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Airport extension contract

The Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners has approved a \$360m contract for construction of the 3.9 km Airport Connection Metrorail extension. This will run from the existing station at Earlington Heights to an intermodal centre adjacent to Miami International Airport which will provide interchange with Tri-Rail and local buses.

To be completed by 2012, the line will be built by the Odebrecht-Tower Community Joint Venture, bringing together Brazilian construction firm Odebrecht (50%), and two firms controlled by OHL of Spain: the Tower Group and Community Asphalt (25% each). The contract includes three electric substations, rail and bus stations at the intermodal centre and other ancillary work.

Another joint venture led by Odebrecht is beginning work on the MIA Mover, a 2 km automated peplemover connecting the airport with the intermodal centre.

The Metrorail extension forms the first phase of Miami-Dade Transit's three-phase Orange Line project, which is intended to extend the metro network by 35.4 km.

To provide rolling stock for the extended line, MDT is planning to order 144 new stainless-steel EMU vehicles, with options for up to 54 more. These would replace its existing 136 Metrorail cars, which are 26 years old. MDT hopes to award a contract in mid-2010, so that deliveries can be completed in 2013.