

Congress on Road Maintenance Spotlight on safety



D.R. - Isted

Three days of discussions, conferences, workshops and a trade exhibition.

For its 5th edition¹, The Congress on Road Maintenance is being held in Paris-Le Bourget on 21, 22 and 23 November 2000. This major biennial rendezvous for the road sector is open to all public and private stakeholders.

Its forum centres on workshops, conferences and discussions, which will provide each of the 2,000 expected participants with an opportunity for information and dialogue on many subjects. Once again this year, equipment, materials and services from the road maintenance and operating sectors will be the classic features. But a larger place will be given to road operation, network development and on-board navigation systems. And, for the first time, sessions will be organized by people outside the Ministry of Public Works, representing trade organizations, associations and urban services.

The forum goes hand-in-hand with a trade exhibition, where 250 French and European exhibitors will display their products, knowhow and most recent innovations to some 10,000 visitors.

This year, the theme running through the congress will be road safety. It will be launched right after the opening by a round table that will bring together various safety component contributors to provide an overall panorama and a few unusual points of view. Then throughout the congress, each theme will be addressed from the safety angle. Road safety was an inevitable choice as it has been declared as the "great national cause" for the year 2000. This issue of *La Lettre de l'Isted* has responded to this cause by devoting its feature to road users' safety and comfort. The 5th Congress demonstrates the strength of the partnership² between the Directorate of Roads and Isted, which is further enhanced for this event.

Patrick Gandil,
 Director of Roads,
 President of the Congress

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The motorway is a specific artery of travel designed with safety in mind. Four times as safe as an ordinary road, it is also more comfortable. This is because motorway companies propose many services (information, rest and service areas, etc.), the quality of which is regularly rated by motorway customers.

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¹ Previous editions: Bordeaux (October 1993), Colmar (June 1995), Rouen (September 1996), Grenoble (September/October 1998).

² The Congress on Road Maintenance is organized by the Directorate of Roads of the Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Housing (Metl-DR), in partnership with Isted and with the support of the Seine Saint-Denis County Public Works Department (DDE 93).

Safer and more comfortable

The motorist who enters a motorway today, expects both safety and comfort. And he is right to do so. Motorways are four times as safe as ordinary roads (for the same travel distances). And as regards comfort, motorway concession companies offer him a service that goes far beyond the road infrastructure itself.

A motorway is a specific artery of travel designed with safety in mind: separate traffic streams, suppression of junctions, wide, regular lanes... And it is the constant concern of motorway companies to make it still safer. Each year, Asfa (Association of French motorway companies)¹ analyses accident factors with the aim of understanding how and why they occur.

Yet again this year, excessive or inappropriate speed is the cause of one in two fatal accidents. In 29% of cases, this is combined with too little space between vehicles or dangerous overtaking.

An analysis of the data collected by five companies between June 1997 and January 1998 highlighted the links between vehicle distances, flows and speeds. It shows that 37% of drivers on the fast lane are less than 2 seconds behind the vehicle ahead and 17% are less than one second behind. In principle, to ensure safety, vehicles should keep to a minimum two-second following distance.

Another finding is that distances between vehicles are greatly reduced as soon as traffic increases, and the percentage of short following distances increases regularly with traffic flow.

Another hazardous type of behaviour is the failure to wear a seatbelt² (in cases where it is compulsory to wear one), which is an aggravating circumstance for one accident in two. In 1998, an analysis of fatal accidents showed that 44% of people killed were not wearing their seatbelt, and this level rose to 70% for rear seat passengers. The second finding is that the death rate is twice as high for people not wearing a seatbelt as for those that are properly secured.

¹ Asfa groups together 8 French toll motorway concession companies (active members): Area (Rhône-Alpes motorway company), ASF (South-of-France motorways), ATMB (Motorways and Mont Blanc Tunnel), Cofiroute (Financial and industrial motorway company), Escota (Estérel, Riviera, Provence, Alps motorway company), Sanef (Northern and Eastern France motorway company), SAPN (Paris-Normandy motorway company), SAPRR (Paris-Rhine-Rhône motorway company). It also has two associate members: SFTRF (Fréjus tunnel French motorway company) and SMTPC (Marseilles Prado-Carénage tunnel company).

