients are due to be treated in the new building by the end of 2028. The hospital is intended for wounded US soldiers from combat missions, but also to provide care for more than 200,000 US-military personnel, civilian employees of the US Department of Defense and other American authorities and their families in Europe.

Züblin and Wolffkran are currently working on other major construction sites, such as several sub-projects of “Stuttgart 21.”

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Crane specifications on this construction site:

WOLFF	Crane base	Jib radius, m	Hook height, m	max. lifting capacity/peak load capacity, t
8033.16 Cross	Foundation anchor	60.0	36.60	16.2 / 7.0
7534.16 Clear	Foundation anchor	65.0	55.10	16.5 / 4.3
6031.8 Clear	Foundation anchor	50.0	46.10	8.5 / 4.0
6031.8 Clear	Cross frame element	55.0	54.65	8.5 / 3.7
7032.12 Clear	Foundation anchor	65.0	68.60	12.0 / 3.4
6031.12 Clear	Cross frame element	55.0	52.35	12.0 / 3.4
6031.12 Clear	Foundation anchor	55.0	43.85	12.0 / 3.3
262 SL	Cross frame element	65.0	25.20	12.0 / 3.2
6031.8 Clear	Cross frame element	60.0	61.40	8.5 / 3.1
6522 FL 12	Cross frame element	65.0	34.35	12.0 / 2.3
5014.6 City	Cross frame element	42.5	22.00	6.0 / 2.0
6031.12 Clear	Foundation anchor	65.0	68.60	12.0 / 1.9
5014.6 City	Cross frame element	45.0	17.50	6.0 / 1.8

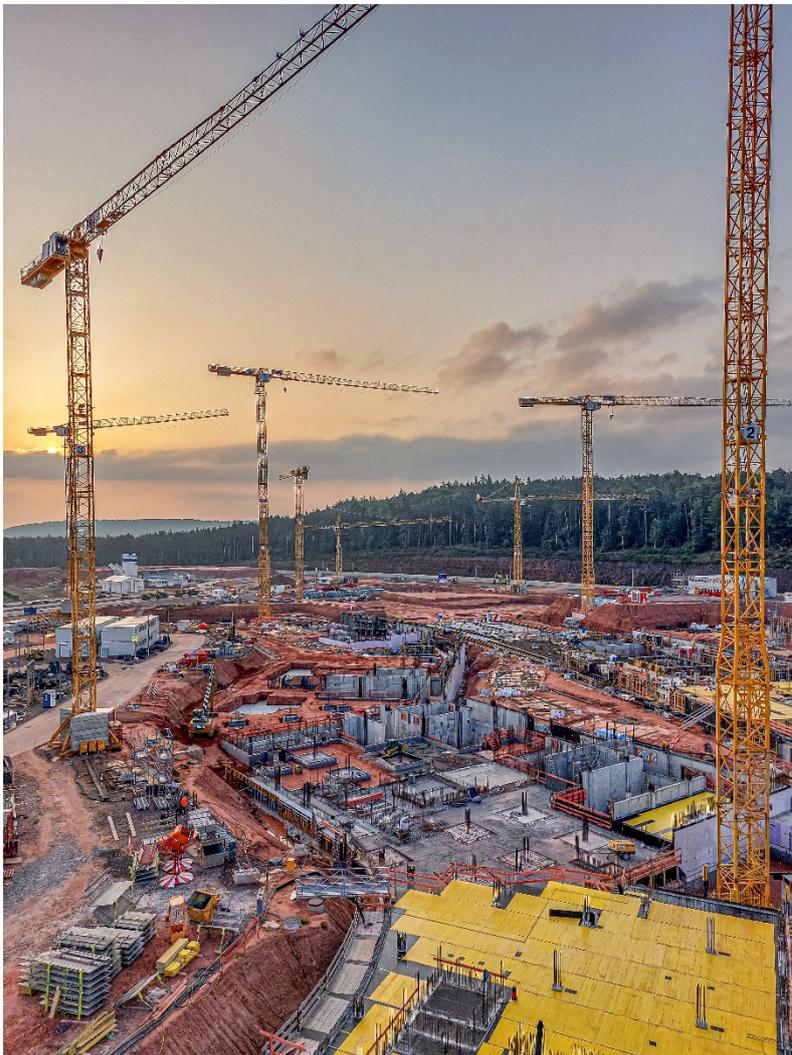
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WOLFFKRAN is a leading manufacturer of premium quality tower cranes with a tradition spanning over 150 years. With its own rental fleet of some 800 tower cranes, it is also one of the largest crane rental businesses in the world. WOLFFKRAN is headquartered in Zug, Switzerland and has manufacturing sites in Heilbronn and Luckau, Germany. It currently employs a global workforce of approx. 860 people in its two manufacturing sites and its sales and service subsidiaries located across Western and Central Europe, the Middle East and the United States.

