

AI in Construction : SOCOTEC and FREEDA partner to industrialize AI-based architectural plan analysis

- A pioneering and strategic partnership to digitalize plan review through AI, secure regulatory compliance, and accelerate digital transformation in the Construction sector.
- More than 4,000 pilot projects starting in Q1 2026 to set new standards of expertise between a deeptech pioneer in this field and the global leader in Testing, Inspection and Certification (TIC), fully dedicated to the built environment for nearly 75 years.

Paris, January 26, 2026 – For immediate release

SOCOTEC, a global leader in Testing, Inspection and Certification (TIC) services dedicated to compliance, sustainability and risk management for the built environment, today announces a strategic partnership with FREEDA, a French deeptech company pioneering the use of artificial intelligence for reading and analyzing architectural plans.

In the context of increasing regulatory pressure, growing project complexity and the constant search for performance, this partnership aims to address a fundamental challenge facing the construction industry: leveraging digitalisation to improve reliability and compliance while faithfully preserving the architect's original design intent. According to the *Digitalisation in Construction* report by RICS¹, the global construction sector remains slow in adopting advanced digital technologies, despite significant potential for improvement. However, 44% of construction companies plan to invest in artificial intelligence in the coming years, positioning AI as a strategic driver of industry transformation².

Compliance: a critical challenge still largely manual

Today, construction project compliance still relies heavily on manual processes: time-consuming reviews of complex plans, spreadsheets, annotations across hundreds of pages, and multiple document versions that are difficult to reconcile. Early-stage compliance reviews can represent hundreds of hours of work per project, without fully eliminating the risks of errors and non-compliance, which often lead to delays, cost overruns, rework and postponed commissioning.

FREEDA, a pioneer of AI-augmented compliance

FREEDA was created precisely to address this challenge. The deeptech company develops artificial intelligence models capable of automatically reading, understanding and analyzing architectural plans, and comparing them against applicable regulatory, normative and contractual requirements.

From a simple plan upload, the FREEDA solution analyzes documents, checks each requirement, precisely identifies and locates deviations, and generates a comprehensive, documented and actionable compliance report. This approach gives project owners full visibility into compliance risks from the design phase onward, enabling early error detection, more reliable decision-making, reduced risk, and on-time project delivery in full compliance.

SOCOTEC, a historic trusted third-party and global leader in compliance

As a natural partner to this ambition, SOCOTEC brings unique expertise built on more than 70 years of experience, fully dedicated to compliance, sustainability and risk management across construction, real estate, infrastructure and industrial facilities.

Operating worldwide, SOCOTEC supports 250,000 clients, relies on more than 250 accreditations issued by competent authorities and regulatory bodies, and acts as an independent trusted third-party for both private and public stakeholders. Thanks to an exceptional database built over decades of operations, SOCOTEC holds an unparalleled knowledge base to train and strengthen FREEDA's AI models.

Large-scale deployment starting in 2026

From Q1 2026, a FREEDA module will be directly integrated into SOCOTEC's tools and deployed across more than 4,000 pilot projects. The solution will enable automated architectural plan reading, detailed analysis of compliant and non-compliant items, and delivery of results through an interactive, clickable and configurable report that precisely locates each identified issue on the plans.

A structuring partnership to accelerate industry transformation

The partnership begins with a commercial agreement, including a three-month exclusivity granted to SOCOTEC during the first quarter of 2026. Numerous joint communication initiatives and additional collaborative actions are planned throughout 2026. Together, SOCOTEC and FREEDA aim to accelerate the adoption of artificial intelligence, secure projects from the earliest stages, and establish new standards of expertise and reliability across the entire construction value chain.

Hervé Montjotin, CEO of the SOCOTEC Group, said:

"This partnership with FREEDA illustrates our commitment to remaining at the forefront of innovation while strengthening our role as a trusted, independent third party. Artificial intelligence automates time-consuming tasks, enabling our construction engineers to focus on higher value-added activities such as optimization and client project support. By combining our long-standing expertise in building compliance and risk management with the most advanced artificial intelligence technologies, we are helping to drive lasting transformation across the industry."

Peter Starr, CEO and Founder of FREEDA, added:

"Compliance is still too often implicit, fragmented and time-consuming. With SOCOTEC, we aim to make it systematic, measurable and demonstrable. This partnership enables us to deploy a new generation of AI-driven services at scale, supporting projects that are more reliable, faster to deliver and better controlled."

(1) Source : RICS

<https://www.rics.org/content/dam/ricsglobal/documents/research/Digitalisation-in-construction-report-2024.pdf>

(2) Source Batinfo Cayola

https://batinfo.com/en/actualite/les-entreprises-francaises-de-construction-prennent-le-virage-de-lia-et-de-la-digitalisation_28886

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ABOUT SOCOTEC

Accompanying companies for 70 years, the SOCOTEC Group, chaired by Hervé Montjotin, has built its reputation as an independent trusted third-party in the fields of risk management, compliance, safety, health and environment in the Building, Real Estate, Infrastructure and Industry sectors.

As a guarantor of the integrity, sustainability and performance of built assets, SOCOTEC is developing a range of services in testing, inspection and certification, from technical control, the group's historical expertise, to technical consulting and risk management services related to construction, infrastructure and industrial facilities. Its expertise enables it to support its private and public sector clients throughout the life cycle of their buildings and equipment in order to strengthen their sustainability.

No. 1 in construction inspection in France, No. 1 in geotechnical services and construction quality control in the United Kingdom and Italy, the group is a major player in TIC (Testing Inspection Certification) services in the Construction and Infrastructure sectors in Europe and the United States. The SOCOTEC group has consolidated revenues of 1.850 bn Euros and 60% of international revenues (40% of revenues come from France) with 250,000 clients. With a presence in 26 countries and 15,000 employees, it has more than 250 external accreditations, enabling it to act as a trusted third-party in many projects. More information on www.socotec.com