

INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL CONVENTION, 2017 – DALLAS

Monday 25th September to Friday 29th September 2017

The IRSE's 2017 International Technical Convention will be held in the Dallas Fort Worth, Texas area on 25-29 September and will be based in the City of Grapevine (near Dallas), Texas in the United States. This is made possible through the cooperation and support of the IRSE North American Section, BNSF Railway, Dallas Area Rapid Transit, Denton Country Transit, Fort Worth Area Transit, General Electric, Herzog Technologies, and a number of other industry sponsors.

The Convention will be based at the Hilton DFW Lakes Executive Conference Center, 1800 Highway 26E, Grapevine, Texas, 76051-9641, USA. It will start with a reception on the evening of Monday 25th September 2017 and conclude with the Convention Dinner on the evening of Friday 29th September 2017.

Bring your cowboy boots and hat as the IRSE North American section welcomes you to join us in the Lone Star State of Texas. From railroads, to BBQ to Tex-Mex, it's all bigger here! Comprising two major cities, it is the economic and cultural hub of the region commonly called North Texas or North Central Texas and is the largest inland metropolitan area in the United States. The region also serves as a major hub for the Union Pacific and BNSF freight railroads, serving the US economy. Dallas is the third-largest city in the state of Texas and the ninth-largest in the United States. The city covers almost 400 square miles (1,000 km²), with a population exceeding 1.3 million. The Dallas/Fort Worth metropolitan area is the eighth-largest metropolitan area in the United States, with 7 million people.

Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport (DFW), located between the cities of Dallas and Fort Worth, is the largest and busiest airport in the state of Texas. At 100 km² (39 sq mi) of total land area, DFW is the second- largest airport in the country and sixth-largest in the world. American Airlines, based in Fort Worth, is the major carrier on routes to and from DFW; there are direct flights available from London, Paris, Tokyo and Sydney.

The Convention hotel – Dallas/Fort Worth Hilton Lakes (<http://bit.ly/2dfCXBq>), is very conveniently located, with a free 24-hour shuttle service to and from the airport. The alternative hotel, Comfort Suites, also provides an airport shuttle service.

DRAFT PROGRAMME (Guest-only parts shown in italics)

Monday 25th September

18:00	Registration and informal welcome reception in the hotel ballroom
19:30	Reception ends

Tuesday 26th September

09:00	Opening Ceremony, Hilton DFW Lakes Executive Conference Center
10:00 – 16:00	Technical Presentations and Papers to delegates
9:00	<i>Guests depart for a Tour of the Fort Worth Arboretum, returning at 14:15</i>

Wednesday 27th September

09:00	Delegates depart for various visits of signaling interest (rail and transit depots, and installations)
18:00	Delegates arrive back at the hotel
09:00	<i>Guests depart for tour of the George Bush Presidential Library, a tour of the SMU campus, lunch at Seasons 52 and Northpark Shopping Mall</i>
14:15	<i>Guests return to hotel</i>
	In the evening, delegates and guests will be free to make their own arrangements

Thursday 28th September

09:00	Delegates and guests will be taken by steam train to the Fort Worth Stock Yards
12:00	Delegates and guests will have lunch at Joe T. Garcia's at the Stockyards
13:00	Delegates and guests will be taken to the JFK Memorial and 6 th Floor Museum
14:00	Delegates and guests will walk to the YO Ranch Steakhouse in Dallas (a short walk) for dinner
17:30	Delegates and guests arrive back at the Hotel

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Friday 29th September

09:00	Delegates depart for various visits of signaling interest (rail and transit depots, and installations)
18:00	Delegates arrive back at the hotel
17:30	Convention will conclude with a Banquet at the Hilton DFW Lakes Executive Conference Center

PRICING AND BOOKING ARRANGEMENTS

The fees payable are shown on the Application Form enclosed with this notice. Delegates are welcome to bring a guest to the Convention on payment of the guest fee. Please note that early bird booking fees are available, offering a significant discount on the full fee. Bursaries are available for younger members of the IRSE – see separate Bursary Application Form.

HOTEL ARRANGEMENTS

We have booked a number of rooms for delegates and guests at the Hilton DFW Lakes Executive Conference Center and also at the nearby Comfort Suites. We have special rates for the IRSE, which include buffet breakfast and all taxes.

The Hotel Booking Form which accompanies this notice should be sent to David Street using the address/email shown on the form, not to the IRSE. Bookings must be made in this way to ensure that you obtain the special rates.

For those who wish to make their own accommodation arrangements, there are many more hotels available for on-line booking or through the DSTM web-site at: <http://hotels.dstravel.co.uk>. Be aware, however, that all events are held at or depart from the Hilton DFW Lakes Executive Conference Center, and no transportation between hotels is provided (including the Comfort Suites).

All enquiries about hotel arrangements should be referred to David Street by telephone +44 (0)1249 460898 or email david-street@btconnect.com.

TRAVEL to DALLAS

Delegates and their guests are responsible for making their own travel arrangements to Dallas. DFW Airport is the main international airport serving Grapevine. It is located 32 km northeast of the Dallas city center, and the hotel provides a free shuttle from DFW airport to the hotel. Early booking is advised to obtain the best fares. For a travel quote, please email david-street@btconnect.com.

VISAS, PASSPORTS AND INSURANCE

Delegates and their guests are responsible for obtaining any necessary visas and permits to enter The United States in time for the Convention. Visas can be applied for online via the following website only (this is the official US Customs and Border Patrol website). There is nominal fee that must be paid - most credit cards are accepted: <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/esta/>.

The [Visa Waiver Program \(VWP\)](#) enables most citizens or nationals of participating countries to travel to the United States for tourism or business for stays of 90 days or less without first obtaining a visa, when they meet all requirements. Travelers must have a valid [Electronic System for Travel Authorization \(ESTA\)](#) approval prior to travel. Note that if you are entering the USA under the VWP, then your passport must contain a biometric chip (see <https://www.dhs.gov/e-passports>). If you prefer to have a visa in your passport, you may still apply for a visitor (B) visa.

More information may also be found at <https://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/visit/visa-waiver-program.html>. Delegates and Guests should also make sure that they have adequate arrangements for travel and medical insurance whilst in the USA.

CURRENCY

The currency in United States is the US Dollar (\$). Major credit and debit cards are accepted at most locations in the Dallas/Fort Worth area.

APPLYING FOR YOUR PLACE

Delegates wishing to attend the Convention are requested to complete and return the Application Form to the IRSE Office in London as quickly as possible. Online booking via the IRSE website will be available soon.

Electronic versions of the application form and the hotel booking form are available on the IRSE website at the following address: <http://www.irse.org/events/public/annualconvention.aspx>. IRSE Members will also be able to register online through the IRSE website.

Any enquiries concerning the Convention program should be directed to the IRSE Office – details in the header for this Notice.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THE CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS IS 1st SEPTEMBER 2017.
BOOKINGS RECEIVED AFTER THIS DATE WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

Ian Harman, Convention Coordinator, January 2017