

SAS International, a leading specialist in interior fit-out solutions, is further strengthening its decades-long presence in the Middle East by launching a new training centre this month in Dubai, UAE, following the recent opening of a depot facility in the emirate. These moves come as part of its continued investment in the region.

SAS International, a UK-based designer and manufacturer of interior fit-out solutions including metal ceiling solutions and partitioning system products, has supplied to many landmark projects in the region over the past 30 years. It has offices and project teams in the region able to help support clients, specifiers, contractors and engineers, from concept to completion.

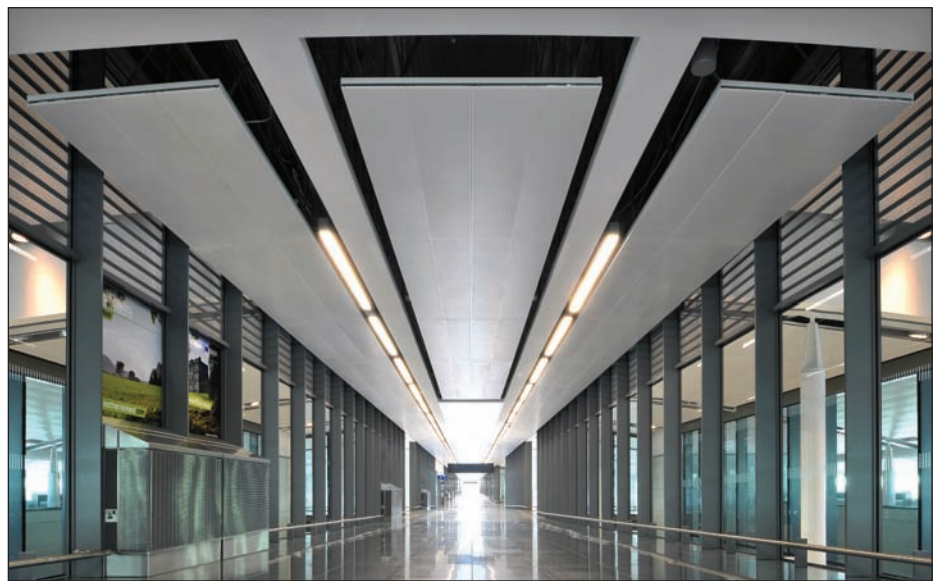
“Working in partnership means the needs of clients and that of the industry, legislation and regulation can be best met whilst maintaining overall value for the client,” says Andrew Jackson, director at SAS International. “An example of this is involvement right at design stage so that the demands that legislation may place on a building, ease of buildability in the construction process, and ongoing maintenance requirements can be considered, right from the outset. Minimising waste and reducing risk are integral parts of this philosophy.”

The Dubai office, which serves as a hub for SAS International’s project activity in the Middle East, North Africa and India regions, has now been operating for over a year. In addition, the company also has an office in Abu Dhabi and in Saudi Arabia. With a specialist export team based in the UK, supported by the local offices in the Middle East, projects can be closely managed and efficiently carried out every step of the way.

Continued investment in the region has seen the office site in Dubai Investment Park Two evolve since it first opened. “The design and technical solutions team based there can provide specifiers, contractors, developers and clients advice from initial concept through to installation. The office facilities also boast a dedicated mock-up area, enabling project teams to visualise products in situ and to get a feel for their functional and durable qualities as well as design-led finish,” Jackson says.

A dedicated training suite has just been completed at the Dubai facility and will be officially launched this month. The centre offers contractors flexible training and seminar programmes where SAS International’s technical experts will impart their expertise and tailor sessions to specific requirements. The comprehensive sessions are designed to provide informative practical advice on the installation of metal ceiling solutions and par-

SAS opens Dubai depot and training centre



tioning systems covering product performance properties and details on fitting durable ceiling solutions that are designed to last for a minimum of 25 years.

“The development of this range of resources in Dubai, including the new depot, means SAS International’s customer base has ease of access to high-quality products and expert service,” says Jackson.

The new depot facility in Dubai will cut on lead times and help the company enhance its services to its customers. The 15,500-sq-ft site

at the Dubai Investment Park stocks a range of commodity products, with trade counter facilities on site and staff on hand to advise on technical aspects of products and installation detail.”

Products available from the new depot include SAS International’s popular International White T-grid, as well as System 150 and 130 clip-in and lay-in metal ceiling systems and the new System 8000 partitioning.

