

TRAMS HIT; 25 PEOPLE HURT

Crowd causes chaos

Twenty-five people were taken to hospital after two trams collided at the corner of Flinders St. and Swanston St., City, today.

No one was seriously hurt.

Eight ambulances took the 25 to St. Vincent's Hospital the Royal Melbourne Hospital and Prince Henry's Hospital.

The accident happened about 12.30 p.m. when a west-bound Flinders St. tram crashed into a north-bound city tram in Swanston St.

Eleven police cars and 45 police had trouble clearing the way for ambulances. Thousands of onlookers made conditions chaotic.

People stood on the Princes Bridge plaza, the steps of Flinders St. station, St. Paul's Cathedral and steps of Young and Jackson's to get a better view.

Drinkers at Young & Jackson's stood at the hotel doors with glasses in hand watching rescue operations.

The Flinders St. tram's brakes are believed to have failed.

The heavy wheels of the 15-ton trams gouged the busy intersection and came to a halt amid broken glass, splinters of wood and twisted metal.

One side of the Swanston St. tram was smashed in.

A police courtesy van pleaded with the people to get away from the intersection, and not to block the limited roadway.

Sirens in Swanston St.

Swanston St. was closed off at the corner.

Ambulance sirens echoed down Swanston St. as ambulances sped to the accident.

Passengers in both trams were showered with glass. "A girl, aged about 18, had a 10 in. piece of glass embedded in her arm," an eye-witness said.

A small late-model sedan driven by a woman travelling north along Swanston St. was hit by the Swanston St. tram when it was forced off its rails by the impact.

She was taken to the Red Cross Flinders St. headquarters and treated for shock. The car was badly damaged on its right-hand side.

Injured form queue

A first-aid centre was set up in one ambulance to treat people with minor injuries.

The people formed a queue and were treated by a Red Cross woman.

"Anybody else," the woman yelled out after treating each patient.

A tramways emergency van crew was at the scene shortly after the accident and started to put the trams back on the rails.

Seventy-five minutes after the smash the busiest

intersection in Melbourne was back to normal.

But shoppers still moved around staring at the spot.

Police have appealed for all witnesses of the accident to contact them.

The head of the Victorian Civil Ambulance Service, Mr J. Jackson, said the ambulances took 16 minutes to take the injured people to hospital through the heavy traffic.

"It was a very good effort," he said.

The chairman of the Metropolitan Tramways Board, Mr R. J. H. Risson, went to the scene shortly after the accident.

Mr B. Geddes, of Copple St., Richmond, a passenger on the tram travelling down Flinders St., said he was just getting up to get off as the tram came near his stop when the trams hit.

"Passengers were thrown about everywhere and the women began screaming. It was dreadful," he said.

Mr John Watson, of Crimson Dr., Doveton, who was on the same tram, said he was sitting near the front.

Thrown to the floor

Young women and a child were thrown to the floor and I finished up on top of them. An elderly woman went first and she was on the bottom of a pile of bodies," he said.

Mr John Dawson, a TV producer, who was in the tram travelling along Flinders St., said seats were tossed about.

Two ambulances took eight people to Prince Henry's Hospital.

An ambulance officer said that none was seriously injured. Most of them suffered from cuts, bruises and abrasions, he said.

One of the tram drivers and a bystander suffering from shock were among those taken to Prince Henry's.

Twelve people were taken to the Royal Melbourne Hospital. A hospital spokesman said none was seriously hurt.



East European diplomatic contacts in Hanoi said regime of President Ho dominated policy decisions. They are now and reportedly more the sources said, a