

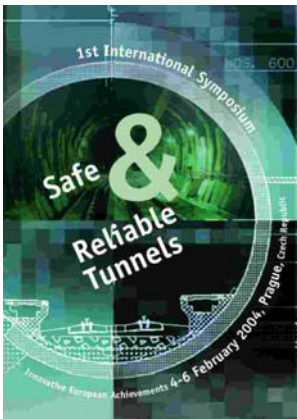
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PRESS RELEASE

Successful symposium points the way forward for improved safety & reliability of tunnels

**1st International Symposium
'Safe & Reliable Tunnels - Innovative European Achievements'
4-6 February 2004, Prague, Czech Republic**



The symposium 'Safe & Reliable Tunnels– Innovative European Achievements', held recently in Prague, attracted more than 250 participants from over 30 countries. The participants enjoyed an active two-days of discussion and dissemination of the latest research achievements and ongoing developments in the tunnel safety field.

The symposium was a joint initiative of three major European projects, known by their acronyms DARTS, FIT and UPTUN, running under the auspices of the European Commission (DG Research, GROWTH Programme) and dealt with the three transport modes (road, rail and metro). All aspects relating to designing, building, maintaining and upgrading of tunnels and tunnel structures, including human behaviour and hazards, were addressed in an integrated way.

The symposium offered latest research results and state of the art overviews with high quality presentations from research, consultancy, industry and governmental organisations. Three panel debates were enriched with the active contributions of the symposium participants. A special poster session gave an overview of all European research projects on safety and tunnels, illustrating again the importance and scale of the research activities being developed at present.

The tunnelling world is challenged to incorporate the results and findings of the symposium in practical construction and operation, standards and design basis to further increase the safety and performance of tunnel operations and activities. A continuous investment in research and development contributes significantly to an advanced – and leading – knowledge-based European expertise on tunnels and tunnel operations.

New projects are launched and research is continuing. A new rendez-vous - the second symposium on Safe & Reliable Tunnels in Spring 2006 – will offer a new opportunity to meet and exchange up-to-date knowledge and gain competitiveness for Europe's tunnel activity.

Slide presentations of the symposium are published on the FIT website www.etnfit.net. Information about this press release is available at:

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SHORT PRESS RELEASE

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The symposium dealt with road, rail and metro and addressed all aspects related to designing, building, maintaining and upgrading of tunnels and tunnel structures, including human behaviour and hazards, in an integrated way.

The tunnel society is challenged to incorporate the results and findings of the symposium in practical construction and operation, standards and design basis to further increase the safety and performance of tunnel operations and activities. A continuous investment in research and development shows to contribute significantly to an advanced – and leading – know-how based European expertise on tunnels and tunnel operations.

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