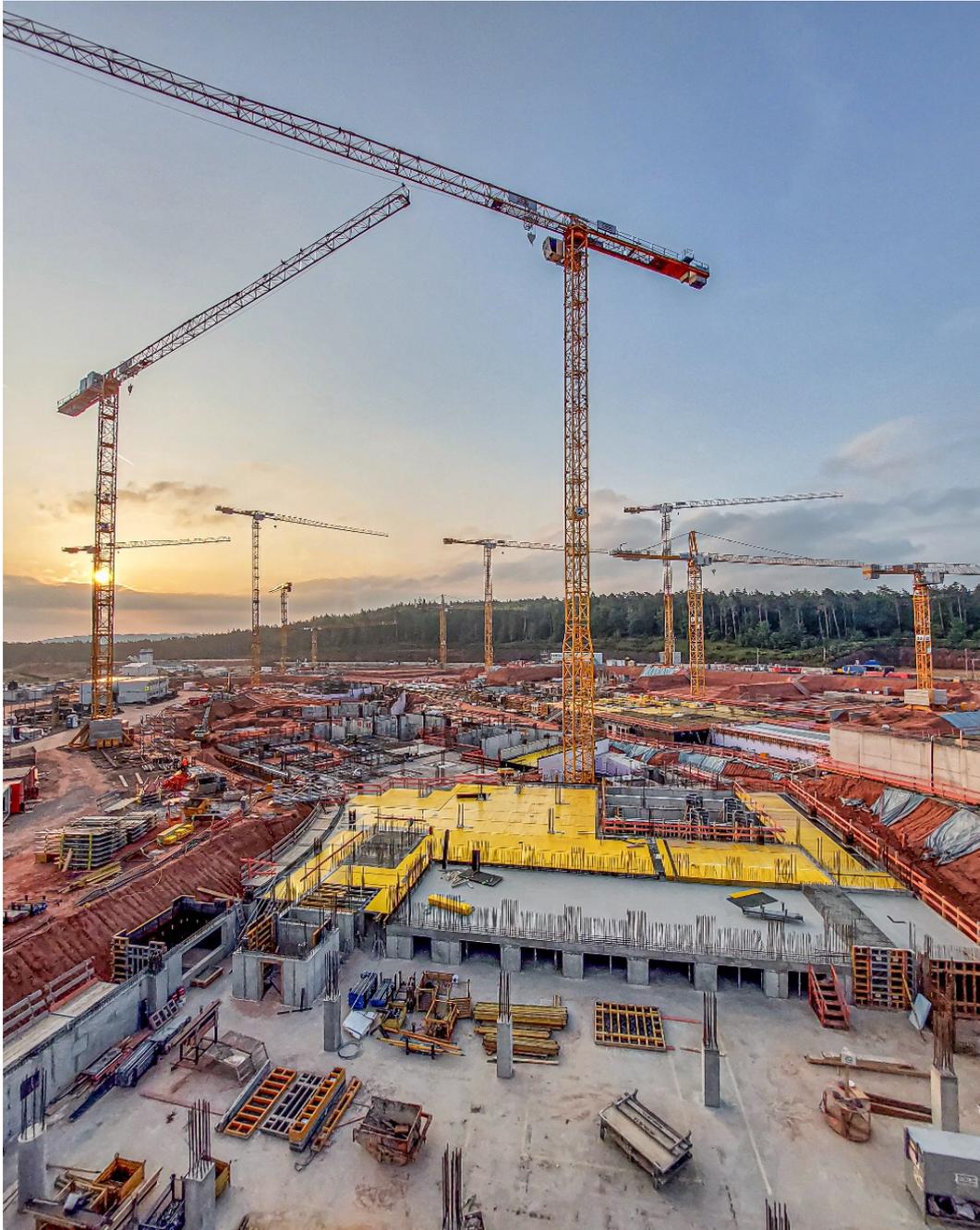
PRESS RELEASE – Pictures and Captions



Due to the very deep base layers, some of the crane foundations had to be integrated into the buildings and will remain in the ground once the construction work is complete. Temporary shoring around the tower sections enables the crane to be completely dismantled even after the working area has been backfilled.



PRESS RELEASE – Pictures and Captions



Züblin and Wolffkran are longstanding partners. The construction company owns a large WOLFF fleet of both new and tried-and-tested models, which have been painted yellow in the customer's color.