² Seatbelts were introduced in 1959. It has been compulsory to wear a seatbelt in the front seat since 1973 (outside built-up areas) and in the rear seat since 1990.

Studies again show that on the motorway, the rate of compliance with the seatbelt rule is 94% in the front seat but it is only 55% in the rear seat. And just as alarming is the fact that one child out of two is not properly secured – to say nothing of the improper use of restraint systems.

Public information campaigns

To enhance drivers' awareness of safety problems and encourage them to protect themselves, the motorway companies have opted for preventive operations in the field. Seatbelts, safety distances, speed, alertness, tyre inflation are typically recurring themes of information campaigns. All possible means are used to put over the message to motorway customers, including posters, motorway radio stations and the press. After each campaign, post-tests on drivers assess how effective and relevant the messages are. For 2000, Road Safety Year, a "great national cause" (see box), an enhanced communication program has been launched.

Motorway companies are not only attentive to safety but also to road users' comfort and satisfaction level. The motorway provides its services 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. The motorist has always had the benefit of ancillary facilities such as rest areas (every 15 km on average) or service areas (every 40 to 50 km on average), with petrol stations, shops, restaurants and hotels.

A number of means are also used to inform motorists before and during their trips.

Above the road or roadside, variable message signs (VMS) provide information in real time, recall safety recommendations and can even display travel times. A total of 430 VMS systems are dotted along the 7,200 km of the French toll motorway network. The idea of a motorway information radio station, launched in 1988 by Cofiroute, has been adopted by virtually all the motorway companies. The radio frequency covers nearly two-thirds of the highly-

Road users' forum

The Directorate of Roads of the Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Housing has set up a completely new "Road Users' Forum". This innovative tool was introduced in 1995. Through a purely qualitative approach, it completes the mainly quantitative information provided by the satisfaction barometer.

The forum is a meeting of a dozen road users and four Administration representatives who address the various aspects of a previously chosen theme. A professional group leader conducts the discussion.

The forum aims to analyse a number of subjects, both at the central level and in the decentralized departments. Among the themes addressed are: road information, ancillary services, two-lane dual carriageways, HGV traffic conditions in winter, users' expectations of road signing, and road users' perception of road maintenance, or of a locally important arterial road, etc.

Each forum gives rise to a full written report and, since 1997, to a summary which outlines "what users say", while highlighting the main issues covered by the meeting. The document, in the form of a short fifteen to twenty page brochure, is intended to be circulated throughout the departments. The first three summaries were circulated before the summer, to be followed by several others before the end of the year.

Further information can be obtained from:

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Twenty years ago, variable message signs were the motorway driver's main source of information.

●●● trafficked network. Motorway customers are regular listeners: two drivers in five normally listen to FM 107.7 (the motorway-dedicated radio frequency) and nearly four in five listen when difficulties arise. The car radio TA button (*Traffic Announcement*) automatically gives road information while enabling motorists to listen to a cassette or a CD.

A multimedia radio

With the arrival of digital technology (TMC—*Traffic Message Channel*—and soon, DAB—*Digital Audio Broadcasting*), radio is going multimedia. Road information, coded in a European standard, will be swapped between information centres, on the Trans-European network. Automatic translation into the driver's language will be available. These systems are undergoing testing. Telephone information centres, which are accessible at all times (*audiotel*, *minitel* (video text) motorway information centre) give information on traffic conditions and weather. Another service, nomad information centres, introduced during the summer, answer motorists' questions on subjects such as using the motorway, tourism or which route to take... The number of *minitel* consultations is levelling off but there is an increase in trip sheets sent by fax: this service provides a detailed trip breakdown with toll costs. The *audiotel* (a dedicated telephone number connects the caller to the motorway network of his choice and disseminates the most recent traffic information bulletin) recorded an increase of 55.8% between 1998 and 1999. For the past few months, some mobile phone operators have begun to offer their subscribers direct access to this service. Lastly, until the WAP is operational (*Wireless Application Protocol*, a connection system to the Internet for mobile phones) the Web is indispensable. Two out of eight motorway companies are already disseminating on-line information on the motorway networks and their traffic conditions in real time.

