



Dear IAES Colleague,

Travelling to “Down under” can be a daunting thought but it should not be.

Australia is a sophisticated country with modern infrastructure matching any European or North American country. The telecommunications are excellent. We speak English (of a kind). The Conference facilities are world class. It is safe. We welcome visitors.

But travel to Australia can be overwhelming unless you do appreciate that it is a big country. You would need an extended trip to gain even a moderate exposure to the landscape.

For those who have already been to Australia this is a time for selecting the places and sights yet unseen. Perhaps more of the outback, the Great Barrier Reef or new wine areas.

For “first timers”, an option would be to enter or depart Australia via Sydney. The Harbor, the Bridge and the Opera House really are a must to see in your life time. Perhaps spend 2 to 3 days recovering from any jetlag. Wander the city and the sights. Climb the Bridge. Those with more time may also fly to Far North Queensland (3 hours) and visit the Great Barrier Reef and Whitsunday Islands. You would need at least 3 days.

Perhaps from there a flight to Central Australia, either to Alice Springs or direct to Uluru (Ayres Rock). Two to three days would be memorable. Local trips can be researched on the web.

Whilst in South Australia, short trips from Adelaide to the Flinders Ranges (spectacular mountainous desert landscape) or to Kangaroo Island (a natural wilderness area) are certainly worth considering.

Peter Malycha, The Local Organising Committee President expands on some of the options in his excellent section within the ISS Newsletter (Dec. 2008 and downloadable from the conference website <http://www.sapmea.asn.au/conventions/isw2009/>). This section also offers connections to other travel websites.

Having travelled to Europe and North America on multiple occasions I will take the liberty of offering some of my travel thoughts. What would I do if I was about to depart for Australia?

I would plan to arrive in Adelaide as my first stop. Perhaps a day or two before the meeting starts to take in a local tour. I would look at the best airline “Hub” and book my flights accordingly to fly directly into Adelaide and not via Sydney, Melbourne or Perth which only increases the travel time. The Hubs are Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia Airlines), Singapore (Singapore Airlines), Hong Kong (Cathay Pacific) and some selected Qantas flights which do connect directly to Adelaide. Perhaps fly from Europe or North America to one of these Hubs and break the Journey. Stay overnight and get accustomed to the time change. Most flights to Adelaide direct from these Hubs are overnight and arrive in Adelaide early morning.

For travelers from North America, use Sydney as the “Hub” and break your trip. Spend a day or two in Sydney and relax!

Travel within Australia is easy but look at the distances. A flight to Sydney from Adelaide takes just under two hours. Driving will take 15-20 hours! Driving just to Melbourne takes 8 hours whereas a flight is only one hour.. The roads are quite good but you do not need the extra stress of driving having travelled so far. Take an organized tour once you arrive in the area of interest. The locals will show you more than you will find on your own. This especially applies to travel to the "Outback". Many overseas visitors have had a difficult time in Central Australia by not appreciating the difficult dirt road conditions and the heat. Go with an expert!

When travelling in Australia there are some helpful websites for good airfares. Try to stay with the main carriers (Qantas, Virgin Blue) as they are more reliable. Check out <http://www.iwantthatflight.com.au/>. For accommodation try <http://www.lastminute.com.au/home.html> or <http://www.wotif.com/>.

If I only had a very limited time in Australia I would travel directly to Adelaide, visit Kangaroo Island as a one to two day trip, attend the meeting, visit Cleland Wildlife Park and pat a Koala, visit a wine area such as McLaren Vale on the free Wednesday afternoon, travel to the Flinders Ranges for two to three days immediately after the meeting, depart from Adelaide to Sydney for one or two days and then head home, reluctantly.

Whatever you decide you will enjoy.

Good Luck

Rob Parkyn
Local Organiser IAES, Adelaide
