

## Education – Training

### STEEL SPORTS CENTRE DESIGN COMPETITION

Otua recently presented the awards for a design competition organised by the Paris Val-de-Seine School of Architecture. The subject was a 20,000-capacity sports centre at Porte de la Chapelle on the edge of Paris as part of the capital's bid for the 2012 Olympics.

Students had to address the following requirements:

- Integrate all facilities (ticket offices, toilets, massage rooms, gymnasium, media centre, VIP areas, etc).
- Design modularity: it must be possible to convert the centre into a 16,000-seat facility after the Olympic Games.
- Solve a challenging urban development equation given the surrounding complex, dense road infrastructure.

**Three out of nine projects awarded prizes.**

first prize-winner (800 euros) and the joint second prize-winners (350 euros each) leverage both the technical and aesthetic qualities of steel. The students maximised transparency (very fine structure supporting extensive picture windows), incorporated mirror features (stainless steel roof) and produced some truly unique designs (a boat-shaped ring surrounding the sports hall).

Overseeing the project, architect Michel Regembal – one of the four architects who designed the Stade de France – commended the students' ability to present and defend their individual projects before the panel of judges, just as they will be required to do when they embark on their careers. On Regembal's request, Otua will be repeating this initiative at his school of architecture next year.

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### OTUA APPOINTS SECOND CIVIL ENGINEERING GENERAL INSPECTOR

Until now, André Montes covered among others all vocational civil engineering courses (spanning all materials) available in France, numbering some 400 diplomas. The appointment of a second inspector – who will be selected from ten candidates all with advanced civil engineering teaching qualifications – offers Otua (and representatives of other materials) further opportunities for promoting the benefits of steel.

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## Website update

### DEDICATED TOOLING STEEL RESOURCE

Last month Otua unveiled a dedicated "Tooling Steel" database on its website.

Let's say you need to make a drill, a saw or a round set hammer and you're not sure which grade steel to use. Now, you can simply log on to [www.otua.org](http://www.otua.org), go to "Services en ligne" (Online Services) or "Tout sur l'Acier" (All About Steel) and you'll find the answer. This new resource presents all standardised European grades, detailing mechanical properties, chemical composition and treatments. The database features a search engine to assist users.

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### OTUA A HIT WITH WEB SEARCHERS

Statistics on Otua website traffic reveal a growing number of hits via search engines.

According to statistics for the April-June period:

- The main key words that lead search engine users to the website: first is "Otua", followed by "Viaduc de Millau" (or "steel bridges", "steelbridge 2004"), and "Acier" (steel), "normes acier" (steel standards), "cours de l'acier" (steel prices), "nuance acier" (steel grade).
- Online payments have increased (especially for registrations for Steelbridge).
- More visitors reach the site via search engines: 38.5 percent in June compared with 15 percent in April. This is a result of better indexing.
- When Web surfers enter "acier" (steel) in the Google search engine, Otua appears fourth out of 295,000 matches. It is listed at the top of 103,000 matches for "développement durable" (sustainable development) and first out of 156,000 for "Traitements de surfaces" (surface treatments).

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## Sustainable development

### OTUA PROMOTES HIGH ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS

Underscoring its commitment to sustainable development, Otua recently joined the French association Haute Qualité Environnementale, which promotes advanced environmental quality.

In June, Otua became one of the 66 members of HQE, alongside several other representative bodies of the construction sector, notably organisations promoting the use of competing or complementary materials, such as concrete and plaster.

For Otua, this step is a response to a number of challenges:

- Promote the multiple innovative benefits offered by steel to address sustainable development requirements.
- Reiterate its support for environmental initiatives.
- Gain access through the association's network to information on environmental quality in the construction sector (such as HQE certification for residential and commercial projects).
- Extend the reach of documents and events on sustainable development initiated by Otua.

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### Recent publications from Otua

- Le bulletin ouvrages métalliques (Steel Construction Newsletter) No. 3, June 2004, on footbridges, opening bridges and other steel structures (30 euros).
- Annals of the Steelbridge conference papers, in English only (80 euros).
- Special report on steel training courses available in France, available online: [www.otua.org](http://www.otua.org) / Publications (in French or English).

