

ATTACHMENT A

**REPORT ON THE SYDNEY MEDIA
DELEGATION TO HUBEI PROVINCE AND
XI'AN EURO-ASIA ECONOMY FORUM, 2015**

ATTACHMENT A

Report on the Sydney Media Delegation to Hubei Province and Xi'an Euro-Asia Economy Forum, 2015

SUMMARY

In 2015, the Tourism Administration Department of Hubei Province and Hubei Provincial Government extended an invitation to me and the City of Sydney to invite a media delegation to visit Hubei and to attend the Yangtze River International Tourism Festival.

As I was to be in China at the same time, I also accepted the invitation from Xi'an Government to attend the 2015 Euro-Asia Business Forum in Xi'an.

In 10 August 2015 Council meeting, Council unanimously endorsed me, as the Councillor of City of Sydney, to lead a media delegation to Hubei Province, and a delegation with two City of Sydney staff members to Xi'an in September 2015.

Great media coverage was generated in both Hubei and Sydney media. Mainstream media in Sydney had very positive stories about this trip and commended the City of Sydney's Chinese New Year Festival for its pivotal role in facilitating further connections with Wuhan and Hubei and in triggering business and investment opportunities in the two regions.

INTRODUCTION

HUBEI

In 2015, at the invitation of the Hubei Tourism Administration and Hubei Provincial Government, I led a delegation of journalists from media organisations in Sydney and staff from the City of Sydney to Hubei from the 16th to 23rd September. The Hubei Government funded the travel and accommodation expenses for myself, two City of Sydney staff and the journalists in the delegation.

The delegation aims to build up the culture links and awareness between Sydney and Hubei and to strengthen Sydney's profile in China and to promote the cultural and economic benefits of our relationship with China.

The visit provides an opportunity to enhance working relationships with Hubei and Wuhan Government under the frequent exchange and communication among the governments of Sydney, Hubei, and Wuhan.

In 2010, ahead of Hubei's participation in the City's 2011 Chinese New Year Festival, I led a well-received media delegation to Hubei at the invitation of the Hubei Provincial Government.

In 2011, Vice Governor of Hubei, Mr Zhang Tong, led a large delegation with more than 200 performers, artists and support staff from Hubei to participate in the Chinese New Year Festival and won a great success. After this visit, the Hubei Tourism Department Census showed that the figure of Australian visitors to Hubei increased significantly.

Hubei, NSW and the City of Sydney signed a Memorandum of Understanding at that time.

ATTACHMENT A

In May 2014, the Lord Mayor visited Wuhan and signed an agreement with Wuhan Mayor Mr TANG Liangzhi to investigate further strengthening the relationships and promote ongoing co-operation where we have matters of common interest, particularly environmental protection, tourism, urban design, culture, arts and international education.

Council endorsed proceeding with a Friendship City Agreement in June 2014. On 6 August 2015, the Lord Mayor hosted Mr Li Hongzhong, Party Secretary of CPC Hubei Provincial Committee & President of the Standing Committee of Hubei Provincial People's Congress, and Mr HU Lishan, Vice Mayor, Wuhan Municipal People's Government to formally sign the Friendship City Agreement.

Under this framework, the direct flights between Wuhan and Sydney has been proposed and discussed, with support and subsidies from Wuhan Government.

XI'AN

As the dates matched and as I was also invited by Xi'an Government, I also represented the City to attend the 2015 Euro-Asia Business Forum in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province.

In 2008, Shaanxi Province sent over 500 performers to participate in the City's Chinese New Year Festival, the first of several delegations from the Province to participate in the Festival. Following the Lord Mayor's visit to Xi'an in 2014, the City has assisted Xi'an University to link with universities in Sydney.

In 2014 and 2015, on behalf of the Lord Mayor, I received Vice Mayor Yue Huafeng and Vice Mayor Huang Haiqing from Xi'an Government in Sydney Town Hall and discussed about potential connection and collaboration we could have between the two cities, especially in education and culture exchange.

