



A.T. Update is a regular newsletter which is designed to keep you informed with the latest A.T. news.

Automated ticketing prototype hits the road

FOLLOWING RIGOROUS testing in the equipment testing facility at OneLink, on-the-road testing has now begun on prototype equipment fitted in trams to make sure that environmental factors such as vibration, voltage fluctuation, and electromagnetic interference do not adversely affect the operation of A.T. equipment.

The first test began with the number 10 Z1 class tram this week. Testing of Z3, B2 and A1 class trams is planned to follow progressively over the next month, however the test plan will remain flexible to allow for changes which may be needed as a result of trials.

Following prototype installation of A.T. equipment, vehicles will be driven over appropriate routes for functional testing. The prototype trams will not look like the final product. Equipment will be connected to enable continuous monitoring and mechanical access.

The test fitting of prototype equipment in trams will provide valuable feedback for engineering teams. The equipment is designed to withstand all types of interference, however OneLink is conscious of the importance of extensive testing to ensure that the system works to a high standard. The exercise will not be open to the public because test engineers will require full access to the tram interiors.

Metcard's Australian Manufacturer

Metcard retail agent ticket sales will benefit from information systems technology provided by an Australian manufacturer renowned for its worldwide corporate strengths in manufacturing magnetic ticket systems.

Against worldwide competition, Moore Business Systems has won the OneLink contract for the printing of magnetic tickets, the warehousing and distribution of tickets, and the management of Metcard retail agents' sales reporting systems.

With manufacturing plants throughout Australia, Moore employs 1,350 people Australia wide and has a turnover of around \$250 million per annum.

Because of healthy market growth in Magnetic Ticket Systems, Moore Australia has invested approximately \$2 million in a new state of the art Magnetic Ticketing Converting and Encoding Press. This press was manufactured specifically for Moore, and it is believed to be a first in the industry of magnetic ticket production and on-line magnetic tape verification. This means that Moore is equipped to thoroughly check their product for magnetic readability, further reducing any possible margin for faulty tickets reaching the public.

The Metcard ticket design incorporates high security features such as ample encoding of information and protection from magnetic interference.

Under the agreement with Moore, OneLink has stipulated a ticket failure rate of no more than 100 tickets for every one million sold, ensuring high standards.





Customer Assistance Centre

The Customer Assistance Centre (or CAC) houses the team behind the new Metcard Help line which will answer automated ticketing queries from staff and customers. The CAC team will be the focal point for all general public enquiries related to A.T. and ticket sales. The Customer Assistance Centre will also serve as a central point for the administration of student passes.

The Centre is scheduled to be operating by the end of the year. Staff and customers will be encouraged to make enquiries on the Metcard Help line 1800 652 313 (TTY).

The Centre has nine staff (3 full-time and 6 part-time) together with 1 team leader, who have undertaken an intense 2 week training program. The initial activity and training has focused on familiarising the team with ticket names and prices, and machinery technology. Detailed informative sessions with PTC staff (Kim Irvine from Disability Services, John Ter Haar and Lynda Monardo from the Customer Information section) have been organised, as well as educational visits to the A.T. demonstration suite.

The group recently toured the public transport system, starting at Camberwell Tram depot where CAC staff were given a behind the scenes look at how the tram system runs.

Team members were given the opportunity to experience what it is like to be behind the controls of a tram. They were also briefed on the functions of a railway station and rail system. Improvements to the system, such as closed circuit TV and announcement upgrades, were highlighted during the tour.

The Customer Assistance Centre staff will shortly move to the Customer Information section at Transport House where they will be taking the A.T. queries and providing some training and assistance to PTC staff there in regard to A.T. issues.

The CAC team will then move to its permanent future location in Albert Road, South Melbourne.

Retail Agents

A letter detailing the PTC's objective to move 90% of ticket purchases off trams and buses and inviting expressions of interest to serve as a Metcard retail agent was recently mailed to approximately two hundred potential retailers within the phase one implementation area.

A promising trend has already emerged with a large number of retailers expressing interest within the first week. Those who have not yet responded will be contacted by OneLink field salespeople, or the telemarketing team, whose role it is to market the benefits of becoming a Metcard retailer.

Interested retailers will be equipped with the necessary point of sale material and training aids. Potential retail agents will continue to be approached progressively 8-12 weeks before A.T. is operational in any one area.

A.T. Training News

The skill and knowledge of current and former PTC staff has been a key factor in ensuring that A.T. training is practical and relevant for the range of Met staff.

Tram Training's Roger Mason (based at Hawthorn Training Centre) is currently on secondment to OneLink's Depot, Station and Vehicle Training team. He has provided most valuable input into all facets of training manuals and user guides, as well as the overall training strategy.

Former PTC employees, Bill Young (Tram) and Brian Cassidy (Rail) have also had significant input at the training development stage and will be key staff involved with the actual delivery of training modules.

Draft versions of training modules related to Automated Ticketing are nearing completion and ready for evaluation.

