REPORT ON OVERSEAS VISIT
SPAIN AND MALAYSIA
25 AUGUST 2004 – 10 SEPTEMBER 2004
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Minister for Transport
Minister for Urban Development and Planning
Minister for Science and Information Economy

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Objectives

The principle objective of the trip was to:-

- hold discussions with the Spanish Government about transport security arrangements following the Madrid train bombings of March 2004;
- hold discussions with the regional governments of Madrid, Aragon and Catalan about urban development pressures and government mechanisms for managing growth and transforming cities;
- attend the International Conference Workshop on Business Process Integration and Management in Zaragoza (31 August – 2 September 2004) and other parts of the IEEE DEXA 2004 conference;

Names of Organisations / People visited

Ms Sue Tanner, Ambassador to Spain
Ms Marjorie Hicks and Mr Bruce Hunt, Australian Embassy, Madrid
Mr Mariano Zabía Lasala, Minister of Environment and Urban and Regional Planning, Comunidad de Madrid (Regional Government of Madrid)
Mr Mariano Trias Chueca, Coordinator, Urban Area, Comunidad de Madrid
Mr Santiago Leon Noval, Chief of Services, Sectorial Planning, Comunidad de Madrid
Ms Margarita Ruiz Celaa, Chief of Services, Territory Planning, Comunidad de Madrid
Mr Jesus Rodriguez Molina, Technical Director, Madrid Regional Transport Consortium
Mr Jose Martin Garcia, Head of Civil Defence and Safety Unit, Madrid Metro
Mr Alberto Larraz Vileta, Minister of Science, Technology and Universities, Govt of Aragon
Mr Jesus Santamaria Ramiro, Director General, Research, Innovation and Development, Govt of Aragon
Mr Felix Pradas, Chief of Staff to Minister Vileta
Mr Francisco Pina Cuencuela, Speaker of the regional Parliament of Aragon
Mr Joaquim Nadal, Minister of Planning and Public Works, Catalan Regional Government
Mr Manel Nadal, Secretary for Transport
Mr Oriol Nello, Secretary for Planning
Mr Miquel Cruz, Minister Nadal’s Office

Government

Spain has been a constitutional monarchy since 1978 (shortly after the death of Franco), with a bicameral parliament consisting of the Congreso de los Diputados (similar to our Lower House) and Senado (akin to our Upper House). The 350 – seat parliament had been controlled for the last eight years by the conservative Popular Party led by Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar. Aznar’s overwhelming re-election in 2000 had made him Spain’s first right-wing leader since Franco.
Power is devolved to 17 autonomous regions, each (comunidad) with its own parliament. These are divided into 50 provinces and each province is further divided into district and town administrations.

The areas of policy control over which each level of government has power tends to vary across the country and my discussions with ministers and officials of various levels of government revealed that even today there are moves afoot to change this balance of control.

The events of the 11 March 2004 train bombings appear to have had a marked impact on the outcome of the recent national elections in Spain. In a dramatic rebuff to the conservative Popular Party, Spain’s socialists scored a stunning victory. Before the bombings, the PP had been tipped to win the election by a comfortable margin. However, the bombings only days before the poll suddenly made terrorism an election issue and turned the anger of the people against a government which they believed had provoked the Madrid attacks, through participation in the US-led war in Iraq despite most Spaniards’ opposition.

While in Zaragoza (the regional centre of Aragon on the Rio Ebro) for the DEXA 2004, I met with the Speaker of the Aragonian Parliament, Mr Francisco Pina Cuenca. The Parliament meets in the UNESCO World Heritage listed Aljaferia Palace and I was privileged to accompany Mr Cuenca, Ministers of the Aragon Government and their entourage on a tour of the palace.

Aragon, birthplace to Goya - Spain’s revered artist and striking Mudejar architecture, has approximately ten percent of the Spanish population and 1.2 million people. It is has an economy that is growing, due mainly to a qualified workforce emanating from the University of Zaragoza and Aragon’s regional training centres. It is one of the regions most open to overseas firms, with the EU as a major source of capital and the US as the single largest foreign investor. Most of that capital goes to industry, which generates one quarter of the region’s GDP, in comparison to the rest of the nation, whose income comes mainly from the service sector, as property and business services grow. The region’s landscape comprises large firms supported by a network of small- to- medium sized enterprises. One of the contributions that government Ministers were keen to promote is the ‘digital mile’ under development in Zaragoza. Already significant software houses are becoming involved in delivery to ‘intelligent houses’.

Also in Zaragoza, hosted by the Minister of Science, Technology and Universities, Mr Alberto Larraz Vileta, there was good opportunity to discuss the potential for exchange between university students in Adelaide and Zaragoza. Zaragoza is a city of around 600,000 people, the fifth largest in Spain. It is a most interesting city, with its Iberian, Roman, Moslem and Christian past each contributing towards the cultural city it is today. Most of my time in Zaragoza was spent at the University of Zaragoza, which is the main centre of technological innovation in the Ebro Valley. The Minister’s enthusiasm for a link with a South Australian university to be established for student exchange stems from the desire of Spanish students to learn English in an English-speaking city that is of comparable size and safety to Zaragoza.

