

Transportation Beyond the Millennium: *Searching for the Real Economic and Environmental Solutions*

British National Committee Hosts 1997 PIARC National Congress

Transportation managers from around the globe gathered in Manchester, England, November 5 to 7, for the 1997 British National Congress and Exhibition. The theme for the Congress was **TRANSPORTATION BEYOND THE MILLENNIUM: Searching for the real economic and environmental solutions.**

The United Kingdom is one of many countries with a national committee to support World Road Association (PIARC) initiatives. The mission of PIARC is to identify the best state-of-the-practice for available road technology and management and to publicize these to the benefit of member agencies. Member nations are eager to hear perspectives and experiences of other countries and to advance their own transportation programs through adopting and often adapting and improving on these innovations.

The British invited participants from outside the UK to enhance their program. Additionally, PIARC Committees were invited to meet in conjunction with the Congress. These national committees provide a venue for public and private sector leaders to come together and address common issues. As a member of PIARC, the U.S. was an active participant and presenter in much of the meeting. The BNC also marked the midpoint between international World Road Congresses.

The BNC was preceded by a program of events designed specifically for senior decision makers in national road and economic planning departments from developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Activities encompassed workshops, meetings, and technical tours:

- **Workshop on Transportation Research Needs**— Delegates reviewed research in transport management and engineering for developing and industrializing countries to identify key problem areas, prioritize research areas that could contribute solutions, and propose possible funding strategies.

- **Seminar on HDM4 Applications in Road Management**—HDM4 is a transportation economic forecasting model, based on a model developed by the FHWA, that aids developing nations in project appraisal, road work programming, and strategic planning.
- **PIARC Committee Meetings**—10 PIARC Committees met in Manchester. See pages 2 and 3 for details of Committee work.

'House of Commons' Debate Sets Congress Tone

The spirit of the 1997 British National Congress and PIARC was evident as participants gathered on the House of Commons set at Granada Studios to hear representatives from the UK, South Africa, Malaysia, Australia, and the U.S. debate *"Congestion is inevitable and we have to plan for it."* The U.S. delegation was headed by Gloria Jeff, the newly appointed FHWA Deputy Administrator.

"Speaker" Steven Norris, a former British Member of Parliament and national transportation official, moderated the debate and gave the audience and debaters a crash course on the British parliamentary system. The clever exercise was also an opportunity for the national leaders to respond spontaneously to each other.

A recurring theme throughout the evening was emphasis on the need to search for commonality to solve transportation issues rather than being preoccupied with differences. Specifically, regardless of the sophistication of available technology, the political structure of road agencies, or the investment of road operators, the solution to transportation issues rests with the need to satisfy the customer—the road user.

Collaboration Enhances Road Development Worldwide

PIARC serves as a conduit for technology exchange among nations. In this role, the World Road Association also works cooperatively with a variety of international organizations to improve roads and road management. Organizations with which PIARC collaborates include:

- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
- World Bank
- InterAmerican Development Bank
- European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
- International Road Federation
- Road Engineering Association of Asia and Australia (REAAA)



PIARC Committees Work to Complete Projects by 1999 World Congress

The World Road Association maintains permanent committees of 30 to 50 members whose mission is to investigate transportation-related matters that are of interest to the Association's member countries. For example, two new committees on performance of road administrations and intelligent transportation systems were formed following the 1995 World Congress. The committees' work sets the stage for many controversial issues to be addressed at the next Congress. Committee reports are an invaluable tool for informing decision makers about emerging issues in the field of road policy.

The 4-year cycle between World Road Congresses is a busy one for the PIARC committees, and meetings are often scheduled to coincide with national road congresses. Ten committees scheduled meetings in Manchester, England, November 3 to 4, to coordinate with the British National Congress held November 5 to 7. The following is a review of the Committees' activities whose chairmen or members are U.S. Federal and State transportation officials.

