

8th World Congress of Metropolis 2005
Training Seminar Rail Systems
Berlin, 13 May 2005

The two-day seminar on rail systems that was held during the 8th World Congress of Metropolis showed once again in what way an efficient traffic infrastructure is of vital importance for the development of a big city. In this context, the seminar dealt with issues such as: what are the advantages of a rail system over public transport by bus. Under what conditions are they economically advantageous? Given certain conditions, what systems are to be preferred for a meaningful solution – trams, underground railway, regional rail system?

In his introductory lecture, **Dr. Gregor Wessels**, general manager of TEWET Berlin, pointed to immense problems of growth facing big cities above all in Asia as well as to vast expenditure for the national economy that are incurred mainly as a result of environmental pollution, traffic jams and further traffic-related social costs. As is apparent, further growth of cities and of whole regions will not be possible in the absence of financial resources for a infrastructure flexible enough to meet the needs of requisite modifications.

As **Dr. Chisanti**, member of the board of the national railways of Thailand, highlighted in his lecture on Bangkok's development during the last 30 years and future prospects for the two decades to come, efficient traffic corridors, integrated traffic systems, traffic guidance systems giving priority to public transport as well as stringent rules for private transport are an absolute must to have an appropriate control of further development. Admittedly, we need more than efforts undertaken only on an urban level. According to his view, Bangkok is only able to stand its ground in the competition with metropolises because the development of the local traffic infrastructure is understood to be a challenge of national dimension.

Mr. Juan Pablo Martinez, director, Metro Buenos Aires, in his lecture placed a far greater emphasis on problems of operational efficiency than on further extension of the traffic infrastructure. In Buenos Aires, essential parts of the public transport network were built as late as during the first half of the last century. For the next century to come, it will be an overriding task to step up the technical and administrative efficiency. 10 years ago, the political framework in favour of a comprehensive privatisation effort was created. Initial results of a successful implementation reveal: since the privatisation, there has been a steady rise in the number of passengers, railway stations have been modernised, operational efficiency has increased strongly.

Mr. Stefan Hofsäss, director Asia, Transportation Systems Turnkey, Siemens AG, spelt out the needs of metropolises from the point of view of a turnkey supplier of rail transportation systems and in the light of demographic and economic trends. Being a powerhouse for the growth of national economies Metropolises need visions of traffic policy, an efficient infrastructure and state-of-the art solutions for modal traffic guidance.

In his lecture, **Dr. Jürgen Sparmann**, president of the Hessian Office for Roads and Traffic, expanded on traffic problems within the region "Frankfurt Rhine-Main", one of the key hubs for passenger and goods traffic in Europe. The ever-increasing demand in transport offers in all fields results in increasing capacity constraints in the overall traffic network of this conurbation. It is imperative to reengineer the traffic management system extensively. In this respect, under the overall control of the Rhine-Main Association of Transport Companies an

integrated multi-modal traffic management system will be developed. Its main aim is to secure mobility, hence to maintain the quality of the location of that region.

Mr. Hilmar Schmidt-Kohlhas is member of the board of the Berlin Public Transportation Company (BVG), the major public transportation services in Germany. With a staff of approximately 11,600 employees, the BVG runs the underground railway, the tramway and a multitude of bus lines in Berlin. Increasing demands made by its customers and the competition between transportation services (thanks to a growing liberalisation of the market across Europe) are requiring more than ever before an efficient operation of public transport. That is why the BVG continues to enhance its integrated management of public transportation offers while observing requirements as established by the transport policy and integrating elements such as network planning, operational planning, information system for passengers and tariff system of the transport company or association respectively.

Airport rail links, an aspect of ever greater dimension, was expounded on in a lecture given by **Hannes Oberkampff**, regional director South East Asia, DE Consult. Airports and air traffic hubs increasingly play a leading role as a location factor for metropolises. Worldwide, a total of 86 Airport Rail Links have been built to enable passengers to get to airports that are mostly situated far out of town as quickly and comfortable as possible. They offer a most efficient and, moreover, environmentally sound airport connection to inner cities. A greater number of up-to-date systems disposes already of inner-city terminals offering the service of a complete passenger check-in and checking of baggage included.

Mr. Christoph Frings, economist and analyst of TEWET GmbH, in coming full circle and thereby concluding the seminar looked at transport systems and their economic aspect. The growth of national economies and individual prosperity made the totality of private cars to explode and resulted in devastating consequences for the traffic infrastructure. In metropolises, those trends can only be counteracted by operating rail-bound public transport systems. By taking into account relevant success factors, especially in a balanced ratio of the density of the transport network to the density of the population in cities, those cost-intensive systems can be quite effective in terms of finance.