



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

6 JUNE 1985

The following arrangements have been agreed by the Minister for Transport, Mr Morris, and myself, to give effect to the understanding on transport co-operation with China that I reached with General Secretary Hu Yaobang during his recent visit.

During his recent visit to Australia, Hu Yaobang described transport and energy as two major areas of attention in China's Seventh Five Year Plan.

Australia's transport experience is of particular relevance to China. Ours is a vast continent with diverse transport needs and problems. We have developed special expertise in moving bulk commodities over long distances, and also have relevant expertise in such diverse areas as road building, air services, road transport and cargo handling.

I advised Mr Hu of Australia's willingness and capacity to co-operate in the review and modernisation of China's transport infrastructure.

As discussed with Hu Yaobang, Sir Peter Abeles, Managing Director and Chief Executive of Thomas Nationwide Transport (TNT), has agreed that a planned Ansett/TNT visit to China will be expanded to include a Government delegation.

Sir Peter Abeles will be leader and Mr Paul Barratt, Deputy Secretary, Department of Trade, Deputy Leader of the Transport Mission.

The official mission will be responsible for developing with the Chinese Government a permanent Government to Government mechanism for promoting long-term co-operation in transport. Within this mechanism, opportunities will be developed for a wide range of Australian private and public sector interests to co-operate in China's development.

In preparation for the Transport Mission, the Department of Trade tomorrow, 7 June, will convene a briefing in Canberra for industry associations in the transport sector. The briefing will outline the Government's aims for co-operation with China in the transport sector, identify possible options to achieve those aims, and seek industry views.

The initial mission to China will identify particular transport issues facing China and develop options for future bilateral co-operation in those areas where Australia can best assist.

Members of the mission will meet with participants in the Australian transport sector who are interested in developing the relationship with China after their return. The findings of the mission will be put to Australian industry and a package of initiatives and plans for future action and further missions will be developed.

The Government's success in maintaining economic growth and concentrating our efforts on those goods and services where we have a competitive advantage, have placed Australia in a useful position to provide assistance to China. Our experience in comparable conditions will be of particular benefit.

Australian industry needs to be sensitive to international opportunities and place emphasis on those areas where we have superior technology, expertise or a competitive edge.

The Government's first objective is to co-operate with China in developing its transport system to support economic development. Commercial and economic benefits for Australia will be a pleasing bonus.