The motorway through customers' eyes

Maintaining, improving and promoting the service to customers requires a good knowledge of their "profiles" and their opinions on the motorway. With this challenge in mind, Asfa regularly commissions studies. Two surveys have recently been conducted, one by Sofres³ (French company specializing in market and opinion research), addresses French households' trips by car, the other, conducted by *Research International*⁴, collects motorway customers' satisfaction and dissatisfaction levels.

³ "1999 motorway customers", a Sofres-Asfa mail survey conducted on 4,000 French households with at least one vehicle.

⁴ "Research into motorway customer satisfaction" 1999 survey report", *Research International*. 28 investigation points throughout the network, 6,000 customers interviewed, 30 themes studied and grouped into 6 main themes, 4 degrees of satisfaction converted into a rating between 0 and 10.



95% of motorway customers declare themselves satisfied.

It emerges from the Sofres survey that the car remains the mode of transport most used for personal and business trips – it is considered most practical, particularly because of the time-related freedom it gives. The motorway is preferred for work-related trips and for going on holiday. However, the ordinary road tends to be more popular for all private trips. Drivers mainly prefer the motorway to the ordinary road because it is quick, safe (71% consider it much safer) and practical. They also appreciate good motorway maintenance and services procuring comfort (service stations open round the clock, sanitary facilities) and safety (rest areas, breakdown services). The cost of tolls is the main factor that deters some people from using the motorway. More than half of them consider it as a "tax levied by the State", which goes to show that motorway companies must step up their communication effort. 23% see in it "a means to build motorways without resorting to taxes" and 23% "payment in return for a service". The satisfaction indicator generally reveals an excellent proportion of "fully satisfied" customers (42%). The scope for progress thus lies in the expression of "fairly satisfied" (53%), "fairly dissatisfied" (4%) and "not at all satisfied" (1%) customers.

Basic characteristics and specific services of the motorway network are also individually rated. Top of the list are: motorway and traffic conditions, with the

best score going to toll waiting times (8,1/10). The satisfaction level is still higher for safety and traffic signs/information (slightly less for weather reports (6,8/10), which customers consider inadequate: they are also interested in the weather when it is good!). The assessment is not so good on the comfort aspects: service availability and the environment. ●

(Source: Association of French motorway companies – Asfa)

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A few figures*

(light vehicle traffic on French motorways in 1999)

Motorways “transported” **1 billion travellers**

These travellers covered around **100 billion km**, which is equivalent to 667 trips from the earth to the sun!

The mean occupancy rate of light vehicles is **1.95**

The mean motorway trip distance is **95 km**, with **50% short trips** of less than 45 km (corresponding to 13% of kilometres travelled); **37% medium trips** between 45 and 225 km (37% of kilometres travelled); 13% long trips greater than 225 km (50% of kilometres travelled).

* Estimations based on a comparative analysis of surveys made over the past ten years by Asfa, motorway companies and public or private bodies in charge of the transport sector.

Safety

The great national cause

Safety on the road has been awarded the label of “great national cause” in 2000. Every year a campaign is thus singled out by the Prime Minister¹. The aim is to promote ideas in the public interest by granting communication facilities to associations (dissemination of 12 messages free-of-charge by the public radio and television corporations).

At the interministerial committee meeting on road safety held on 2 April 1999, the Prime Minister expressed the wish for road safety to be declared the great national cause for the year 2000. And in November 1999, thirteen associations sent him a letter asking to be awarded this label.

