

We have recently successfully completed GE's LEXAN-2 polycarbonate plant with our joint venture (JV) partners Sener and Técnicas Reunidas. The new plant at La Aljorra, near Cartagena in Spain, is a 'smart clone' (duplicate plant with value-added changes only) of the LEXAN-1 plant completed at this location by the same JV at the end of 1998.

# Polycarbonate LEXAN-2 Success in SPAIN



*Francisco Becerril, project manager, Foster Wheeler Iberia.*

The new plant will produce 130,000 tons per year of polycarbonate. Foster Wheeler handled the monomer plant: carbon monoxide, dimethyl carbonate and diphenyl carbonate units, utilities and the interconnections between LEXAN-1 and LEXAN-2. The other members of the joint venture handled the rest of the plant: bisphenol acetone, polymers, finishing and storage, tankage and offsites.

As part of the 'smart clone' approach, Intergraph PDS™ drawings were updated to the co-ordinates for the new plant, improvements were made to the dimethyl carbonate unit and, where possible, use of LEXAN-1 equipment suppliers was maximised. To meet the schedule, special materials were purchased early, such as tantalum, glass lining, Teflon, Hastelloy, Sanicro and duplex, and piping materials were purchased via internet auctions.

A good safety performance was achieved during construction; training courses attended by all construction personnel throughout the project contributed to this achievement.

The high quality polycarbonate produced is used in such industries as optical, automotive (headlights, car body parts), communication systems (CDs and DVDs), and information technology.

## LEXAN-2 facts & figures

<b>475</b>	pipings & instrument drawings
<b>16,000</b>	isometrics
<b>20,000</b>	instrument signals
<b>2,300</b>	equipment pieces
<b>1,000</b>	electric motors
<b>&gt; 5 million</b>	direct construction manhours
<b>35,000 m<sup>3</sup></b>	concrete
<b>8,000 te</b>	structural steel
<b>200 kms</b>	pipe
<b>1,700 kms</b>	electrical & instrument cable
<b>130,000 m</b>	steam tracing
<b>2,100</b>	construction manpower peak