A new Federal program to encourage more effective use of freeways by transit vehicles was under study this month by AC Transit officials with representatives of the State and Federal governments.

Of specific interest is the success of the exclusive bus lane established by the State on the Bay Bridge last January to speed evening commute traffic.

The lane, which enables district buses to cross the span twice as fast as automobiles, is the only one in the Nation operating on a highway or freeway, although street lanes have been set aside for buses in some cities.

Plans for the new Chicago Southwest Expressway, however, call for center lanes to be used for buses only.

Favorable Consideration

President Kennedy, in asking Congress last month for action on urban transportation problems, said he had requested the Secretary of Commerce to "consider favorably the reservation of special highway lanes for buses during peak traffic hours whenever comprehensive transportation plans indicate that this is desirable." (Continued on Page 2)
Better Freeway Use Under Joint Study

(Continued from Page 1)

Ways of extending the mileage of exclusive bus lanes in Alameda and Contra Costa County were being explored by district officials with Dr. John C. Kohl, top federal transit administrator, working in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads.

Dr. Kohl, after several meetings with district officials, said his interest in AC Transit's efforts to provide speecler roadways for buses stems in part from studies of the Bay Bridge special lane and the general success of the district.

Kohl, administrator of a $45,000,000 transit research and development fund, declared "the AC district has a very progressive point of view and its activities are of extreme interest to us."

Kohl works closely with the Bureau of Public Roads to assure highway-transit coordination. The bureau specifically is watching and studying the effect of the exclusive Bay Bridge bus lane on transit riding and on auto traffic.

State officials, also, have been keeping a close eye on the operation.

One indication of the lane's effectiveness was seen in the jump in commute book sales, up 6.5 per cent in March, as compared to a year before, and 13.7 per cent in April, compared to a year ago.

The value of the books sold last month totaled $182,897, an increase of $19,655 over the previous April.

The increase in commute sales has been steady since the state established the Bay Bridge bus lane January 15.

Kohl, in the Bay area on a western planning conference, met with district directors and staff members to informally discuss the government's program.

Kohl, in addition to other federal transit and highway officials, conferred earlier in Washington with General Manager Kenneth F. Hensel and Robert E. Nisbet, attorney for the district.

The officials flew to the Nation's capitol in an effort to determine how the East Bay's bus system fits into the President's mass transportation proposal and the policies of the U.S. Bureau of Roads.

The officials conferred with legislators representing the East Bay area, including Congressman John F. Baldwin, Jr., Jeffrey Cohelan and George P. Miller.

Preliminary discussions also have been held with officials of the State Department of Public Works.

Staff findings as a result of the several conferences with state and federal agency representatives will be summarized in a report to the AC board of directors early next month.

Employees Welcomed To Transit District

New employees welcomed by AC Transit during April included:

**Emeryville Division**

Schedule Analyst: Robert W. Rausch, 525 Comstock Dr., Tiburon.

Traffic Checker: Harold W. Fell, 615 Ashbury Ave., El Cerrito.

Bus Operators: W. B. Kling, 1300 El Curtola Blvd., Walnut Creek; T. J. Estes, 335-A 49th St., Oakland; J. J. Callahan, 4416 Hull Rd., Oakland; A. V. Martinez, Jr., 554 25th St., Oakland; H. J. Gross, 360 45th St., Apt. 4, Emeryville.

**East Oakland Division**


Bus Operators: T. F. Shevlin, 2230 84th Ave., Oakland; J. L. Price, 1132 98th Ave., Oakland; R. W. Remnie, 8387 Iris St., Oakland; P. O. Wilbur, 4534 Wheeler Dr., Fremont; M. L. White, 43373 Columbia Ave., Irvington; W. A. Richards, Jr., 916 Central Blvd., Hayward; J. J. Hussey, 22957 Sutro St., Hayward; R. B. Hilton, 1824 57th Ave., Oakland.

Informative Signs Posted at Transbay Terminal to Make Bus Riding Easier

Bright, new colorful signs were posted at 30 loading zones at the Transbay Terminal in San Francisco this month to help the district's booming family of riders make the best use of their expanding bus system.

