

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT
(AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND)
GPO BOX 2531
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Telephone: + 61262475990
Facsimile: + 61262306898
Web: <http://www.uitp.com>

14 March 2006

To:
The Inquiry Secretary
House of Representatives
Standing Committee on Environment and Heritage
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Little

I thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on the Environment and Heritage Inquiry into a Sustainability Charter.

Mobility is a fundamental necessity of 21st century living and brings access to jobs, markets, education, health care and other primary services and leisure. But mobility can no longer be defined uniquely by transport. Today, the choice of individual, collective, physical or virtual mobility options is both complex and confusing and the differences in local, national and global conditions compound this.

Current mobility patterns are unsustainable

It is clear that current patterns of provision and consumption of mobility are not sustainable. It is a paradox of our supremely functional modern world that amenities supposed to connect us together, in fact, more often separate us.

This is particularly visible in urban situations, as cities all over the world suffer from high levels of traffic related congestion, pollution and the degradation of communities and social dysfunction.

However, no one mode can satisfy all the urban transport needs either today or in the future. Therefore a balance must be struck between collective and individual transport, taking into account economic, environmental and societal issues in order for any level of sustainable development to be achieved.

Cities and transport have yet to find a modus vivendi.

Adequately addressing the highly complex challenges of sustainable mobility depends on the co-ordination of all stakeholders, as well as, integrating environmental, societal and economic concerns in core decision-making supported by an enabling policy framework.

UITP is addressing this challenge with its advocacy programme, regional workshops and other actions.

A business approach to sustainability

Congestion, the greenhouse effect, air pollution and the depletion of non-renewable resources have placed green issues and sustainable development at the top of the list of pressing political and social concerns.

It is an easily demonstrable fact that public transport is far more economically-efficient for the community as a whole than private transport. The direct financial costs of journeys made by private modes of transport in Western Europe take up an average of 6.7% of GDP, compared with only 1.6% for public modes of transport. In the European Union, congestion costs alone have been estimated at an average 2% of GDP, or about 120 billion euros. Public transport also consumes 3.7 times less energy per passenger than private modes of transport in Europe. The difference is even more dramatic in the case of Japan, where public transport is as much as 10 times more energy-efficient than private modes of transport.

All of this is well and good, but it is difficult to persuade governments and the business community to opt for sustainable and environmentally-friendly transportation unless it is a viable business proposition.

As well as addressing environmental and social issues, UITP's approach to sustainability is thus also firmly rooted in the soundest business principles and practices, such as cost-efficiency, profitability and growth potential.

UITP Charter on Sustainable Development: A measurable commitment

At its 55th World Congress (2003) in Madrid, UITP launched its performance-based Charter on Sustainable Development.

Signatories to this Charter agree to adhere to its social, environmental and economic principles, and to integrate these into their company's strategic objectives.

This Charter shows that sustainable development, and the role sustainable mobility can play in this, is not just an issue we pay lip-service to.

Indeed UITP has already put a system in place for Charter signatories to regularly report on their implementation of sustainable development principles, based on a concrete set of criteria.

Hong Kong: Enhancing shareholder value

Hong Kong is a good example of a city that has thrived on green business. It is not surprising therefore that one of the very first signatories of UITP's Charter is MTR Corporation. MTR, a publicly-listed company, has been able to provide one of the most efficient collective transport systems in the world that has won the confidence of shareholders locally and worldwide.

UITP, founded in 1885, based in Brussels, has some 2700 Members in 85 countries.

The Association is one of the leading advocates for change in urban transport in the world with links to the European Commission, United Nations and the World Bank.

Web Site: www.uitp.com

In 2001, MTR became the first Hong Kong company to publish a Sustainability Report, detailing its performance against targets drawn up on the basis of a series of sustainability criteria. The company's efforts in this area have been acknowledged by the international investment community, with its shares included in the Dow Jones Sustainability World Index (DJSI World) and the FTSE4 Good Global Index. MTR made a net attributable profit in 2002 of HK\$4.212 billion (€489 million).

Paris: Environmental management

RATP, the public transport operator in Paris, France, was also among the first to sign up to the UITP Charter. RATP, a frontrunner in sustainable development, has already put in place an environmental management system covering all areas of network maintenance. In 2001 it was awarded an ISO 14001 certification for its metro line 8, the first metro line in Europe to be given one covering all activities. By the end of 2002 further certificates were awarded to a bus depot and a maintenance workshop. Since 2001, environmental specifications in respect to life cycles and energy efficiency have also been introduced for all rail and road procurement.

"The Three Pillars"

In conjunction with its Charter, UITP has also launched a publication setting out public transport's contribution to sustainable development - **Ticket to the Future: Three Steps to Sustainable Mobility.**

This publication identifies three 'pillars' for sustainability: intelligent land-use planning that directly incorporates mobility needs; restricting private car use; and the promotion of an attractive, comfortable public transport system that is both operationally and financially efficient. It also contains a series of practical recommendations for public transport stakeholders as well as a wealth of worldwide examples of good practice.

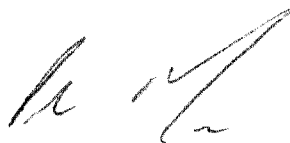
A copy of the Publication - Ticket to the Future - Three Pillars to Sustainable Mobility, can be downloaded from www.uitp.com - go to Knowledge - go to Sustainable Development.

I thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the Inquiry.

Yours faithfully



Heather Webster
Chair, UITP (Aust/N. Z.)



Peter Moore
Executive Director, UITP (Aust/N.Z.)

CONTACT:
Peter Moore
Executive Director
UITP (Australia/New Zealand)
GPO Box 2531
CANBERRA ACT 2601 AUSTRALIA
Direct Phone: 02 62475990
Mobile: 0404052635
Fax: 02 62306898
Peter.Moore@uitp.asn.au
www.uitp.com

UITP, founded in 1885, based in Brussels, has some 2700 Members in 85 countries.
The Association is one of the leading advocates for change in urban transport in the world with links to the European Commission, United Nations and the World Bank.
Web Site: www.uitp.com