



NATIONAL BANK BUILDING • 160 RUSSELL STREET, MELBOURNE, CI • FB 3621, FB 3622

1961 — No. 2

Annual Subscription 12/-

Australian Electric
Traction Association.

Courtesy on the Footpaths

3 CT 2

The City Council's experiment with white lines down the centre of the footpath in sections of Swanston and Collins Streets is a sensible move that deserves the public's co-operation.

However, one senses a certain amount of scepticism in regard to the likely success of the trial and this no doubt results from experience in past endeavours to bring some semblance of order to the pedestrian traffic flow.

Without the force of law, regulation of pedestrian traffic is not easy to achieve. Unfortunately, there is always the minority group which blithely ignores any form of persuasion designed to make conditions easier for everyone.

At major intersections the "walk — don't walk" lights have helped to make crossing safer. But

there is still a tendency to ignore the "don't walk" light.

General observance of marked pedestrian lanes at intersections would only enable more people to cross the road more quickly.

Admittedly, the pedestrian has many hazards to contend with, particularly the vehicles turning left and the over-eager motorist who straddles the crossing in his vain bid to beat the lights.

But closer observance of pedestrian traffic rules would pay off handsomely in reducing risks and lessening congestion on footpaths and crossings.

More obvious persuasive methods such as directional arrows or "keep left" signs painted on the pavement at intersections may assist in achieving success with the present experiment.

"THIS WEEK IN
MELBOURNE"

3 CT 1-36

Australian Electric
Traction Association.

(C.D.A. Bulletins 1961/2)

No. 2-8

10

12-15

18-21

28-31

33-36

STAGGERING OF HOURS IS WORTH A TRIAL

Staggering of working hours is not the whole solution to Melbourne's public transport problem, but its acceptance would result in much more comfortable travelling conditions for city workers.

A special sub-committee, appointed by a conference of interested authorities last year, has made a close study of Melbourne's travel patterns and has produced a very illuminating analysis of the present situation.

Between 8.38 and 8.52 a.m. 28,825 people commence work in the City. This figure rises to a peak of 57,118 between 8.53 and 9.07 a.m., and at 9.08 drops sharply to 13,535.

The evening peak is even more pronounced, and from a figure of 14,555 people finishing work between 4.38 and 4.52 p.m., soars to 60,103 between 4.53 and 5.07 p.m. After a quick drop at between 5.08 and 5.22 p.m. to 16,138, there is a further slight peak of 31,160 between 5.23 and 5.37 p.m.

It is obvious that a levelling of these morning and evening peaks would greatly ease the present congestion of vehicles (trams, trains, buses and

cars) and would relieve the serious over-crowding of public transport for two short periods a day.

Only slight changes in the starting or finishing times of certain major groups would be necessary to achieve the desired result. The change could involve as little as 10 or 15 minutes variation of the present working times.

As an experiment, a number of large City firms, principally in the "office" group, have already staggered the working hours of their employees. From an initial reluctance to alter their work habits, the attitude of these employees has changed to enthusiasm for the new working hours which give them comfort in public transport and more leisure time of an evening.

Such a simple solution to the present intolerable conditions on trams and trains is surely worth a trial.

Any difficulties preventing a staggering of hours by some of the major groups of City workers are only minor and could be readily overcome if there is a willingness to accept the fact that someone must lead the way.

TRAFFIC CONTROL IN MOSCOW

Traffic in Moscow, as in every other Soviet city, is handled by the Municipal Department for Regulating Street Traffic, called ORUD for short. It is responsible for licensing drivers, setting and enforcing traffic rules, and investigating accidents.

On driving in the Soviet Union you keep to the right, pass on the left. Horn blowing is banned. Traffic signs are based on internationally recognized symbols used in European countries. Moscow's traffic lights are the three standard colours—red on bottom, then yellow and green on top.

Much of ORUD's work is educational, to reduce driving hazards. Most through trains on Soviet railroads broadcast music to passengers en route, but, when a train approaches a metropolitan centre, talks on local traffic regulations replace the music.

To obtain a driving permit, the applicant must be at least 18 years of age and pass a thorough medical examination. This is not a casual eye test but goes into reflexes and reactions as well. In addition to being able to drive competently,

the applicant also must prove that he knows how to handle minor mechanical troubles, change a tire, adjust brakes, fix headlights or get a stalled car into operation.

Statistics show that novices are the greatest hazard both to drivers and pedestrians. Drivers with less than a year's experience must display a special sign both in front and rear of the vehicle they drive. It features a yellow background with a heavy black exclamation mark and warns drivers and pedestrians to exercise good care—a novice is at the wheel.

When a driving permit is first issued, it is accompanied by a green coupon which is retained as long as the driver commits no traffic violation. After the first offence it may be replaced with a yellow coupon. A more serious violation or accident would bring about the drawing of a red coupon. Upon its loss, the driver's licence is suspended for a six month period.

Moscow is more than 800 years old and, until recently, many of its streets were little more than narrow, winding lanes. Now most of the major