In 2015, as an appreciation of Lord Mayor's first visit to Xi'an, the Mayor of Xi'an sent a Terracotta Warrior Statue as a gift to City of Sydney and now it is standing outside of our Council Chamber.

DELEGATION MEMBERS

Clr Robert Kok, Councillor, City of Sydney

Paul Mackay, Communication Officer, Office of the Lord Mayor

Rebecca Yang, International Relations Policy Officer, Office of the Lord Mayor

Journalist representatives

Lee Lin Chin, TV Presenter, SBS

Belinda Lord, SBS

Matt Wade, Senior Journalist, Fairfax Media

Stephanie Harmon, Senior Editor, Junkee Australia

Adam Bell, Journalist, Newslocal

ATTACHMENT A

DELEGATION ITINERARY 15 - 25 SEPTEMBER 2015

15 September

- Departed from Sydney to Wuhan;
- Arrived in Wuhan and meeting with Director General of People's Congress of Hubei Province, Mr Zhang Dahua.

16 September

- Visited Wuhan Wanda Movie Park in the morning and watched the Flying Beyond Hubei 4D Movie produced by Hubei Province Tourism Department;
- Travelled from Wuhan to Yichang City by High Speed Train;
- Courtesy Call with Vice Governor of Hubei Province, Mr Gan Rongkun in Yichang City. Mr Gan was the host of the Festival;
- Attended Opening Ceremony of the Yangtze River International Tourism Festival in Yichang City and watched the Gala Show of the Opening Ceremony.

17 September

- Visited the Three Gorges Dam. The delegation was given a briefing and taken on a tour of the site;
- Took high speed train to Enshi City;
- Arrived Enshi City and attended the reception dinner hosted by Mr Yuan Wu, the Director General of Enshi Tourism Department.

18 September

- Visited the Site of Tangya Tusi Domain in Xian Feng County. We were given a briefing the county officials on the historical aspects of the site and the current work to preserve the heritage;
- Visited Li's Family Mansion in Li Chuan County – a well preserved historical building in the area;
- Returned to Enshi City.

19 September

- Travel to Grand Canyon which is approximately 4 hours by bus. The Canyon is one of the major tourist attractions. However the route there is still in construction and being developed;
- On arrival Ms Chin and I were interviewed by China Central Television;
- Grand Canyon Track Walk;
- Attended the Grand Canyon Dining Festival and watched the Dragon Boat Melody show at the foot of the mountain.

ATTACHMENT A

20 September

- Flight back to Wuhan City;
- Interview with Hubei Television;
- Dinner reception by Mr Qian Yuankun, the Director General of Hubei Provincial Tourism Department and Watched the Han Show in Han Show Theatre.

21 September

- Visited CSR rail company which was a state-owned enterprise supervised by the State Council of the People's Republic of China. The rail company has been supplying rail transportation carriages to various states in Australia;
- Reception Lunch by Madam Zhang Daili, Deputy Director of Provincial People's Congress hosted a luncheon for the delegation at East Lake;
- Visited Changjiang Daily;
- Courtesy call and reception dinner with Mr Hu Hanmin, the Deputy Director of Wuhan Municipal People's Congress at the Citizens Home;
- Visited Stall Street.

22 September

- Courtesy call to Vice President of Hubei University;
- Visited Han Street.

23 September

- Left Wuhan for Xi'an to attend the 2015 Euro-Asia Business Forum;
- Banquet dinner hosted by the Xi'an Government for all of the attendees and met with Vice Mayor of Xian;
- Attended the Opening Ceremony at Xian City Gate.

