

ABB technology keeps indoor skydivers in the air at the Wind Games 2017

February 2, 2017 – ABB variable speed drives provide precise control of the airspeed in one of the world's top indoor wind tunnels

More than 200 elite indoor skydivers from across the world are showing off their indoor flying skills at the Wind Games 2017, taking place on February 3-4 in Spain's Windoor Realfly vertical wind tunnel. As they tackle a range of disciplines including speed races, freestyle and formation skydiving, they will rely on ABB variable speed drives (VSDs) to ensure precise and almost instantaneous control of wind speeds up to 300 km/h – stronger than a Class 5 hurricane.

The Windoor Realfly facility in Empuriabrava, Province of Girona in north eastern Spain, was constructed by Strojirna Litvinov, the Czech-based wind tunnel specialists and opened in 2013. It rapidly became established as one of Europe's leading centers for indoor skydiving and is the home of the Wind Games, now in its fourth year, regarded as the unofficial world championships.

In addition to providing beginners with an introduction to the exciting sport of indoor flying, 15 minutes in the wind tunnel chamber is the same as 15 freefall jumps from an aircraft making it an ideal training facility for experienced skydivers.

"We operate 12 hours a day, every day of the week. Therefore total reliability is a must as any downtime results in unhappy customers and lost revenue. The ABB drives have performed perfectly over the past 4 years," said Sergi Ponsa, Director of Marketing and Communications for the Windoor Realfly & Wave Club.

The wind tunnel chamber, 4 meters in diameter and 15 meters high, can accommodate up to 8 skydivers at a time. The upward airflow that enables them to 'fly' is generated by four massive electric fans. The fan speed is controlled by four ABB ACS800 industrial drives with a precision that enables the wind force in the tunnel to vary from 150 km/h to 300 km/h in less than a second.

Morten Wierod, Managing Director of ABB's Drives business unit says: "This indoor wind tunnel is a perfect example of the precision control and reliability provided by our industrial drives. Compared to the previous setup of operating the wind tunnel with generators running on oil and petrochemicals, the drives ensure the electricity costs are reduced to minimum by controlling the speed of the fans based on actual airflow demand."

"ABB has provided a complete service package, so we can rest assured that should there be any problem technical support is available 24/7, an engineer is always a phone call away and support personnel can get on site usually in 4 hours or in a maximum of 24 hours," concluded Ponsa.

About ABB

ABB (ABBN: SIX Swiss Ex) is a pioneering technology leader in electrification products, robotics and motion, industrial automation and power grids, serving customers in utilities, industry and transport & infrastructure globally. Continuing more than a 125-year history of innovation, ABB today is writing the future of industrial digitalization and driving the Energy and Fourth Industrial Revolutions. ABB operates in more than 100 countries with about 135,000 employees. www.abb.com



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