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NCC and Tyréns to participate in development of new ELT

NCC and the Tyréns consulting company, in cooperation with ABB and Lund University of Technology, have been commissioned to analyze the technical possibilities of building a new Extremely Large Telescope, or ELT. This will be the world's largest telescope, with the capacity to identify earthlike planets in other solar systems.

A group of European companies and institutions has been assigned to prepare a preliminary study to analyze the technical possibilities of building a new ELT.

The preliminary study is based on the group's winning e-BAT competition proposal from 2005. The project is on behalf of IAC, Instituto de Astrofisica de Canarias and will be financed through the EU's sixth ramp program. Assuming a decision is made at the end of 2006, the ELT could be ready for operation in 2017.

e-BAT has a 50-meter-diameter mirror enclosed in a 200-meter-high building. The building itself is supported on 20-meter-high legs to avoid the risk of any ground-level air turbulence.

NCC will provide leading-edge expertise within several specialist areas of construction and installation technology.

"NCC will assure the constructability of the new telescope. Our experience of large and advanced projects, such as the Turning Torso and City Tunnel, has qualified us for this project," says Mårten Lindström, President of NCC Teknik, who adds:

"The telescope will be located in a part of the world in which NCC has no experience of operations, which is why we have no ambition to be involved as a principal building contractor."

Astronomers anticipate making a number of breakthrough discoveries using the new telescope, such as finding the oldest stars and galaxies. It is also hoped that it can be used to identify earthlike planets in other solar systems – despite the light from such planets being ten billion times weaker than the brilliance of the stars around which they orbit.

The new telescope will also have the ability to identify basic elements on the planets in question, and the presence of any photosynthesis.

NCC AB

Postal address SE-170 80 SOLNA Visiting address Vallgatan 3, SOLNA Contact Tel: +46 8 585 510 00 Fax: +46 8 85 77 75 www.ncc.info VATno. (publ) Reg.no SE556034517401 Solna, Sweden

FACTS

The contract has been secured as a result of the €-BAT team's winning proposal in the European Large Telescope Enclosure Conceptual Design competition. In future, the project will be led by Per Hallgren at Tyrén AB and the project group will consist of the following companies and organizations:

Tyréns AB, Sweden Lunds Universitet, Sweden NCC Construction Sverige AB, Sweden Asea Brown Boweri AB, Sweden Tower 151 Architects, UK Ove Arups and Partners, UK National University of Ireland, Galway, Ireland Emma Pfenninger AG, Switzerland

For further information, please contact: Ulf Thorné, Press Relations Manager, NCC Group, +46 8 585 523 46, +46 70 214 77 27

All of NCC's press releases are available on www.ncc.info

NCC is one of the leading construction and property development companies in the Nordic region. NCC had in 2005 sales of SEK 50 billion, with 21,000 employees.

NCC AB

Contact Tel: +46 8 585 510 00 Fax: +46 8 85 77 75 www.ncc.info VATno. (publ) Reg.no SE556034517401 Solna, Sweden