

# Trolley buses may roll soon

**MELBOURNE** may get trolley buses because of the energy crisis.

The Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board's annual report presented to Parliament yesterday said the rising cost of energy made the wisdom of retaining trams more evident.

"The potential of the trolley bus as a means of transport must be re-considered," the report said.

Diesel fuel was expected to rise by 57 per cent this financial year compared to an estimated rise of 18 per cent in electricity costs.

The report said studies were in progress but significant capital investment would be needed to provide trolley buses.

The report revealed the Tramways Board had a record operating loss of

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By **GARY WALSH**

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more than \$35 million for 1978-79.

Its deficit was cut to \$2,886,712 after the State Government contributed more than \$32 million.

Last year the operating loss was \$31.5 million.

The number of passengers carried on trams dropped by 226,000 to a little more than 101,000,000, while patronage of tramways' buses rose by more than 500,000 to almost 20,000,000.

The total result was a passenger increase of 361,131.

The report says this increase was achieved despite a fare rise, mainly because of the success of the "Travel Permit" and "Day Tripper" tickets.

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