FMBusinessDaily

Data centre builds suffer project disruption

3 years ago

A new Europe-wide report has found external site disruptions and inflationary pressures are causing delays to the construction of new data centres and preventing them adopting greener practices.

This comes from the second half of a two-part report series from Aggreko, titled *Uptime on the Line*, which explores the challenges affecting data centre construction projects, such as skills and equipment shortages, the viability of renewable alternatives and power procurement.

The report highlights the majority of contractors are having to extend timelines due to supply difficulties, with rising costs compounding the sectors difficulties – only 8% of those surveyed reported no delays due to supply chain-related disruption. The research uses insights from a survey of 700 data centre professionals consulting for large businesses in the UK, Ireland, Germany, France, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden.

As pressures mount for adopting low-carbon construction, the report also explores the sector challenges preventing uptake of greener practices. For example, lack of skills was among the top two challenges for adopting renewable energy during the construction phase in every surveyed region besides France.

Global sector head – data centres Billy Durie said: “Exponential increases in global internet usage and the rise of high-performance computing mean demand for new data centres is set to rise rapidly. Coping with such traffic now seems vital to not only the data centre space, but Europe’s wider economic growth.

“Market disruptions, rising costs and regulatory pressures, however, mean challenges outside of contractors’ control are jeopardising project schedules. The demand for new sites to cope with traffic volumes mean this will soon become unsustainable, necessity strategies which combat delays, while supporting the transition to renewable practices.”

To support the data centre market with these challenges, the report highlights the bridging solutions designed to keep data centre builds on track. Such approaches use tactical strategies and new technologies to; secure power, integrate greener power, maximise energy efficiency, minimise delays and counter weather conditions.

Mr Durie said: “Data centre construction requires various different parts working in unison and while delays often come part and parcel with new builds, as disruption becomes more common, comprehensive contingency planning should too. Innovations in equipment mean contractors can offset these challenges with energy and temperature control provisions throughout the building phase. “As the demand for data centres becomes more intense, the bridging solutions discussed in Aggreko’s report offer the stability contractors need to deliver projects on-time. However, technologies that improve resilience to external disruptions, must support contractors’ bottom-lines and sustainability credentials. Doing so will be key for what is set to be a period of insatiable growth for the sector.”