

No matter how complex the project
or remote the location, chances are
Bechtel can build it.

YEAH, WE CAN DO THAT

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GLOBAL REACH



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You get the point. And if it's that hard to reach a project, imagine the challenge of bringing equipment, materials and workers to a job site so remote that the neighbors are mostly shepherds and mountain goats.

Take for example the big Antamina copper

mine project that Bechtel completed in 2001. The surrounding glacier-draped peaks of the Cordillera Blanca are the tallest mountains in Peru and the highest in the world's tropical zone. One can reach the mine only by a circuitous route that takes 10 hours from the capital

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5



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and nearest city, Lima. The first four hours are on the Pan-American Highway. The last six require a climb of 4,200 meters up a narrow mountain road that forms hairpin turns and crosses rivers that flood during the seven-month rainy season.

When Bechtel staff first arrived at the mine,

Antamina was cut off from modern civilization not only by distance but also by the absence of an adequate communications system—the nearest phone was a treacherous, four-hour drive away.

In addition to constructing a huge new copper concentrator and the facilities to go with it, the Bechtel

team had to build 120 kilometers of new roads to transport 500,000 tons of equipment and materials, and create housing for close to 6,600 workers at three job sites.

The Fjarðaál aluminum smelter on the eastern coast of Iceland, completed in 2007, posed the sea-level

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



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version of many of the same challenges. The project site, on the eastern coast of the country, is at the inner edge of a large, glacier-fed fjord that empties into the Norwegian Sea. Like most of Iceland, the area is sparsely populated—the nearest town, Reyðarfjörður, is home to about 650 residents.

Given its remote location—and the fact that most of the material required couldn't be found in Iceland—Fjarðaál became a showcase for Bechtel's global reach. Ships brought in steel and pots from China, concrete from Iceland and Norway, and heavy equipment from Europe, the Middle East, China, India, and North America.

At remote projects, logistics represent just one of the big challenges. Climate and natural conditions also can cause headaches—in some cases literally, as at Antamina, where the high altitude and low level of oxygen made it a good idea to stock up on aspirin.

Then there are temperature extremes: On Sakhalin Island, the mercury drops to 40-below in the winter, and people may wake up in the morning to find three meters of snow on the ground. As a result, snow-clearing was a major activity on Bechtel's gas development project. As many as 30 people cleared snow 24 hours a day with excavators, trucks, and mini bobcats.

Despite its name, Iceland isn't usually quite that



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cold, but it can get windy. At the Fjarðaál project, winds sometimes exceeded 140 kilometers per hour, shutting down crane operations and other outside work. But Bechtel found a way to get the job done by having components—in some cases entire buildings—preassembled so they could be put in place when the weather improved.

Not every place Bechtel works is freezing cold. Some are hot and some are wet. On Bioko Island, you get both, with the temperature averaging 31 degrees

Celsius humidity around 90 percent, and up to three meters of rain for the year.

It should be noted that most Bechtel work is done in comfortable offices in cities around the world, where the biggest challenge is the morning commute. But if you want to experience the thrill of working in a remote location on the kind of project that made us famous, we've probably got one for you.