The collective², which adopted Road Prevention as its leading association, is aiming for nation-wide mobilization to make everyone aware of the tragic absurdity of road accidents. And therein lies the particularity of the great national cause, which aims to mobilize everyone: associations, administrations, local and regional authorities, companies and private individuals.

To promote the activities, two labels have been devised. The first “Road Safety Partner” is awarded

by the DSCR³ to those engaging in actions aimed at building awareness, knowledge and capacities of their internal and external target populations. The criteria for awarding this label are the extent and sustainability of the action and the degree of commitment. The second label “a Road Safety Backed Initiative”, distinguished between innovative actions in favour of road safety with local or nation-wide coverage. It is awarded by the Prefects (and possibly the DSCR for national actions).

Several communication campaigns have also been scheduled throughout the year in 2000, covering subjects as diverse as using mobile phones (this campaign was organized with the mobile phone operators), motorcyclists and vulnerable road users, obeying the rules, daily commuting...

Lastly, a road safety week is scheduled for 23rd to 29th October to enable the partners in this operation to meet and report progress. On the agenda are country-wide debates and forums and actions targeting the general public.

¹ The great national causes of previous years were the public spirit (1999), the defence of human rights (1998) and protection of abused children (1997).

² The collective consists of militant road safety associations (Road Prevention, the League against Road Rage, Laser, Road Foundation, Anne Cellier Foundation against road hazard, Federation of road associations for education, Association of traffic accident victims’ families) together with associations whose scope goes beyond road traffic (National union of associations of brain injured victims’ families, National federation of industrial injury victims and disabled persons, French Association of paralysed persons) and associations that are not involved in road safety but may include this problem in their concerns (Anima’fac – Network of exchanges of experience and resource centre for students’ initiatives -, primary education sports union, French union for secular physical education).

³ Directorate of Road Safety and Traffic (DSCR) of the Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Housing.

Further information can be obtained from:

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TWO NEW ISTD MEMBERS

Isted has two new members: **Secmair** Company, a manufacturer of equipment for road surface dressings (asphalt spreaders, gritters, combined asphalt/grit spreading equipment) and **IGN France International**, a geographical engineering society, subsidiary of the French National Geographic Institute.

For further details on the 52 Isted members, you can access

our website at the following address: <http://www.isted.com>

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ISTED / CNIG COOPERATION

Xavier Crépin, Executive Manager of Isted, has just accepted the office of Chairman of the International Relations Working Group of the Economic Commission of CNIG (National Council for Geographic Information). This interministerial consultative body was set up in 1985 to develop the use of geographic information and to coordinate public action in this field. The CNIG comes under the Ministry of Public Works.

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"SOURCE" TOOLS



The "SOURCE" operator's handbook, information brochure and CD-ROM (Standard Overall Ultralight Road Care Estimate) are now available. This method is part of a World Bank project to define an overall indicator of the level of service offered by main road networks in Africa. It is based on standardized measuring of common travel speeds and traffic levels and provides a quick, comprehensive assessment of the state of preservation of the road networks. The publication of this handbook, brochure and CD-ROM follows several field experimentation campaigns in Cameroon, Ghana, Guinea and Madagascar (see below).

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"SOURCE" IN MADAGASCAR

The "Source" method is based on the principle of assessing the actual level of service of a country's main road network by measuring mean light vehicle travel speeds and traffic levels. For the overall observation system, a three-yearly rate is scheduled for the measurement campaigns. But the method is flexible enough to adapt to specific requirements and to enable much closer monitoring of major routes. An exemplary system is now operational in the Madagascar Ministry of Public Works. "Source" is implemented every fortnight according to a slightly modified measuring protocol. This makes it possible to monitor the patterns of change, particularly season-related, of common travel times and traffic levels on the country's three ultra-priority routes (RN2, RN4 and RN7) covering a distance of around 1,850 km. Measuring work is performed on their return runs by three of the Ministry's specialized watch patrols. On the outward runs, they record any new instances of damage, which they report to the subdivisions, ensuring they are addressed within the time frame specified by the maintenance charter. The two tools complete each other for management and monitoring of the level of service on these routes.