**Transport Security**

*Note: While there were many detailed discussions about the circumstances of, and consequences arising from, the Madrid bombing in March, only those details for which there was permission from the Spanish Government to reveal are discussed here.*
The most striking aspect of the Spanish reaction to the March Madrid train terrorist attacks is how it differed across the country. In Madrid, the events in March resulted in a concerted effort to upgrade all security aspects of the transport system, including a recent 120 million euro commitment towards the task and a world-wide focus on Madrid through international meetings and conferences. However, in Barcelona, perhaps Spain’s most cosmopolitan city, the attitude is more relaxed. Indeed one Minister of the Catalan Government shrugged off the terrorist threat to me as ‘just one of those things you can’t control – like ETA’ (a reference to the Basque terrorist organisation Euskadi Ta Askatasuna). However, one does get the impression that as much as the central government focuses on the issue, the Catalan Government is determined to downplay the matter with its own citizens. Perhaps this is simply an extension of the historic rivalry with Castilla (the Madrid region).

The Madrid bombings have been a wake-up call for governments around the world. While, internationally, focus has been up until now on aviation and maritime security, most countries are currently reviewing their land transport security arrangements in light of the Madrid attacks.

Around 200 people were killed on 11 March 2004 when metro trains were bombed. It was made public that there were 10 bombs on four commuter trains in the morning rush hour. One of those trains was in Atocha station – the main station in Madrid. There were also around 2000 injured in the attacks. Ironically, Madrid had the year before completed a mock disaster exercise in which a scenario for a maximum of 200 casualties was tested. At that time several failings had been identified by security and hospital/emergency personnel. One of the new elements of the March 2004 event was that there was a series of bombs, designed to produce maximum casualties as the emergency workers moved in to assist.

There are twelve lines on the Madrid Metro system covering 227 kilometres of track, with 2.5 million people travelling each day (627 million journeys in 2004). Operators of the Madrid Metro list security as their top priority. This is driven mainly from a recognition that visible signs of security are very important factors in passengers’ perceptions of quality of service – the indicator that the Government uses in judging the success or otherwise of the operators. User perception is regarded as very important as feelings regarding security are subjective. Consequently, quite a number of passenger surveys have been conducted in Madrid (before and after the bombings) in pursuit of service improvement.

A survey of passenger perceptions in May 2003 found that security rated of high importance in the evaluation of Madrid Metro passengers, second only to arrival on time at their destination. Yet in that survey, passengers rated the Madrid Metro poorly in terms of their evaluation of its security. In fact, of all the nineteen aspects surveyed, perceptions surrounding security showed the biggest gap in passengers’ ratings between how importantly they regarded the particular aspect and how well their expectations were met by the service they received. Surveys conducted in May 2004 actually showed improvement in the perceptions of security by Madrid passengers, with 68 percent claiming they felt safer than they had twelve months prior. Most pointed to the massive program of closed-circuit TV installation, followed by the increase in visible security staff in the system. Sixty-seven percent of commuters said they were satisfied with the changes in security on the Metro. Certainly the statistics show that there has been a massive decrease in robberies on the Metro which may explain this attitude.
All stations are now under CCTV surveillance and all have a system of locally-controlled alarms. Sixty of the stations are centrally-monitored for security and all will soon be part of the one network. Each train has two CCTV cameras per carriage which relay, in real time, to the driver and to central control. The driver can also see the stretch 100 metres in front of, and behind, the station. The Metro is also trialling in one station a new hand-held PDA for its staff that, at the touch of a button, gives the mobile officer control over lighting, alarms and a range of other functions, as well as real-time vision from CCTV screens anywhere in the station.

There have been a number of improvements at the organisational level since the bombings, as well as better coordination with the police services, enhanced security on the main airport line and above-ground stations, and intensive information and awareness campaigns aimed at staff and at the public. Staff training has been significant, with all staff now having a security role as part of their job. Whereas inspections for suspicious packages used to only be done at the end of each line, there are now spot inspections and tighter security at depots. Luggage racks have been removed from the system and electronic luggage scanners have been installed at major stations. Debate is still ongoing about whether to also remove rubbish bins from stations as an anti-terrorism measure.

The Metro system now requires many new security guards, at a cost of 56 million euros per annum. The examinations for entry are set by the police and are quite difficult. This has led to a shortage in Spain.

Like most passenger train systems around the world, a major problem on the personal security front is graffiti and what the Spaniards refer to as *scratchiti* – using a spark plug or similar to scratch on glass on trains and in stations. The cost of this sort of damage has been huge, with the Madrid government spending in the order of 170 million euro in repair work as a result. There is also a much greater problem on their network with what they label ‘anti-social behaviour’ – illegal sale of fraudulent goods, drug exchange, tramps and young delinquents.