C3 Technology Exchanges and Development

Members of the Technology Exchanges and Development Committee met to evaluate the effectiveness of existing technology transfer initiatives, to present Work Group reports, and to plan for the Committee's Technical Session at the 1999 World Congress and its involvement with the KL6 *Appropriate Levels of Road Development Cross-Linking Theme* (see page 4). KL6 is primarily aligned with this Committee. Work Groups are addressing:

- Technology of Technology Transfer
- Financing Maintenance under Budget Constraints
- Facilitate Stronger Ties with the Regional/National Organizations
- Better Use of Local Resources
- Road Transport Investment and Development

Committee members also reviewed the progress of the World Interchange Network (WIN), the global information exchange network successfully launched during the 1995 World Road Congress. With 62 nodes in 32 countries, WIN has been actively promoted, particularly with the introduction of the new WIN Website. There is also an initiative to develop the information system to assess the use and the effectiveness of WIN.

Other discussions addressed the need for more effective programs to promote better participation in PIARC, and in the Technology Exchanges and Development Committee and other Committees, by individuals from developing countries and those with economies in transition. Efforts will target ways to support development of national committees or other mechanisms to ensure continuity of technology transfer programs and how ITS technologies and services could assist developing nations.

Joe Toole of the FHWA, and English-speaking secretary to the Committee, noted, "We very much recognize not only the special needs of developing countries, but also the tremendous challenge of identifying new technologies that are appropriate to their progress. Gaining their participation in organizations such as PIARC will help us in this understanding."

C4 Roads, Transport and Regional Development

Committee members discussed the progress of the six Working Groups' programs and planned for the Kuala Lumpur Congress. The Roads, Transport, and Regional Development Committee's major involvement will be in KL3 (see page 4), and will include presentations by M. Arsenault (Québec) on "Transport and Mobility Linked with Economic Development," and Seppo Sillan (Senior Design Engineer, FHWA) on "The Environment and Public Consultation." The Committee also has proposed a joint workshop with the Financing and Economic Evaluation Committee, the Urban Areas Committee, and the Intelligent Transport Committee to discuss modern traffic management and user fee collection techniques (such as automatic toll collection). Finally, the Work Group on Freight Transport plans a full 3-hour session on that issue.

As a further example of committee cross-cooperation, the Roads, Transport and Regional Development Committee plans a joint meeting in October 1998 with the Road Tunnels Committee in Boston. The Committees' agenda involves plenary meetings and technical tours, including a briefing and tour of the Boston Central Artery project.

C5 Road Tunnels

This Committee provides guidance on standards for maintenance, equipment, and normal services for road tunnels. In anticipation of the 1999 World Road Association Congress, the Committee meeting in Manchester provided the opportunity to evaluate progress of the Work Groups at the midpoint of their 4-year cycle. Each of the 25 Committee members is involved in one or more of six Work Groups considering:

- Reduction in Operational Costs
- Pollution, Environment, and Ventilation
- Surface Tunnels
- Traffic Safety in Tunnels
- Transport of Dangerous Goods Through Tunnels
- Fire and Smoke Control

These Work Groups meet independent of the Committee three times each year. Their responsibility is to study issues and write a report on their findings, which will be compiled into the final report for presentation at the 1999 World Road Congress. Discussions in Manchester enabled members to approve the format of the final paper. The members will meet in Copenhagen in 1998 to review the draft reports before compiling the final report.

According to Committee member Anthony Caserta (FHWA Tunnel Group), the meeting was also an opportunity for members to view innovative tunnel construction in Wales. The project incorporates longitudinal ventilation systems that are just beginning to be used in U.S. tunnel construction.

A recent project of the Road Tunnels Committee is publication, through PIARC, of the *Planners Guide for Countries Without Tunnels*, a manual designed to help planners in countries with no previous tunnel construction experience to consider environmental, construction, and traveler impact as a part of construction.

C6 Road Management

Topics areas addressed by this Committee include a variety of general issues, including how best to:

- Conduct customer (user) surveys.
- Define Quality of maintenance services (as opposed to construction projects).
- Measure performance of the producer of maintenance work.
- Determine what work should be outsourced and how to specify such work.
- Prepare and present maintenance plans and budgets to decision makers.
- Train producers to perform quality maintenance services.

