

Global Centre for Mega Projects in Transport and Development



The Bartlett School of Planning
University College London



The Bartlett Smaller VREF Project

- ‘Improving the treatment of complexity, uncertainty, and risk in the planning of urban mega transport projects’
 - Grant of about £120,000 over 18 months
 - Commenced January 2006
- Review of strategic decision making in the context of *complexity, uncertainty, and risk*
 - Literature review
 - Commissioned papers focused on urban transport, city and regional planning



Aim of the Smaller VREF Project

- To define a consistent and coherent vocabulary, a common language, and a set of definitions for the OMEGA Centre of Excellence research programme.



OMEGA Centre Research Program

- Awarded research grant valued at about UK£2 million over 5 years.
- Core research programme at University College London, with 10 worldwide university partners.
- Total 30 mega project case studies.
- Launch and First Meeting of Partners: Jan 22nd-Jan 27th 2007, London.



Background

- Increasing concerns about the evaluation of and decision-making for mega urban transport projects (MUTPs).
- MUTPs restructuring whole metropolitan regions in a way that makes sustainability objectives (eg climate change adaptation) far more difficult to achieve.
- MUTPs have in some cases become ends in themselves, justifying and creating places of global investment rather than being built to serve the needs of people and localities.



Participating nations

- UK (Bartlett School of Planning, University College London)
- France (Ecole Nationale des Ponts et Chaussees, Paris)
- Germany (Free University of Berlin)
- Netherlands (Institute for Metropolitan Studies, University of Amsterdam)
- Greece (University of Thessaly, Volos)
- Sweden (Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm)
- China (Hong Kong) (University of Hong Kong)
- Japan (Toyo University)
- USA (New York University)
- Australia (University of Melbourne, GAMUT)



Key Objectives

- Building an international data base of MUTP profiles for comparative analysis.
- The application to MUTPs of principles for the treatment of complexity, uncertainty and risk.
- The development of new decision-making tools and guidelines to assist public and private agencies in planning, appraising, implementing and evaluating proposed MUTPs.
- The building of institutional and professional capacities for decision-making for future MUTPs.



Key questions

- What criteria have been used to measure success?
- What was the institutional and political context of the projects?
- What were the social, environmental and financial risks of the project, and how were these handled in decision-making?



Approach and Methods

- Conceptual papers on risk evaluation.
- Country Overview background papers.
- Case studies:
 - Project profiles using secondary data sources.
 - Primary data from questionnaires administered to key informants (using ‘narrative pattern analysis’ to elicit reasoning).



Hypotheses

1. That the planning, legitimation and evaluation procedures for MUTPs have resulted in substantial ineffectiveness,
2. That MUTP planning processes demonstrate certain shortcomings of method.
3. That too restrictive a set of criteria have been applied to measure success.




Case Studies

- Land based transport infrastructure investments within and connecting urban areas in the form of bridge, tunnel, road and rail links (or combinations of these).
- Construction cost of over US\$500 million at present day prices.
- Projects completed since 1990 in partner countries and territories.
- Projects perceived as critical to the performance of major urban and metropolitan development initiatives.

Australian Participation of GAMUT

- Principles paper on environmental risks.
- ‘Country Overview’ background paper
- Case studies:
 - Sydney Harbour Tunnel (road and tunnel)
 - City Link motorway expansion, Melbourne (roads, tunnels and bridge)
 - Rail network expansion, Perth (railways).





Background paper on Australian case studies by Imran Muhammad

- History of decision-making and dates of key decisions.
- Key personnel involved.
- Institutional context.
- To be completed before January 22nd Workshop.





● Thanks:

Questions?