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## **Press release**

### **Inauguration of the A79: France's first free-flow tolling motorway**

On Monday, 14 November, with the Prefect of Allier, Valérie Hatsch, and Eiffage Chairman and CEO Benoît de Ruffray in attendance, Minister Delegate for Transport Clément Beaune officially inaugurated the new A79 motorway, which entered service on Friday, 4 November 2022. This 88-kilometre section between Sazeret (Allier) and Digoïn (Saône-et-Loire) links the A71 and A6 motorways.

The project was decided by the French government in 2017 to ensure rapid safety improvements to the highly accident-prone RN79. It was assigned in March 2020 to the Eiffage Group, which arranged finance for an investment of over €600 million.

This project to widen the RN79 and upgrade it to motorway standard was completed in just two years with no interruption of traffic, and drew upon all the Eiffage group's different areas of expertise. The route includes 12 interchanges, 3 rest areas and a service area, with almost 150 engineering structures. In total, the project required 3,100,000 working hours, including over 500,000 hours of access-to-employment work, and enlisted almost 530 local businesses, with 1,200 people working on the project at its busiest.

Operation and maintenance of the A79 are being managed from the beginning of the concession by teams from APRR, the Eiffage motorways subsidiary.

Eiffage made a commitment to minimise the carbon footprint for this project and conserve natural resources as far as possible. The route was established with consideration for the surrounding environment, especially where it crosses the Val d'Allier nature reserve. Additionally, a 380-hectare offsetting programme has been rolled out, and 71,000 plants bearing the "Végétal local" label will be used for landscaping.

The A79 is France's first motorway equipped with the free-flow tolling system authorised by the December 2019 Law on Mobility (LOM). Along the route, six gantries equipped with infrared cameras and sensors automatically detect vehicle types and registration numbers to determine toll payments. The infrastructure foregoes any physical toll barriers, thus reducing the land footprint required, improving traffic fluidity and contributing to the modernisation of the French motorway network.

On 30 June 2022, Eiffage transferred ALIAÉ, which holds the 48-year concession contract for the A79 as an integral part of the network, to its subsidiary APRR. APRR operates more than 2,400 kilometres of motorway in France, including 200 kilometres within Allier.

**About Eiffage**

Eiffage is one of Europe's leading construction and concessions companies. The Group's activities are organised around the following business lines: construction, real estate and urban development, civil engineering, metal, roads, energy and concessions. Thanks to the experience of more than 73,500 employees, Eiffage generated revenue of €18.7 billion in 2021, of which 27% was outside France.

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