Improving event transport management

Large events such as the Olympics or the World Cup pose huge transport challenges for the organising city. Researchers have recently tested several technological solutions to these problems.

Transport is a complex and crucial part of a city's infrastructure, and it becomes even more so in the context of hosting major sporting events. This can consume up to about 20% of the local organising committee's (LOC) budget, and requires massive organisation in a short space of time.

To address this, the EU-funded ‘Smart transport applications designed for large events with impacts on urban mobility’ (STADIUM) project was established. The project tested information and communication technology (ICT) systems at major sporting events. This included the 2010 FIFA World Cup in Cape Town (South Africa), the 2010 Commonwealth Games in Delhi (India), and the 2012 Olympic Games in London (United Kingdom).

In Cape Town, STADIUM tested a demand-responsive transport system in minibus taxis. The system used a central control centre to reduce the 'downtime' of taxis and to improve efficiency. As a service, it was successfully integrated with the mass transport systems already operating in the city.

Delhi operations involved testing an integrated booking system that used a mobile application. The project linked public transport (trains and buses) with paratransit services (taxis and autorickshaws) using global positioning system tracking and forecasting tools to improve transit times.

In London, CCTV cameras were used to provide data for visual scene analysis. It was intended as an automated traffic and incident detection system that could alert operators to potential traffic problems and congestion. This reduced the workload of the operators while improving traffic control and overall travelling times, despite increased traffic.

The STADIUM project has collected the results of these demonstrator projects into a guidebook for transport management at future events. This will enable LOCs to better coordinate travel requirements without disrupting public transport during major sporting events.
Subjects
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