

# The Origin and the Evolvement of WCRR

The World Congress on Railway Research (WCRR), which originated in the international railway research seminar held by RTRI in 1992, has evolved to be the world's largest international congress on railway research. Ryuji Tsuchiya, the director of international division gives a brief overview of the history of WCRR in this article.

## Birth of WCRR

In October 1992, an international railway research seminar was held in Tokyo hosted by RTRI as one of the commemorative events of the 5th anniversary of RTRI. The speakers of the seminar were top R&D executives of major railways in the world including Roy A. ALLEN, Vice President of AAR, George W. BUCKLEY, Managing Director, Central Services of British Railway Board, Theo RAHN, President of the Technological Center of DB, Philippe ROUMEGUERE, Assistant Director General of SNCF and Kainen WATANABE, Executive Vice President of RTRI.

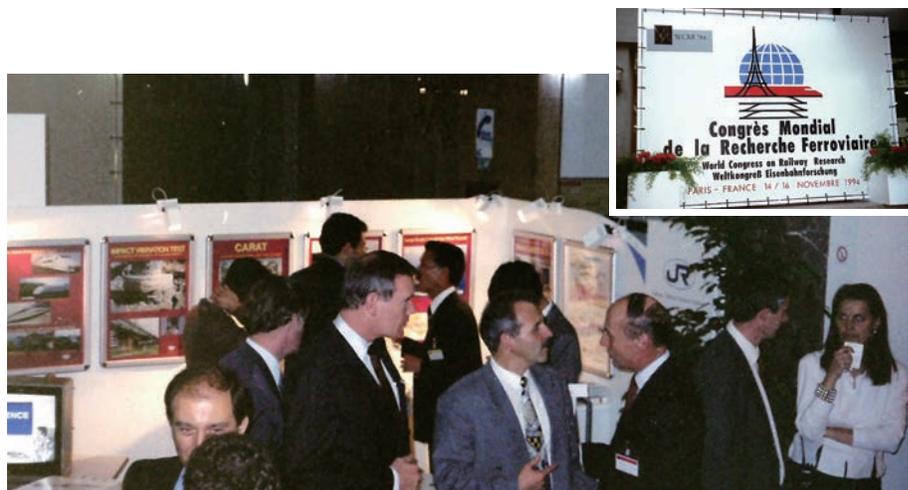
On this occasion, RTRI's proposal for founding the World Congress on Railway Research was agreed upon by all the members present at the seminar and the organizing and executive committees of the congress were established. UIC and Italy also participated in these committees later.

## Overview of the past congresses

The first congress was held in Paris in 1994 hosted by SNCF with 1370 participants. The congress takes place at least every 3 years. An overview of the past congresses is listed in Table. In October 1999, WCRR 1999 was held in Kunitachi Headquarters of RTRI in Tokyo. The most recent congress was held in Milan from May 29<sup>th</sup> to June 2<sup>nd</sup>. It has been decided



International railway research seminar in 1992



The first WCRR in Paris in 1994

that the next congress will be held in 2019 in Tokyo.

### Current Status of WCRR

WCRR has become the world’s largest international congress dedicated to railway research, where researchers and engineers in diverse fields of railway technologies get together from all over the world to present their latest research results and to share ideas and experiences for promoting the innovation of railways. In addition to the oral/poster presentations of scientific/technical papers, plenary sessions and exhibitions are also featured. Plenary sessions often include round tables involving senior management of major railway operators, infrastructure managers, rail-related manufacturers and other stakeholders of railways.

The congress in Milan covers such areas as 1) rolling stock, 2) infrastructure, 3) railway system (including signalling and train

control systems), 4) passenger mobility, 5) freight logistics, 6) sustainability, 7) operation and safety and 8) economics and policy. It should be noted that in addition to purely technical matters, issues related to social and financial processes for deploying railway technologies are also discussed in the congress.

### Organizing/Executive Committees of WCRR

WCRR is governed by the joint activities of WCRR committees. The senior committee is called the “Organizing Committee” (ORG, for short) and reporting to it is the “Executive Committee” (EXE for short). The permanent members of the WCRR committees are SNCF (France), DB (Germany), Trenitalia (Italy), RSSB (United Kingdom), RTRI (Japan), TTCI (USA) and UIC (International Union of Railways). In addition to the permanent members of WCRR, special membership can be



WCRR '99 at RTRI in Tokyo in 1999

conferred on other organizations that have been approved to host future WCRR events. Canadian, Korean and Australian organizations took part in the committees in order to host WCRR 2006, WCRR 2008 and WCRR 2013, respectively.

### Overview of the Past WCRR

Edition	Location	Year	Month	Number of participants	Congress Theme
1	Paris	1994	11	1,370	Managing the Strategic Fields of Railway Research in the 21st Century
2	Colorado Springs	1996	6	490	Seeking, Creating, and Developing International Railroad Research Partnerships
3	Florence	1997	11	1,560	Future Railways Need to Halve Costs, Double Productivity and Remain Environmentally Friendly
4	Tokyo	1999	10	740	New technologies create new opportunities for the railways and society of the 21st century
5	Cologne	2001	11	1,050	Market - Products - Technology
6	Edinburgh	2003	9	700	From Birth to Renaissance
7	Montreal	2006	6	750	Progressing Together
8	Seoul	2008	5	800	Towards a Global Railway
9	Lille	2011	5	800	Meeting the Challenges for Future Mobility
10	Sydney	2013	11	560	Keeping Ahead of the Curve through the Sharing of Knowledge
11	Milan	2016	5-6	1,000	Research and Innovation – From today towards 2050