

Tram signal priority trial

A trial of green light priority for trams along Nicholson Street is underway in partnership with VicRoads and the Department of Transport.

The trial begins on Tuesday 16 August and will run until November. It involves VicRoads traffic operators manually changing lights to green to allow trams through the intersection when it is safe to do so.

A key part of the trial will be to determine what the benefits and impacts of traffic light priority are for trams and other road users.

Various points along Nicholson Street will be monitored throughout the trial, leading to a test of full priority along the street in November.

Once the trial concludes the stakeholders involved will decide what improvements can be adopted on a permanent basis.



The yell for Cadel

As Melbourne celebrated Cadel Evans' victory in the Tour de France, our trams paid their own tribute to his heroic achievement.

The message of congratulations appeared on 80 tram 'faces' across the city to say a big "well done" to Melbourne's newest sporting hero.

Our message to Cadel featured on trams leading up to the parade which was held through the city centre in his honour last Friday.

Meet the Managers

Passengers have taken the opportunity to quiz Yarra Trams managers and give their views on improvements to Melbourne's tram network.

On the morning of Thursday 28 July, managers gathered at Box Hill terminus armed with clipboards and an ear for feedback and met with commuters who braved the cold to share their opinions.

The passengers gave a big thumbs up to the frequency of Route 109 trams and the convenience of low floor vehicles on the Box Hill to Port Melbourne line.

Not only were managers on show, but our trial accessibility tram was available for passengers to board and give their feedback.

One special passenger who cast his eye over the new layout was Vision Australia's seeing eye dog representative Zeus who tested out the new tram on behalf of visually impaired passengers.

Guide dogs and hearing assistance dogs are permitted on all Yarra Trams services.

Kew Depot staff also "met the managers" as part of Executive Leadership Team visits to work locations. The dates of visits to other locations will be published in *The Wire* when they are available.



ABOVE: Business Integration Director Susie Homan meets the public.



ABOVE: Business Excellence Manager Sara Parmar and Zeus with the trial accessibility tram.

THE WIRE

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:
* Behind the scenes at Preston Workshops *



Congratulations!

June 2011 marked the second year in a row that we have met performance benchmarks that are reported to the Department of Transport.

KDR Yarra Trams focuses on five specific benchmarks each year. Two of these benchmarks don't change so we call them "fixed" and the other three change each year to focus on a different part of the business, so we call these "flexible".

The three flexible benchmarks for last year were to complete a study of the tram services on St Kilda Rd and identify improvements, improve our safety statistics with passenger falls and pedestrian knockdowns and to investigate the benefits of a new fleet management system.

Our fixed benchmarks are to deliver 98.5% service reliability for scheduled services and to meet or exceed our Customer Experience Performance Regime (CEPR) targets.

The CEPR is a measure which the government uses to track our performance in cleaning, graffiti removal, asset damage and customer information. Independent auditors travel the network checking the conditions of stop infrastructure and rolling stock assets to compare them to the beginning of the new tram franchise in late 2009.

The three flexible benchmarks for the year to the end of June 2012 are to reduce fare evasion to 14% or below, to achieve a 94% tram dispatch rate between April and June 2012 and to have Customer Service staff deployed to manage crowds at five key locations around the city.

The new tram franchise is the first time this sort of benchmarking has been done by the State, so we're two out of two so far and will be doing our best to make it three from three come June 2012.

Icon	SNAPSHOT
Punctuality	82.96% (last August 82.11%)
Service Delivery	99.24% (last August 99.34%)
Tram-vehicle collisions	29 this month 594 this year
Tram-tram collisions	0 this month 11 this year
Passenger falls	1 this month 102 this year
Pedestrian knockdowns	1 this month 21 this year
Derailments	10 this month 38 this year

All figures current on 10 August 2011



Life at the Workshops

Many staff will never set foot in the giant 'depot' on the corner of St Georges Road and Miller Street, but without the work done there our trams wouldn't be able to run.

Since its opening in 1925 the Preston Workshops have been the site of major maintenance or collision repairs for thousands of trams.

Also located at Preston is the Store from which depot maintenance staff are sent the materials they need to do work on vehicles at their locations.

A total of 63 employees are based at the complex.



Peter Thomson will work on between 700 and 800 wheels every year to get them ready to be put on trams.



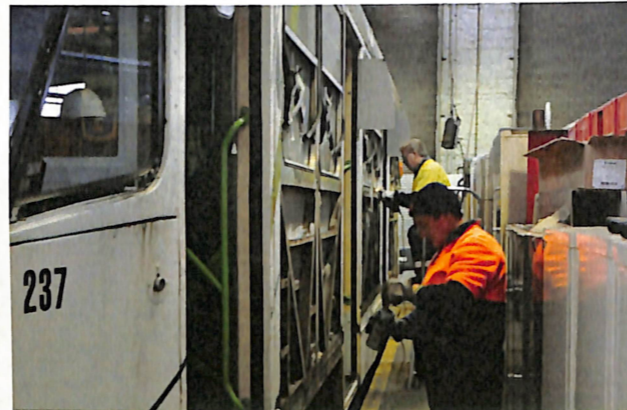
Fibreglass panels are produced on site so that they are always available instead of having to be ordered from external suppliers at a greater cost.

Where Melbourne found its icon

The first W Class tram rolled off the production line at Preston Workshops in 1926.

A total of 546 W's of various models were produced at the Workshops until the number 1040 became the final tram to go into service in 1956.

At one point early in its life the workshops were home to the headquarters of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board.



Ken McLellan and Don McRae do preparation work on Tram 237 for its eventual rebranding into new livery. Before the new colours can be applied the bodymakers work on external panels to clean them of corrosion.



The Workshops are home to several heritage trams, including this former Victorian Railways vehicle.



Electrical Fitter Laz Akritidis with work experience student Nandor Sebestyen from Dandenong High School. Nandor's father is an electrician at Southbank.



Damage from a major accident after a truck hit tram 3018. The design of a Citadis tram means that the entire driver's cabin has to be dismantled for the repair work to be done. The cost of the job could be over a hundred thousand dollars.

The Workshops - a brief history

As the Melbourne Metropolitan Tramways Board took over local tramways in the 1920s they realised a need for major maintenance and tram building facilities.

Heavy maintenance facilities were available at various depots but the original plan to establish a major workshop in Church Street, Richmond was shelved when the MMTB needed more space than was available.

The board instead turned its attention to the current site, which was conveniently located eight kilometres north of the city. It secured the land in 1923, beginning construction in October the next year.

Initially the workshops only catered for the northern depots but within two years had become the centre for all heavy maintenance on electric trams.

During World War II the workshops assisted the war effort by building a number of items for the military, including life rafts for the navy.

At its peak in the 1950s more than 600 people were employed at the Workshops, and it has continued to play an important part in the maintenance and repair of trams for more than 75 years.

When KDR began operating the Melbourne tram network in 2009 all staff at the workshops once again came under the Yarra Trams banner.

TRAM IMPROVEMENTS WORKS ALERT

The following works are planned for coming weeks. Some tram service changes will be in place.

Saturday 20 to Monday 22 August
Balaclava Road, St Kilda East/Caulfield North
Track renewal

Monday 22 to Wednesday 24 August
Fitzroy Street, St Kilda
Overhead work

Saturday 27 to Sunday 28 August
Swanston Street North (Lincoln Square)
Platform stop construction

Saturday 10 to Sunday 11 September
Swanston Street North (Queensberry Street)
Platform stop construction

Your Say

To provide your feedback or submit a story to *The Wire* or *The Pantograph* email panto@yarratrams.com.au