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"TARIFF AND TRAFFIC"



"Tariff and Traffic" is a teaching game devoted to the financing and organization of road maintenance in Sub-Saharan Africa. It covers the creation of a road maintenance fund (jointly managed by public authorities and users) and enables road maintenance strategies to be tested. This collective training module, available on a CD-ROM, has been developed by the Road Maintenance Initiative – RMI*. It is designed as interactive role-play in tandem with teaching features that address real situations. Note that Isted is associated in the trainer training exercise for collective workshops and can provide assistance for countries wishing to organize this type of workshop.

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* The RMI is a basic component of the Sub-Saharan Africa Transport Policy Program. It was launched jointly by the World Bank and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE ARMENIAN ROAD DIRECTORATE

Under the "Taxis" project, financed by the European Union, the Isted "Roads" Department is conducting a technical assistance assignment for the Armenian Road Directorate. This project receives help from the Technical Departments of the French Ministry of Public

Works (Technical Study Centres, Regional Laboratories, Central Road Research Laboratory and the County Public Works Directorates). Its aims are to improve the technical skills of engineers in the Armenian Road Directorate, to qualify road contractors and to facilitate the implementation of a real road maintenance policy. The activities initiated in 1999 mainly concern the manufacture and use of asphalt emulsions and dense bituminous mixes; maintenance and management of engineering structures; management, programming and maintenance of roads; the participation of an Armenian Road Directorate executive in the Cesroute training course. This course will be completed at the end of 2000. The partners are seeking additional financial resources to continue their action, particularly in the field of road safety, road management, engineering structures and pavement construction techniques (mixes and bitumen emulsions).

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ROAD COMMERCIALIZATION

During the General Meeting of Adar (Association of African Road Directors), a seminar on road commercialization was organized from 3 to 5 July 2000 in Cotonou (Benin). It was attended by Road Directors and Road Maintenance supervisors from fifteen countries. The main theme of the seminar was the teaching game “Tariff and Traffic”. It reviewed all the questions that must be asked when creating or revising a Road Maintenance Fund (RMF). Other meetings were held at the same time: a meeting of the C20 technical committee on “Appropriate Levels of Development” of PIARC (World Road Association); the 10th General Meeting of the Association of Building and Public Works Laboratories (ALBTP); the 3rd General Meeting of the

Transnational Committee of African Geotechnical Engineers.

► **Contact:**

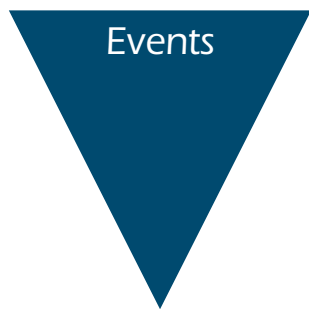
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TECHNOLOGICAL EXCHANGES AND DEVELOPMENT

The last meeting of the C3 Committee on “Technological Exchanges and Development” of the World Road Association (PIARC) was held on 29 and 30 June 2000 in Mexico. It finalized the Committee’s work program for the coming years. The priorities were: training oriented towards social and economic development, technology of technology transfer, and the evaluation of PIARC’s performance in technology transfer and dissemination of information. The next C3 Committee meeting is scheduled for the beginning of 2001 in Uganda.

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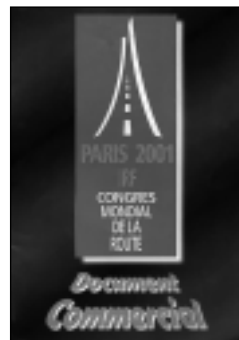
A seminar will be held from 12 to 14 June 2001, at the Cité des Sciences et de l’Industrie, Parc de La Villette, Paris (France), to optimize the benefits of scientific and technological activities developed under “Predit” program for land transport research, development and innovation. This event will be organized by the Predit permanent secretariat in partnership with Isted. This

program was launched in March 1996 for a five-year period, at the initiative of the Ministers of Transport, Research, the Environment and Industry, with the support of Ademe (Agency for the environment and energy management) and Anvar (National agency for research development). It aims to build and develop cooperation between public and private stakeholders on matters of common concern.