The signs, larger and more informative than those left over from Key System operations, identify the line loading at the zone, its destination and the route over which it operates. On express schedules, the first East Bay stop is listed to notify new commuters of the nature of the limited stop service.

The signs are in district colors and include the district emblem, adding a touch of brightness to the loading area. For 18 of the zones, used only during commuter hours, special "cover-up" cardboard signs have been devised, featuring the district's theme girl and the phrase, "It's Smart to Ride the Bus!" They'll cover the special commute signs during off-peak operations.

Free Rides Inaugurate New Alameda Service

Three days of free rides--biggest welcome yet for a new bus line--gave Alameda's Line 63 a rousing send-off this month.

Hundreds of residents took advantage of a three-day courtesy ride period, arranged by Park Street and South Shore merchants, to try the new service.

The line will give South Shore and Bay Farm Island residents access to neighborhood recreational and shopping facilities and will also provide passengers with additional connections with other transit service.

Colored cards, showing timetables and a route map, were posted at coach stops and in stores to introduce the service. Personal letters also were sent to 1700 homes explaining where the line would run and how it could best be used by the riders.

IN MEMORIAM

Mary G. Hayes, ticket seller in the early days of Key System operations and again during the busy war years, died April 17 at the age of 78.

Miss Hayes went to work at the former Key Pier in 1917, was pensioned in 1935, but returned in 1944 to act as a ticket collector at the San Francisco terminal. She retired again in 1957. Her home was at 452 40th St., Oakland.
AC Transit hit its highest peak in patronage during March, tallying the greatest number of riders since the district went into operation a year and a half ago.

Some 4,511,000 passengers were carried during the month, an increase of 262,000 riders or 6.2 percent over March of last year.

The previous high was last October, when 4,461,000 riders were carried.

John F. Larson, treasurer-controller, said total March income of $1,115,000 was adequate to cover all operational costs, which were up 11.7 percent over last year.

As projected, however, income still is not enough to provide for total expenses, including retirement of bonded debt and a portion of bond interest.

Miles operated in March totaled 1,944,000, an increase over March, 1961, of 142,000 miles or 7.9 percent.

The first three quarters of the year ending March 31 showed the district had a more favorable net operating result than projected, with a deficit of $323,000, instead of the anticipated deficit of $518,000 for the nine-month period.

Emeryville Keeps Trophy

For the second month in a row, Emeryville Division mechanics won the traveling road call trophy by tallying up 15,482 miles per mechanical road call during April. East Oakland mechanics were in second place, with 11,907 miles.

Fare Cut Scheduled

For Teen-Age Riders

Teenagers through the age of 16 will be able to ride transbay lines to and from San Francisco at reduced fares starting June 1.

The new fare schedule will reduce fares for the 13 through 16 age group by an average of 60 per cent.

The lower rate already applies to children under 13, but the older group has been paying regular adult fares.

Under the new schedule, youngsters riding between Oakland, Berkeley, Alameda and San Francisco, for example, will pay 20 cents, instead of the present 50 cents. Between San Leandro, Richmond, El Cerrito and San Francisco, fares will be cut from 60 to 25 cents; and from Hayward, 70 to 25 cents.

This will be the second time the district has reduced fares for youngsters in the 13 through 16 age bracket, as part of its plan to build the bus riding habit among East Bay residents.

Last year, the 10-cent local fare paid by those under 13 was extended to include the older group.

MORE INFORMATION

A note or phone call to the transit district—Olympic 3-5555—will place your name on the mailing list for Transit Times if you are not already regularly receiving a copy of the monthly newsletter.
Central Dispatch Keeps Buses Moving
By Virginia Dennison

As the “nerve center” of AC Transit operations throughout the district, Central Dispatch handles everything that might affect bus service—with one possible exception.

It hasn’t yet (fingers crossed) been called upon to direct the delivery of a new-born passenger.

But fires, accidents, “stalls,” bus breakdowns—and complaints—are part of round-the-clock operations at Central Dispatch. And the air waves and phone wires are perpetually humming in vicinity of the center’s small, but efficient headquarters on the second floor of the Emeryville division offices.

