

## **Montreal ITS World Congress Incoming Mission October/November, 2017**

The 24<sup>th</sup> ITS World Congress was held in Montreal, Canada in October 29 to November 2, 2017. Although an annual event, the ITS World Congress is held in North America once every three years. It is a popular event among ITS experts. Typically, several thousands of ITS professionals from over 50 countries around the world attend such an event and the accompanied exhibition attracts several thousand more. A total of 8000+ delegates from 65 countries attended the ITS WC 2017.



ITS WC 2017 Incoming Mission Team



Joe Lam, Chair ITS Canada IBD Committee welcoming the ITS WC 2017 Incoming Mission – ITS Canada welcome reception



Waiting in line for B2B meetings

Pictures courtesy of ITS America ITS WC 2017

The Montreal event was held for the first time in Canada since 1999 in Toronto and it provided a great opportunity for international business development for many of Canadian ITS product and service providers. For this reason, ITS Canada invited seven people from ITS communities around the world to attend the Montreal ITS World Congress, thanks to financial support from GOA (Global Opportunities for Associations) of Global Affairs Canada.

The invited guests included representatives from Chile, Mexico, Romania, Thailand, Indonesia and China. Their focus was to attend the Montreal event and visit the congress exhibition to familiarize with the various ITS technologies Canada has to offer and discuss

business potential and partnership opportunities with our members. Some of them would visit another city as part of their travel to visit ITS companies and tour ITS installations.

After their arrival in Montreal, they first attended a briefing session arranged by Joe Lam, ITS Canada's International Business Development Committee chair. Explanations were given to them regarding the nature and objective of GOA subsidy, the goals and missions of ITS Canada and expectations of them during the Congress. They were provided a brochure each containing all the Canadian ITS exhibitors in the conference and were urged to visit every one of the Canadian booths.

As a kick-off to their mission, they were invited to attend the ITS Canada Reception for members on Sunday, October 29 and presented to the gathering at large. They were also introduced to many key members, especially those involved in exports, on a one on one basis.

The exhibition commenced the following day and our guests were busy in meeting people, visiting exhibition booths and seeing technology demonstrations. They were allowed to roam freely throughout the congress and not subjected to a strict agenda. Whenever possible, they were introduced to our government officials and the SME suppliers present, many of whom were ITS Canada members. They were invited to drop in the ITS Canada booth as well as the City of Montreal Smart City Pavilion, and representatives from ITS Canada and the City of Montreal certainly made them feel very welcome. I believe they visited most if not all of the more than 65+ Canadian booths in the exhibition and got a real appreciation of our ITS technologies and how it could be applied in their own countries. In particular, a number of effective business discussions and partnership engagements were witnessed.

In the end, our objectives for the Incoming Mission were met in terms of business networking and potential partnerships. Many of our members as well as other Canadian ITS suppliers benefited from the mission in many aspects. ITS Canada will assist our members in that regard. It is hoped that after our invited guests return home, they will act as catalysts to promote business and partnership with Canadian ITS companies, with the understanding of our technologies and the good will developed during their week in Montreal. Of course, follow-ups are critical for future success and the IBD Committee of ITS Canada will continue to assist our members in this regard.