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IRF 2001 WORLD ROAD CONGRESS



Paris (France) will host the XIVth World Road Congress of the International Road Federation (IRF) from 11 to 14 June 2001. An exhibition will complete the congress information sessions and will present a wide range of products and services of the international road and transport industry. Isted will coordinate a French pavilion that will group together companies wishing to promote their skills, around the technical services of the Ministry of Public Works.

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THE 4th CESROUTE SESSION

The “Roads” advanced studies program of international personalized training in road management is continuing its development, with the opening of its fourth session in September. Isted is in charge of organizing this operation and the courses are given by ENPC (École Nationale des Ponts et Chaussées). The 2000/2001 session is attended by a large number of trainees from Eastern Europe:

- Ovidiu-Daniel Biolan, in charge of the Mechanization Office of the Regional Public Works Directorate (Craiova – Romania)
- Bogdan Tudor, in charge of the “Pavements” Department of the Technical Studies Centre (Bucharest – Romania)
- Joanna Zajfryd, in charge of the Environment at the Directorate General of Roads (Warsaw – Poland)
- Daniela Kovalcikova, Director General of Legislation, Ministry of Transport (Prague – Czech Republic)
- Jozsef Hollo, Technical Director of the National Roads Operation, Maintenance and Development Department (Hungary)
- Hitoshi Yoshida, Expert on Economics and Assessment, Department of Road Projects, Public Corporation of Metropolitan Motorways (Japan)
- Nevil Coakley, Project Engineer in the Colas Teoranta Group (Cork – Ireland)
- Fathallah Boughrara, Engineer, Eastern Region Directorate of Public Works (Morocco)
- Alle Ould Guig, Director of Studies and Programming, National Road Maintenance Establishment (Mauritania)

Trainees' personal projects cover a wide range of subjects including: the introduction of road data bases and development plans; evaluations of the mechanization level of roadworks; restricted-clearance tunnel projects (case of motorways); performance contracts for road maintenance work projects; environmental concerns in projects; legislation changes in road transport, Community law; legal procedure and contract negotiations.

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FINANCING INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Public-private partnerships



Public-private partnerships provide a cost-effective response to the ever-increasing demand for facilities and community services. They are today's key instruments for modernizing global economies. French companies have already placed their long-standing tradition in this field at the service of a

number of countries. To enable this experience to be shared, the Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Housing (Metl) has called on the services of recognized experts to draw up a composite work on public-private partnerships. Its main features are:

- basic principles for successful partnerships in economic, legal and financial terms;
- the process of preparing, making and performing a contract;
- useful recommendations derived from many years of practical experience;
- a description of the characteristics of major working sectors, based on concrete examples of partnerships for the various types of transport facilities and urban services in many parts of the world.

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URBAN COOPERATION STRATEGIES



The President of the High Council for International Cooperation (HCCI), Jean-Louis Bianco, signed the editorial of the 48th issue of *Villes en Développement* devoted to urban cooperation strategies. Contents: *Cities Alliance*; The new challenges of urbanization; UNCHS solutions; the urban strategy of the World Bank; the European Commission's urban programs for developing countries. You will find this issue, and previous issues, on the Isted website.

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INTER RAIL COOPERATION



The feature article of Issue 5 (September 2000) of the *Inter Rail Cooperation magazine* is a full report on the Cameroon railway company, CAMRAIL. With all the regular columns: "The Manager's Corner (A railway concession case study – Get ready to negotiate – Appointments – Safety); News from Abroad (Morocco – Air-rail transport). Note: the entire magazine is on line on the Isted website.

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Isted, a non-profit organization, is a platform for study and debate, information and action, at the service of its public and private members in the public works, transport, planning and environment sectors. It facilitates their international activities, optimizes the use of French knowhow throughout the world and helps to implement international programmes with third country leaders.

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