

Info Polis

----- MEMBER IN THE SPOTLIGHT – CITY OF AALBORG -----

The compact bus terminal in Aalborg

The city of Aalborg is the main city of the North Jutland region in north Denmark. The population of the city itself is approximately 130 000, which rises to around 200 000 for the whole of the Aalborg municipal area. With 1900km of roads, Aalborg is the third largest municipality in Denmark. Aalborg, especially the city centre, has become more pedestrian-friendly to the satisfaction of both the users of city facilities and the retail industry. Aalborg is a city experiencing rapid growth and the city is responding to this in a sustainable manner. In the coming years, the focus will be on redesigning the urban waterfront to make it a place of residential housing, restaurants, retail facilities and an area of significant recreational value for the citizens.

In 2004, the city inaugurated a new compact bus terminal, replacing an old terminal from the sixties which had become tired and occupied much valuable land in the city centre. When a private development company offered to build a shopping centre with an integrated bus terminal, the city authority and public transport authority seized the opportunity to build a modern compact terminal with quality information services for users.

It was decided that the construction of the new terminal should be funded through income generated from selling the site to the shopping centre (valued at €9 million), which naturally meant that the terminal would have to occupy less land in order to free space for the shopping centre.



How does the terminal work?

The terminal has a total of 11 bays serving daily some 250 buses and a minimum of 7000 passengers. A dynamic allocation system directs buses to a bay upon arrival at the terminal which means that fewer bays are required compared to the fixed bay system of typical bus terminals. Dynamic bay management not only reduces space consumption, it also minimises the walking distances for passengers since departures can be concentrated on bays closest to the waiting area.

The system

Running a compact terminal requires an IT system that knows where each bus is at all times. The buses are equipped with GPS for positioning outside the terminal area and with RFID for positioning within the terminal area. When a bus enters the terminal area, the system decides which bay the bus should depart from and sends this information to the driver's on-board screen and to the display on the front of the bus. Passengers have already been informed about the departure time of the bus, via the displays at the terminal waiting area (or through mobile phone), and this information is supplemented with the bay number. Once the bay information has been given, passengers then have 3 minutes to reach the bay and enter the bus. For people with visual impairments, there are special signs which provide audio information.



The back-office system forecasts bay usage, allocates the buses to bays on the basis of preference rules for each bus line and is also used for handling touring coaches without equipment.

No formal customer surveys have yet been undertaken but anecdotal evidence suggests that customers are very satisfied with the new terminal.

Aalborg and Europe

Since the beginning of the nineties, Aalborg has been involved in several international projects in the field of sustainable mobility including JUPITER and CIVITAS. Two of the main actions of the VIVALDI project (CIVITAS I) were the implementation of telematic solutions such as real-time passenger information signs at the most important bus stops, a traffic information centre and the new compact bus terminal. Aalborg is leading the CIVITAS+ cluster ARCHIMEDES. As a partner in the eDrul project and a national forum for City Logistics, the city of Aalborg holds a great deal of expertise in the field of urban freight logistics. Currently, the city is also participating in the STEER project MIDAS concerning the use of soft measures to encourage citizens to use sustainable transport

Aalborg's international experiences have influenced domestic planning. The first Traffic and Environmental Plan was adopted in 1996 covering the city centre, and the most recent plan, from 2005, covers the old municipality district. The Traffic and Environmental plan will be revised during 2008 and 2009. A Public Transport Plan was implemented in 2004 changing public transport to a high frequent metro bus system. The fleet of buses fulfils the EURO IV standards and was the first to do so in Denmark. Other current plans include a bicycle action plan (2005), a traffic safety action plan (2005), a speed plan (2005) and commuter plan for the Technical and Environmental Department (2006).

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