One of the most significant achievements of the Manchester meeting was the opportunity for Committee members to meet jointly with the members of the Performance of Road Administrations Committee. Both Committees are developing performance measures and the meeting enabled the Committee members to define tasks and approaches. The Road Management Committee will pursue the user perspective, while the Performance of Road Administrations Committee will focus on the broader owner perspective. The two Committees plan a joint presentation on performance for the Kuala Lumpur Congress.

A key discussion item for this Committee regarded defining the word *maintenance*. Every country knows the functions included in their own definition of the word, but there is quite a difference among members as to what functions and activities are included and excluded. This confuses discussions among members. In an attempt to define maintenance in general terms, agreement was sought as to what is included in maintenance subgroups, for example, operational versus routine versus preventive versus preservation versus rehabilitation versus reconstruction. Although significant progress was made, further work is necessary.

C9 Financing and Economic Evaluation

This PIARC Committee's focus is financing and economic evaluation of road construction and use. The Committee has organized into three major subgroups to explore key issues and develop consensus reports. Members used the meeting in Manchester to review drafts of these three products:

- Cost recovery and dedication of road user fees
- Economic evaluation methods for road projects
- Financing of road infrastructures—guide for new methods of financing and public/private partnerships

The reports examine methods and approaches to these topics in PIARC member countries and summarize findings. Some include literature reviews for the relevant topic areas as well as recommendations for future research agendas. All address the potential for harmonization.

The Committee intends to approve these reports at an April 1998 meeting and have them available before the 1999 Kuala Lumpur World Congress.

C15, Performance of Road Administrations

This PIARC Committee is collecting information on how different countries are restructuring the road sector; what kinds of quality systems, if any, are being used to improve performance; tools for performance measurement; and how resource decisions are made. Many of these same topics are under consideration by the Road Management Committee. The two Committees took advantage of the meeting in Manchester to share information and to ensure that there is no overlap in their respective efforts. As a result of the meeting, it was agreed that the focus of the Performance of Road Administrations Committee will be on actions taken at the government level that address broad program perspectives. The Road Management Committee will focus on the road user perspective in performance measurement and quality systems and at the project level in resource allocation.

There was general consensus that the lack of standard definitions for key terms and the great variance in the operating systems among countries made performance benchmarking extremely difficult. Thus, a decision was reached that current efforts exclude attempts to benchmark performance except at the highest level of aggregation. Participants also agreed that any performance indicators identified should be used only to manage.

Committee members also discussed recently published work by the OECD on performance indicators, *Performance Indicators for the Road Sector*, and the report on *Road Financing and the Organization of Road Administrations in Europe*.

This Committee has completed the data collection phase of its work and Committee Work Groups are currently analyzing results of a questionnaire that was sent to countries throughout the world. Approximately 27 countries responded.

For more information on PIARC, visit its web site at www.piarc.lcpc.fr. For more information on U.S. participation in PIARC, visit www.international.fhwa.dot.gov.



“Selamat Datang” to Kuala Lumpur and the PIARC XXIst World Road Congress

Selamat Datang means Welcome, and Kuala Lumpur plans to extend this warm greeting to the thousands of delegates and guests of governments, regional authorities, public organizations, and associations from more than 90 nations around the globe who will

gather in this Malaysian Federal Territory for the XXIst World Road Congress.

The October 3 to 9 World Congress program reflects organizational initiatives presented in the PIARC Strategic Plan approved at the 1995 XXth World Road Congress in Montréal. The plan defines PIARC's commitment as the international source of impartial and authoritative information on roads policy, management, and technology within the total transport context. Several changes in the 1999 World Congress reflect this increased sense of mission.

