

## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION - ITALY

Former Secretary Volpe and Italian Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation Gaspari signed a Memorandum of Understanding on October 3, 1969. The following nine areas were identified for initial cooperative activities: experimental safety vehicles (ESV), emergency medical assistance, surface noise, accident investigations, auto passive restraints (air bags), air pollution, traffic control, high speed ground transportation (TACV), and civil aviation. Through the years, cooperative activity slowed considerably because of economic and political problems on the Italian side, and became limited to occasional exchanges in the areas of ESV, noise abatement, traffic safety, economic research, and high speed conventional rail. At your meeting with Minister Signorile last year in Washington (June 21), it was agreed to revitalize the relationship by a new Memorandum of Understanding tailored to present needs. Bernard Ramundo (P-25) met last October in Rome with Ministry officials to work out the text of the Memorandum which is now ready for signature.

Recently, the National Research Council (CNR) of Italy has sought DOT advice on the development of the Italian National Transportation Plan and two meetings have been held in Washington to discuss plan objectives. Also, at Italian expense, DOT has participated in transportation seminars organized by the International Transportation Studies Center, a nonprofit organization quartered in Rome and closely associated with the Ministry.

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P-25  
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In November and December 1977, NHTSA awarded two contracts to FIAT. One contract entitled "Lightweight Automotive Diesel Data Base" was for almost \$.5M, and the other contract entitled "Light Truck Weight Reduction Evaluation" was for approximately \$150K. Both contracts were awarded to FIAT as subcontractor of the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT Research Institute) in Chicago and are administered for NHTSA by TSC in Cambridge. The work on the truck weight reduction contract is essentially completed and the diesel contract has been extended to include research on direct injection diesel.

Cooperative activities tend to come in spurts primarily in the aviation area. For example, during the summer of 1980, the Government of Italy approved a Memorandum of Agreement for FAA to conduct an air traffic control (ATC) system study in Italy. FAA will provide a nine-man technical team to carry out the ATC system study over approximately three months beginning October 6, 1980.

Although the current political and economic situation in Italy continues to limit cooperation possibilities to exchanges of information, the Italian Embassy's Scientific Counselor, formerly involved in Italian transportation activities, believes that Italian transport officials are interested in renewal of cooperation. Also, a DOT highway specialist visited the Italian MOT in December 1979 and generated some interest on the part of Italian highway officials for further information exchanges.

The last Italian transport dignitary to visit the Department was Minister of Transport Mario Martinelli in November 1975. During the Minister's meetings with former Secretary Coleman and former NHTSA Administrator Gregory, he showed special interest in ESV, vehicle testing for compliance with environmental requirements, and encouraging the use of public transportation.

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