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TECHNICAL ADVISORY BUREAU FOR STEEL USERS

# INFOTUA

Experts in steel solutions  
Newsletter N°5 July 2004

## AVIS

### Global communications, local actions

*The Otua plays two fundamental and complementary roles, one national and international in some regards – the other local.*

*First of all, Otua pursues broad initiatives to promote steel "upstream", helping create a positive and attractive image for this material. At the same time, the steel industry needs to be present directly in the field to provide concrete assistance for professionals, allowing them to benefit from the full potential of steel.*

*Our general initiatives to promote steel have proved very successful – the "Made of Steel" campaign is a perfect example. This is also true for the educational tools created for teachers, as well as conferences with dynamic international reach such as Steelbridge, which proved a tremendous success, drawing both a significant number of avid participants and featuring high-quality presentations. Initiatives such as these sustain knowledge of steel and an appreciation for its qualities.*

*We also need to promote both "symbolic" achievements with a high media profile, like the Millau viaduct, as well as less widely known projects that are part of peoples' daily lives across Europe and constitute important markets for steel. Medium or smaller bridges would prove an excellent theme for a future symposium, for instance.*

*Otua is already very much involved at the local level, organizing "technical days" at project worksites, posting a full array of tools on the website to help customers choose and use steel. However, I believe that Otua should be given additional resources to allow the organization to deepen this presence on the "front lines" to help convince prime contractors and specifiers of the benefits of steel.*

*I therefore see the balance between global communications and local initiatives as the key challenge facing Otua in the years ahead. This challenge is shared by all organizations that promote steel in Europe. We will all benefit from better coordination of our activities and joint organization of initiatives in favor of steel.*

Ralf Hubo  
GENERAL MARKETING MANAGER DE DILLING GTS,  
ET MEMBRE DU CONSEIL D'ADMINISTRATION DE L'OTUA

## Bridges and civil engineering structures

### MILLAU – AN INTERNATIONAL CROSSROADS OF STEEL BRIDGES

The Steelbridge symposium organised from 23rd-25th June by Otua in the southern French town of Millau drew 355 delegates of 36 nationalities. The showpiece was the Millau Viaduct – a harmonious convergence of engineering and architectural imperatives. Who was the matchmaker? Steel, of course!

Gathering participants from throughout the world (notably France, Spain, Belgium, UK, Italy, South Korea and Japan), the three-day Steelbridge conference provided a dynamic forum for discussions of the latest innovations in civil engineering structures among bridge experts: academics, engineering companies, representatives from government highways agencies, bridge design offices, inspection authorities, steel construction companies, and others. Exchanges were pursued within the scope of a full agenda, including:

- Some forty conferences and almost as many poster sessions covering a broad spectrum of steel bridges (suspension, cable-stayed, arch, twin-girder), launch systems and more specifically the Millau Viaduct, from design through to construction.
- Exhibits showcasing design software, cable mounting systems, lifting mechanisms, anti-vibration solutions, and more.
- Visits to the Millau Viaduct – the highpoint of the conference – along with the Garrigue and Verrières viaducts, which also stretch across the motorway that crosses the Millau Viaduct. A number of delegates visited the Garabit and Viaur bridges.

Designed by British architect Sir Norman Foster, the Millau Viaduct is a remarkable illustration of how, rather than being at odds with one another, the imperatives of architecture and engineering can converge to achieve stunning results. This is particularly manifest in the light steel deck which casts an elegantly simple stroke across the horizon, and the slender soaring pillars and cables that support it, bringing grace to this 250,000-tonne structure.

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Specialists from around the world were on hand to discuss the state of the art in bridge construction.

Photos: Photo Video Jamme

## Construction

### CONSTRUCTION ECONOMISTS GET A TASTE FOR STEEL

Otua took part in the 32nd annual conference of the French Union of Construction Economists and Coordinators (Untec), held in Besançon, in eastern France, last June 2nd-4th. The event offered an ideal opportunity for promoting the benefits of steel within this profession, which today plays a pivotal role in project management.

The centuries-old trade of quantity surveying has evolved to keep pace with developments in industry and building techniques. Today, these professionals go by the name of "construction economists" and are closely involved in every project phase. Their task is to estimate and control project costs and to assist the project manager with calls for tender and the choice of contractors. This makes them a prime audience for promoting the cost and ecological benefits of steel.

#### Guidelines on steel construction assembly times

At the conference, Otua took part in a forum on "innovative materials and sustainable development", bringing together representatives from the steel, concrete, aluminium and mineral wool industries, as well as French gas utility, Gaz de France. Alongside Untec and Arcelor, Otua also

participated in a session entitled "Steel", focusing on steel construction solutions. The work group announced that it will soon publish an appendix to the guide "Economics and Steel Solutions", providing data on average assembly times of steel frames and shells. These guidelines will offer an invaluable resource for construction economists, allowing them to firm up construction lead-times and advocate the use of steel solutions when negotiating with project owners. These guidelines will be published in early 2005.



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### SOCIAL HOUSING: HIGHER VISIBILITY FOR STEEL

Just two percent of French housing employs steel frames. Determined to improve on this low proportion, Otua teamed up with regional housing agencies in Nord Pas de Calais and Picardy to organise a one-day conference on "Steel and social housing" in Lille, last May 26th.

Are developers in the North of France – a region typified by red-brick houses – aware that attractive, cost-effective building solutions are available in the form of steel structures and brick cladding?