For example, previous World Congresses selected Questions to define key priority issues to be addressed, these were then the focus of member country reports. The 1995 Strategic Plan concentrates on nine road and road transport issues, which were grouped in six topic areas:

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|--------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Road Technology | 2. The User's Perspective |
| 3. Value for Money | 4. Technology Transfer |
| 5. Road Management | 6. Sustainable Development |

For the 1999 Congress, each topic area corresponds to a Cross-Linking Theme, which brings the expertise and resources of several PIARC Committees and Ad Hoc Groups to address common issues. The Cross-Linking Themes are:

- **KL1 Infrastructure Asset Management** addresses the whole life performance and cost of roads.
- **KL2 User's Perception** considers how perceptions, attitudes, and values shape the road system (including road safety) and affect the role of road administrators.
- **KL3 Sustainable Transportation** examines the decision-making process that encompasses economic and social development, environment, and land use issues affecting transportation.
- **KL4 Communication/Information Revolution** considers how the communication/information technology and systems in the next century may affect road operations and maintenance.
- **KL5 Effective Performance of the Road System** examines methods for financing, organizing, and measuring road system performance.
- **KL6 Appropriate Level of Development** addresses levels of road development that meet social and economic needs.

Each Cross-Linking Theme is the subject of a half-day session designed for decision makers in road policy.

Selamat Datang—to the XXIst World Road Congress.

U.S. State DOTs Well-Represented on World Road Association (PIARC) Committees

To encourage States to participate in global technology transfer, pending FHWA reauthorization designates 2 percent of most Federal highway funds as eligible to be spent by State DOTs for international activities or programs, such as international scanning. Although State DOTs focus on local issues, many State DOT representatives also participate directly in the technology transfer effort by serving as members on PIARC committees.

Member, C4 Roads, Transport, and Regional Development

Gary Gould
Chief of Design and Environment
Illinois Department of Transportation
2300 South Dirksen Parkway
Springfield, Illinois 62764
Tel:217-782-7526 Fax:217-524-0989

Member, C6 Road Maintenance

Rodney A. Pletan
State Maintenance Engineer
Minnesota Department of Transportation
395 John Ireland Boulevard, M.S. 700
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155
Tel:612-297-3590 Fax:612-297-7576

Member, C8 Flexible Roads

Linda Pierce
Pavement Structures Engineer
Washington Department of Transportation
Transportation Building
Olympia, Washington 98504-7300
Tel:360-753-4661 Fax:360-586-4611

Member, C9 Financing and Economic Evaluation

Clyde E. Pyers
Director, Office of Highway Policy and
Technology Utilization
707 N. Calvert Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202
Tel:410-545-0341 Fax:410-209-5015

Member, C10 Urban Areas

Ysela Llort
State Transportation Planner
Florida Department of Transportation
605 Suwannee Street—Mail Station 57
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0450
Tel:850-414-5235 Fax:850-921-2291

Member, C12 Earthworks, Drainage and Subgrade

Edward J. Hoppe
Geotechnical Engineer
Hydraulics and Geotechnical Branch (HNG-31)
Federal Highway Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W., Room 3113
Washington, D.C. 20590
Tel:202-366-1568 Fax:202-366-3713

Member, C13 Road Safety

Thomas Werner
Director, Traffic and Safety Division
New York Department of Transportation
Building 5, State Office Campus
Albany, New York 12232
Tel:518-457-6438 Fax:518-457-1780

Member, C14 Environment

Andras Fekete
Manager, Bureau of Environmental Analysis
New Jersey Department of Transportation
10335 Parkway Avenue, CN 600
Trenton, New Jersey 08625
Tel:609-530-2824 Fax:609-530-3767

Member, C15 Performance of Road Administrations

Gloria Sheppard
Deputy Director, Office of Planning and
Preliminary Engineering
Maryland State Department of Transportation
707 North Calvert Street, 5th Floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21203
Tel:410-545-0414 Fax:410-333-1045

Member, C16 Committee on Intelligent Transport

David Hensing
Deputy executive Director
American Association of State Highway and
Transportation Officials
444 North Capitol Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001
Tel:202-624-5800 Fax:202-624-5806

Note: Several former committee members have retired or assumed new job responsibilities, and new members may be appointed to fill vacancies for the C7 Concrete Roads and C11 Road Bridges Committees.