“Direct from stock means contractors can

adhere to the short lead times often demanded today in coordinating fit-out projects,” says Jackson. “Also, contractors are able to specify high-quality metal ceiling systems at very competitive prices, with the reassurance that products come from SAS International’s manufacturing facilities that are accredited to ISO 9001, ISO 14001 standards and OHSAS18001.”

The new System 8000 is a fully-glazed frameless partitioning system that successfully combines contemporary aesthetics with outstanding fire performance and acoustic control.

“Used in conjunction with SAS International’s award-winning C-Joint, a clear yet robust finish for jointing both fully single- and double-glazed partitioning can be achieved. Saving vital time on site, the C-Joint is installed at the same point as the partitioning glass. As a solid extrusion, it provides a consistent 1.5-mm compression joint between glass modules to create the appearance of butt jointed glass,” he explains.

Production

SAS International manufactures a broad range of durable, sustainable and aesthetic products, meeting a range of design, performance and integration requirements. It has complete control of the production process, which means product quality is maintained and maximum value ensured.

“Continuous investment in manufacturing facilities and technology enables the company to stay ahead in the marketplace, and provide a tailored and quick response,” says Jackson.

Wherever possible, SAS International looks to provide value engineering, through the design of products, manufacturing processes that reduce waste, maximising efficiencies and improving on-site installation, and providing durable products and solutions.

The company manufactures performance-led metal ceiling systems in steel and aluminium along with architectural metalwork solutions, and a range of partitioning and door solutions. These ranges of products for the fit-out market enable value-driven packages to be coordinated and supplied from a single source.

Sustainability

Through better design, responsible sourcing of materials and innovative manufacturing techniques, SAS International is able to provide clients with solutions that help their buildings to achieve suitable ratings under systems such as Estidama’s Pearl Rating System, Leed (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) and Breeam (BRE



Environmental Assessment Method).

“Sustainability has become increasingly important as projects now demand long-term value of any product, balanced with environmental credentials and greater design flexibility to meet occupant comfort demands,” Jackson says.

He points out that steel is the world’s most recycled product and can continuously be recycled without any loss of value or properties withholding a residual value at end of life. Once installed, metal offers an inert and inherently hardwearing surface, making metal ceiling systems both hygienic and a low-maintenance option, he adds.

“Metal ceiling solutions have a lifespan in excess of 25 years requiring basic maintenance. Using approved architectural powder coatings, the paint finish can be guaranteed for 30 or 40 years. This provides the durability and longevity that many clients are increasingly specifying,” he adds.

Modern office environments also require careful consideration of acoustic control and space flexibility, along with low maintenance costs and product durability. Other important factors such as life cycle costs and flexibility of product to meet the demands of occupants over a 50- to 60-year building life cycle are also important.

Jackson comments: “With many office properties coming onto the market in the Middle East, and in Dubai and Abu Dhabi in particular, it is essential that owners are seen to offer the best value to potential clients if they are to rent the space quickly. One of the most successful ways of doing this is by upgrading the space to include ceilings, raised floors and services rather than just offering shell and core. In doing this, potential tenants can get an understanding of space flexibility and how their business could function efficiently.”

Projects

The company has supplied solutions to many prestigious projects in the region

including the stunning new Aldar headquarters and The Souk, Central Market, Abu Dhabi. The company has also worked on numerous projects in Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

SAS International’s System 150 metal suspended ceiling solution was specified for the interior fit-out of the Aldar headquarters building in Abu Dhabi. “As a Category A office development, aesthetics, occupant comfort and durability were all key considerations for specification. The suspended ceiling system was required to make a significant contribution to acoustic comfort within the office areas, taking into consideration both open-plan acoustic absorption and room-to-room privacy. In addition, acoustic flexibility for future tenants had to be considered to suit individual space-planning requirements.

“This state-of-the-art commercial development has impressive sustainability credentials, having been developed in line with the US Green Building Council’s Leed rating system,” says Jackson.

For The Souk, Abu Dhabi Central Market, the company provided bespoke lighting and service channels as well as metal ceilings for the lift lobby areas.

“With many unusual shapes and specifications involved in The Souk’s design, SAS International was actively involved in the design and manufacture of these high-quality architectural metalwork solutions for both internal and external applications. Ensuring the highest standard throughout was essential as, still partially under construction, Abu Dhabi’s Central Market has already become a landmark in the city,” he says.

Meanwhile, SAS International is working on the extension of the main terminal building and inbound baggage handling facilities at the New Doha International Airport. This has required working closely with sub-contractor Al Misnad Trading to facilitate the right look and finish, utilising SAS International’s metal ceiling systems and bespoke architectural metalwork solutions.