



## Australian Minister for Infrastructure and Transport visits the “Archimede” Diagnostic Train in Rome

*The Hon Anthony Albanese visit to the flagship vehicle of the Italian Railways fleet of monitoring trains underscores the ongoing strength of the relationship between Italy and Australia in developing closer business ties in railway infrastructure development.*

**Rome , 5<sup>th</sup> November 2010** Australia's Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Anthony Albanese, visited the “Archimede” train on Friday morning, November 5<sup>th</sup> at Rome's second largest train station, “Tiburtina”. He was joined by his Deputy Secretary, Ms Lyn O'Connell, Australian Ambassador to Italy, Mr. David Ritchie, Consul General And Trade Commissioner to Italy, Ms. Simone Desmarchelier, and Investment Director EMEA Austrade, Mr. Jean-baptiste Nithart. Chief Executive Officer of Rete Ferroviaria Italiana-RFI, Michele Mario Elia, and President of the MERMEC Group, Vito Pertosa, welcomed the Australian delegation onboard the train, that stopped for nearly three hours at the train station before starting again for its weekly measuring campaign along Italy's rail lines.

“Infrastructure of the highest quality is vital to guarantee safe and reliable operation of the Italian railways” reported Michele Mario Elia during his speech to the Minister, “In order to achieve this goal, frequent monitoring of the infrastructure's condition without disrupting train services is a necessary task”.

The information provided by Archimede enabled RFI to switch from a cyclical maintenance regime to the more efficient and cost-effective “preventative” maintenance. Archimede, developed by the MERMEC Group, was the first diagnostic train to operate in Europe and travels more than 120,000 km a year checking about 10,000 km of line. Measuring equipment is concentrated within the train which can run at 220 km/h and measure more than 140 different parameters of the infrastructure.

“Integrated technologies for infrastructure monitoring, such as those found on Archimede, are gaining momentum in Australia – reported Vito Pertosa - where all major railway companies have recently issued tenders to acquire solutions aiming at improve efficiency, availability and safety of their own networks. Archimede is the perfect example that can clearly demonstrate how technological innovation can take infrastructure monitoring and maintenance on to a new plane, helping railway operators save money, gain efficiency, and improve safety”.

The Australian Government is investing AU\$37 billion over six years to expand land transport networks, targeting roads, rail and ports. The Government's commitment is to build a world-class railway infrastructure able to boost future productivity and growth for the country. Because of this, Minister Anthony Albanese and President Vito Pertosa agreed to organize an international railway conference on new safety technologies for infrastructure management to be held in Australia in February 2011

**About the MERMEC Group** - Industry leader and innovator focused on developing cutting-edge technology able to advance safety, efficiency and availability of railway and rapid transit networks worldwide. The MERMEC Group provides products and services in more than 37 countries, with nearly 120 major private and public customers involved in freight and passenger transport, train production, wheel & rail manufacturing. [www.mermecgroup.com](http://www.mermecgroup.com)

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