Apparently not. Like professionals in other regions, they tend to be insufficiently informed about the benefits

of steel for housing, namely: modularity, low manufacturing costs, and its potential for creating a sense of spaciousness. To help fill this knowledge gap and promote steel solutions, Otua organised the "Steel and social housing" conference in partnership with USH (Social Housing Union) and other housing agencies in northern France.

#### Expanding the network of small and medium-sized steel construction companies

Acier Construction, an association set up 20 years ago by architect Paul Depondt to promote the use of steel in the residential construction sector, was another key contributor to this one-day event. It presented Prism, a structural design software package that also performs building pre-sizing. This application delivers a custom-tailored solution for developers, who require support for steel constructions right from the design stage. Acier Construction also publishes a directory of steel construction companies that offer the requisite know-how to undertake steel building projects. Built up over the past twenty years, this network today needs expanding in order to meet rising demand.

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A special housing brochure is also available on request from Otua.



*Steel is still not widely enough used for individual home construction*

## Construction

### OTUA FOSTERS LINKS WITH SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES

Otua took part in the annual conference of the Small Building Company and Tradesmen's Confederation (CAPEB) held in Perpignan, in south-west France, from 3rd-5th June. The aim was to improve mutual awareness between the two professional bodies and examine possible areas for joint action.

Invited to present its activities and objectives – and the myriad benefits of steel for sustainable construction projects – Otua also seized this opportunity to learn more about CABEB, which defends the interests of 300,000 construction companies. The confederation encompasses eight families of trades, including steel hardware. This sector counts around 11,000 companies offering steel as well as aluminium and PVC solutions for construction applications (steel frames, roofing, etc.), home protection (doors, locks, plating, home automation systems, etc.), and home improvement (lifts, ramps, stairs, solar control, etc.). All of which adds up to a key target for promoting the use of steel.

#### Joint projects

Otua and Capeb announced that they are pooling their efforts in a number of joint projects:

- Encouraging young people to join the building trade, in particular small and medium-sized companies, which are presently facing recruitment difficulties.
- Publishing steel construction guidelines (e.g., a new edition of the brochure "Steel structures: simplified design", written jointly).
- Examining the possibility of joint actions in social housing (see article opposite at left).

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### A LOOK INSIDE CONTEMPORARY HOMES

Over 300 contemporary architect-designed houses opened their doors to the French public in June – including some 50 "Made of Steel" homes.

Ineluctably, the more people see the "Made of Steel" logo, the more aware they are that steel is synonymous with comfortable living and architectural creativity. Under the aegis of Otua, the Made of Steel campaign sponsored this year's "Contemporary Home Open Days", last June 11th-20th, to highlight the role played by steel in our everyday lives.

The houses and apartments chosen for the event are located throughout France, and include a few in Switzerland. They offer examples of both new constructions and renovations, from large properties to studio flats. Visits were by appointment



## Made of Steel

### RAISE A GLASS AND SAVE YOUNG LIVES

Supported by the Made of Steel campaign, the Dry-Verre one-day action was conducted in France to discourage youngsters aged 15-24 from drink-driving. Otua spearheaded the partnership, which also spotlights the benefits of steel.

What's the connection between steel and staying sober at the wheel? It all began in 1996 with the creation of the pressure group "La Route des Jeunes" aimed at preventing road accidents involving young people, currently the main cause of death in the 15-24 age group in France. Over 400 volunteers – all under 25 – have since joined the group, which aims to heighten awareness among young people in bars and clubs about the dangers of drinking and driving. The idea is to encourage young drivers to hand over their car keys in exchange for a free, non-alcoholic drink. At the end of the evening, they get their keys back if they pass a breath test.

#### Steel steps in

As part of the Made of Steel campaign, steel contributed to these efforts by funding a one-off operation, dubbed Dry-verre (literally, "dry glass", and a pun in Franglais on "driver"), and conducted on 15th May in the Centre, Burgundy, Franche-Comté, Ile de France-Paris and Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur regions. In addition to soft drinks, with this campaign drivers who keep to their pledge of "staying dry" all night receive a free stainless steel glass. 6,000 stainless steel glasses (0.8 mm 304 grade) were drawn for this action using sheet produced by Ugine & ALZ. An excellent way of introducing youngsters to steel while saving lives!



*A sleek steel glass for young people who pass a breath test when leaving bars and clubs. Supported by the Made of Steel campaign.*

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A special issue of the magazine Architectures à vivre focused on these open days (Issue No. 18, May-June 2004 – 5.50 euros, available at newsagents and for consultation at Otua).

*The steel show house in La Villette, Paris, has been acquired through auction by a Caen-based property promoter. The house can still be visited until the end of September. It currently welcomes 700-800 visitors each week.*