Under a special contract, all graffiti on stations is removed within 24 hours. In 2003, that contract cost one million euro. There is also a recent problem with large-scale graffiti on the outside of trains. This involves large groups of perpetrators, sometimes armed with metal bars and often violent towards Metro staff. In fact, there have been competitions run on the internet offering prizes of up to 6000 euros for graffiti on the newest model trains. A new problem has arisen with vandals using air vents and emergency exits for access to stations. The Madrid Government is consequently considering the extra expense of additional security patrols of those areas.

Topics of conversation with representatives of the relevant government departments included:-

- the role of urban planning in design of transport corridors and nodes
- governance and operational arrangements
- deciding on standards
- security planning and flow of information and intelligence
- roles, responsibilities and relationships between agencies and operators for security reporting
- risk assessment, security planning and planning for continuity of business
- embedding preventative security measures into operational practice
- need to encompass private transport operations
- transport/logistics supply chains
Urban Planning

Spain is one of the least densely populated countries in Europe, with about 80 people per square kilometre and a relatively slow rate of population growth. Madrid, the nation’s capital with its population of just over 3 million people, is situated in the Comunidad de Madrid – the greater Madrid region with its own regional government and approximately 5.7 million people. For Spain, Madrid’s population density of around XX is regarded as severe.

The last two decades has seen significant population growth in and around Madrid, with at least 600,000 emigrants (many do not have papers). The average annual income is 14,500 euros. Madrid is starting to turn into a city of satellite boroughs.

Between 1998 and 2001, the average number of people per household declined from 3.3 to 2.9, and over the same time, house prices have increased dramatically. Fifteen percent of households hold a single parent, Madrid has a 6.5 percent unemployment rate and 2.2 percent economic growth.

There is no regional plan in place for the greater Madrid, with each borough formulating its own. While there exists Federal law that would enable such planning to be put in place, the process of enacting such law is too difficult. Regional Government input into planning is only to adjudicate on matters of rules, for example, to decide whether or not a proposed development would affect a neighbouring municipality, particularly with reference to issues about environment, water supply or in the situation that an industrial development would abut residential areas. The regional government is responsible for protection of ‘protected areas’ – areas identified through EU biodiversity regulations. It has powers to administer fines and local Councils or developers can face criminal action with respect to violation of such areas. It also has responsibility to approve local plans (as fas as deciding whether these are legally appropriate).

Development applications are assessed by the Town Planning Commission – a body which usually will consist of the relevant Ministries of the Regional Government, representation of the National Government and representation of the local Government. Appeals are allowed and the process is for the Municipality to lodge with the Co-ordinating Commission, however this has never happened.

Developers can appeal a decision to the Regional Administrative Court, however this can take up to ten years and so very few prevail.

Public housing is built by the private sector. While it has been the norm in Spain to own one’s own home, recent house price rises has made this unaffordable for many. There are nationally subsidised assistance schemes for low income earners to purchase their own home. The first scheme is a straight subsidy, while the second is by way of lower interest rate loans.
(targeting under-35 year-olds). This age seems high to Australians but it is in recognition of the fact that the age at which the average Spaniard now leaves home has grown.

It is a standard requirement for all new housing developments in Madrid to set aside a proportion for low-cost housing. All land for development is divided into categories – fifty percent must be set aside for public housing in new developments. Typically, the Regional and local governments and the owner of the land will form a project consortium to deliver this. What the owner gets out of the consortium is planning approvals from the governments involved. To be eligible to access this public housing one needs to earn five-and-a-half times less than the average income and it also depends on how many people are in the family and which part of Madrid the property is in. The local Council gets ten percent for protected dwellings and part of that is used in payment for the land.

**World Urban Development Congress INTA 28**

This congress concentrated on key development issues of interest to South Australia, including private sector involvement in the provision of services, integrated land-use management, protecting urban environments, providing mobility and transportation of people and products, resource allocation in metropolitan development and the adequate balance of infrastructure and services. The themes of the conference for 2004 were sustainability, accessibility and social cohesion. Conference papers are available on approach to my office.

There was opportunity during the congress to visit two new cities:

**Putrijaya** is a new satellite city about 40 kilometres from Kuala Lumpur. It has been built to accommodate many government functions and is a master planned city. It boasts substantial areas of open space (in Malaysian terms) for use by its workers and incorporates a man-made lake system. The presentation and cleanliness of the city is noteworthy.

**Cyberjaya** is a high-technology city, close to Putrijaya, that boasts one of the highest broadband capabilities in Asia. Large technology-based private sector organisations have located in Cyberjaya to take advantage of that Information Superhighway, thus enabling the Malaysian IT industry to grow remarkably quickly.

For us, *South Australia’s Strategic Plan* sets out an aim to support sustainable settlements, for our cities and towns to be designed with a high standard of infrastructure (be that health, education, culture or recreation) and to improve the health of our communities and our environment. Our built environment and transport infrastructure, if reformed, has the potential to encourage better community interactions and enhance social inclusion, while also reducing our impact on the environment. There are significant opportunities for South Australia to develop new technologies and practices that are efficient in energy and water use, provide lifestyle benefits and enhance biodiversity.

**International Conference Workshop on Business Process Integration and Management**

Conference papers available on request from my office.