

## Air Liquide signs new contracts in the fiber optics industry in China

Over a one-year time period, Air Liquide signed new supply contracts covering 10 to 15 years with three major Chinese fiber optics manufacturers. In the framework of these new contracts with Futong Group Communication Technology, Yangtze Optical Fibre, and Zhongtian Technology Fine Materials, Air Liquide will supply a total exceeding 6,000 Nm<sup>3</sup> per hour of hydrogen and 4,000 Nm<sup>3</sup> per hour of nitrogen, together with bulk oxygen, helium, argon and carbon dioxide. Air Liquide will thus support the further development of China's fiber optics industry.

Industrial gases are used to consolidate the center of the fiber, which consists of a silica glass rod. In practice, the first step in manufacturing fiber optics is to produce this glass rod, called "preform". **Hydrogen, oxygen and helium** are then used to strengthen the preform before heating and drawing. In the final step, **helium and argon** are used to cool the drawn fiber efficiently.

Air Liquide signed a new 10-year contract for the **supply of hydrogen and nitrogen** to Futong Group Communication Technology (FGCT) in Jiashan City, Zhejiang Province. FGCT is one of the world's largest fiber optics cable manufacturers.

Two other agreements in the same field of large-scale fiber optics production were also signed with Yangtze Optical Fibre and Zhongtian Technology Fine Materials. For a 10 to 15 year duration, Air Liquide will deliver to each customer **nitrogen and hydrogen on-site generator solutions**, as well as **bulk oxygen, helium, argon and carbon dioxide**.

With these new contracts, Air Liquide is reinforcing its **leadership** with **China's top fiber optics companies**, who account for more than 30% of the Chinese production. In China, demand for **fiber optics** has experienced **rapid growth** in recent years, driven by 4G deployment and wideband "Fiber to the home" and "Fiber to the office" plans.

**Francois Abrial**, member of the Air Liquide group's Executive Committee, supervising Asia Pacific, said: **"We are proud to support our customers' business development. These new projects illustrate Air Liquide's ability to accompany the rise of fiber optics in China. These gases-supply contracts reinforce the Group's position in this growing market and demonstrate our ability to deliver competitive and reliable solutions."**

### **Air Liquide's Industrial Merchant Business Line**

Air Liquide's Industrial Merchant Business Line delivers industrial gases and innovative solutions, including application technologies, equipment and services. From independent professionals to large industrial companies, our 33,500 employees serve over 2 million customers daily across 75 countries. In 2016, revenues were €7,565 million.

### **Air Liquide in China**

operates nearly 90 plants and employs more than 4,000 employees. With a strong presence in the key coastal industrial areas, the Group is further expanding into the center, south and west of the country. Its main business activities include industrial and medical gas operations, as well as Engineering & Construction (designing, manufacturing and installing air separation units/hydrogen facilities).

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The world leader in gases, technologies and services for Industry and Health, Air Liquide is present in 80 countries with approximately 67,000 employees and serves more than 3 million customers and patients. Oxygen, nitrogen and hydrogen are essential small molecules for life, matter and energy. They embody Air Liquide's scientific territory and have been at the core of the company's activities since its creation in 1902.

Air Liquide's ambition is to lead its industry, deliver long term performance and contribute to sustainability. The company's customer-centric transformation strategy aims at profitable growth over the long term. It relies on operational excellence, selective investments, open innovation and a network organization implemented by the Group worldwide. Through the commitment and inventiveness of its people, Air Liquide leverages energy and environment transition, changes in healthcare and digitization, and delivers greater value to all its stakeholders.

Air Liquide's revenue amounted to €18.1 billion in 2016 and its solutions that protect life and the environment represented more than 40% of sales. Air Liquide is listed on the Euronext Paris stock exchange (compartment A) and belongs to the CAC 40, EURO STOXX 50 and FTSE4Good indexes.