24 September

- Attended the Opening ceremony of the 2015 Euro-Asia Business Forum. Attendees included the Vice Director General Mr Wang Yong from the State Council of China Central Government, Armenian President, Vice President of Nepal and Deputy Prime Minister of Cambodia;
- Participated the discussion session with EU representative from Hungary, Finance Minister of Afghanistan, Minister from Tajikistan and Vice Chancellor of Oxford University;
- Courtesy call with the Deputy Director of Xian People's Congress followed by a lunch.

ATTACHMENT A

25 September

- Courtesy Call with Xi'an Mayor Mr Dong Jun and all delegate leaders;
- Unveiling of Xi'an Euro-Asia Economy Forum sculpture;
- Departed Xian for Sydney after lunch.

MEDIA REPORTS

The Media Delegation's visit to the Yangtze River International Tourism Festival successfully increased the publicity for Sydney in both China and Australia.

China's Changjiang Weekly reported the Media Delegation's visits ("Australian media delegation visits Changjiang Daily Press Group", 25 September 2015). Hubei Tourism Bureau published an article on 25 September 2015 as "Australian Media Delegation visited Hubei, highly praised the cultural heritage and natural scenery". It reported the delegation's site visits during the Yangtze River International Festival in detail.

The Australian media also published in-depth reports on the delegation's visits in Hubei.

In the article "City of Sydney deepens trade and tourism links with China" (28 September 2015), News Local (Central) journalist Adam Bell wrote that "closer ties in tourism, education and trade between Sydney and a large province in central China are developing after the City of Sydney sent a delegation to visit the region".

Fairfax journalist Matt Wade published two articles in the Sydney Morning Herald:

- "Thriving in the Asian century" (21 September 2015) and
- "Sydney's investment in Chinese New Year pays dividends as links to China deepen" (20 September 2015)

In the articles, Mr Wade wrote that China's second-tier cities, like Wuhan, will be "critical" to Australia's economic future and noted "the growing links between Sydney and Hubei" which "underscores the potential for Sydney's Chinese New Year celebrations to help promote trade and investment".

CONCLUSION

Delegations from Sydney to the cities in the Asia-Pacific region serve to demonstrate to the region that Sydney is serious about developing relationships in the region.

The actions resulting from sending as well as hosting such delegations can have significant benefits for cultural and economic development in Sydney.

The relationships formed during such visits are the key to generating concrete action in collaborating on business, cultural and sustainable development. For example, the Lord Mayor's visit to Wuhan and Hubei helped the open of direct flights between Wuhan and Sydney.

The MOUs signed with the Municipal Government of Wuhan and Provincial government of Hubei were aimed at seeking opportunities for cooperation and exchanges in culture, education, tourism, trade, agriculture, mining, forestry, science and technology.

ATTACHMENT A

The MOUs were signed by the Lord Mayor of Sydney and Vice Mayor of Wuhan, Mr Hu Lishan, and witnessed by the Party Secretary of CPC, Hubei Province, Mr Li Hongzhong and his delegation.

The signing of the MOUs demonstrates that the City has significant potential to play a major role by facilitating other levels of government in Australia to develop relationships with major cities in China and the region.

Australian Governments at all levels are recognising that the second-tier cities and regions in China are playing an increasingly significant role. Thus the relationships that the City has formed with these cities and regions have great potential to contribute to the economy, culture and tourism in Sydney.

Australia is in a position to move from a resource-based economic relationship to a services-based one which includes the financial services sector, sustainable urban planning and development, education and tourism.

These are areas where the City has much to offer and has the ability to develop relationships across the many areas of potential collaboration. For example, the creative industries are rapidly developing in the Asia-Pacific region and this is an area where Sydney has an advantage in its creative, multicultural and multilingual population.

It is now widely accepted in Australia that at a time when western world economies are stagnating, the Asia-Pacific region is rapidly developing; and Sydney is well-placed to lead and benefit from the dynamism in this region.

As State and Federal Governments renew their efforts to engage with China and the Asia-Pacific region, Sydney as a global city can play a major role in this effort by building on the relationships formed during delegation visits to China.