

PIARC

Network of Experience

The Permanent International Association of Road Congresses (PIARC) will hold its XXth Congress in Montreal, Canada, September 3–9, 1995. This event is expected to attract more than 3,000 specialists and experts from all over the world.

The 1995 congress provides an excellent opportunity for North American participation, building on the increasing level of U.S. involvement in PIARC resulting from the Federal Highway Administration's renewal of U.S. membership in PIARC a few years ago. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials and the Transportation Research Board have also helped expand U.S. participation.

PIARC, founded in Paris in 1909, is the oldest international organization dealing with roads and road engineering. Its aim, within the context of wider transportation policies, is to enhance international cooperation and foster progress in the formulation of road transport policies, the planning, construction, improvement, and maintenance of roads, and the operation and management of road systems.

A world congress at which specialists from all continents take stock of road techniques is held every four years. PIARC also organizes other major technical events, specifically international winter road congresses.

The association has almost 20 permanent committees and various work groups composed of specialists from more than 60 countries, making it the world's largest network of experts on road technology. PIARC's world congresses present an

opportunity for these groups to report on their research and activities.

National reports are another feature of the congresses. These reports are submitted by member countries at PIARC's invitation and deal with specific questions selected for debate. In preparation for the congresses, the association invites its member countries to make their opinions known on subjects or questions. Reports from individual countries are then summarized for debate. At the Montreal Congress four questions will be debated: performance management of road administrations, transportation and urban space planning, attainment of quality in roadworks, and new techniques for pavement strengthening and maintenance.

In addition the association asks the congress host country to arrange special sessions on subjects of its choice. In Montreal, participants will have the opportunity to debate major issues of the day in a ministerial session on the theme of road security, and in other sessions on large cities, countries of Latin America, the North American Free Trade Agreement, and the African Road Maintenance Program implemented by the World Bank.

A major road exhibition is always part of PIARC congresses. In light of the interest sparked by leading-edge technologies, the theme *New Ways To Manage Highways* has been selected for the exhibition at the Montreal Congress. National delegations from more than a dozen countries will attend to present their achievements to decision makers, specialists, businesses, and road industry organizations from around the world.

PIARC is constantly seeking to adapt to

a changing world and has thus developed a strategic plan to guide its activities. PIARC members hope that with this plan, which will be discussed at the Montreal Congress, the association will be in a position to continue to serve the international community well in the field of road infrastructure.

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