Donald Bennett, one of the five regular dispatchers who keep the coaches moving, estimates the center—one man to a shift, usually—handles 250 radio calls and between 300 and 400 telephone calls in a normal 24 hours.

It’s the dispatcher who gets the word from bus drivers needing some kind of assistance, and it’s the dispatcher who sends out help, usually by radio call to a supervisor or maintenance vehicle.

Similarly, it’s the dispatcher who handles other problems which may disrupt service and when Transit Information closes down its switchboard at midnight, it’s Central Dispatch that answers questions and occasional complaints.

Along with its own radio and telephone system, Central Dispatch monitors Oakland and Berkeley police calls and the state highway patrol. When something occurs which might involve the buses, the word goes out to the supervisors. Or sometimes they star on their own.

Bennett, handling the mike now, jumped into a cops and robbers chase in his supervisor days, capturing a fleeing thug. He also had the horrifying experience of seeing the chasing police car go speeding right by, while he held the captive, armed only with conviction. A loud shout—from Bennett—brought back the cops in time to take possession.

Service with the combat engineers overseas in World War II may have helped Bennett with some of his supervisor activities, but his imperturbability with a mike can probably be credited to “show biz”.

Bennett played the theater circuit as the “boy called Useless” in the give-away program of “Shanny Advershow”. After handing out prizes for a spell and another period as assistant manager of the Granada Theater, Bennett changed roles and followed his father into the Key System.

Another supervisor, Fred Hymes, found his experience as a tough Marine sergeant a help when he spotted an armed kidnaper and robber hotfooting it through the former Piedmont station to jump on a Grand Ave. bus. Hymes ran after him, pulled him off the bus and turned him over to police.

Helping to carry out the assignment of Central Dispatch—keep the buses rolling—are R. E. Hawes, L. L. McDonald, L. H. Minear, B. C. Walden and Bennett, manning different shifts.

On the other end of the mike are the supervisors, cruising in seven radio cars. Five superintendents’ cars are also radio equipped, along with a fleet of tow cars and maintenance equipment. They go to make up the field team that can take any situation in hand to keep transit moving.

There are always problems, but in the memory of general superintendent Donald J. Potter, there’s been nothing in AC Transit regime to match the horrifying time a 22nd St. train derailed at Grand Ave. and Broadway, just after the break of a UC-St. Mary’s football game.

Both streets were blocked, traffic was tied up for five hours and Potter isn’t sure either he—or Central Dispatch—will ever be the same again.
At an adjourned regular meeting April 25, 1962, the Board of Directors:

- Awarded contract for 10 new autos for AC supervisors and two delivery trucks to Golden Bear Motors at a cost of $23,090, on motion of Director Coburn.
- Approved purchase of 10,000 token holders at a unit price of 25 cents for resale to AC patrons, on motion of Director McDonnell.
- Commended safety department and operating personnel on results of efforts to reduce accidents, on motion of Director Barber.
- Approved retention of Thompson, Dechow and Reich to conduct annual audit, on motion of Director McDonnell.
- Approved increasing age limit for use of children's transbay fares, and authorized extension and rerouting of Lines 43-Foothill Blvd., C-Montclair and R-Hayward, on motion of Director Coburn.
- Authorized study on reorganization of functions performed in general offices as to effects on space requirements, on motion of Director Barber.
- Extended provisions of pension plan and vacation and sick leave benefits to include all non-contract personnel, on motions of Directors Berk, Coburn and Barber.
- Authorized General Manager and Attorney to confer in Washington with federal officials on transportation problems, on motion of Director McDonnell.

At the regular meeting May 9, 1962, the Board of Directors:

- Endorsed administration bill before Congress to provide Federal aid and support to mass transportation systems on motion of Director Barber.
- Authorized Attorney to retain additional legal claims counsel as required, on motion of Director Barber.
- Voted appreciation to Federal officials and East Bay Congressional representatives of courtesies extended AC officials during recent Washington meetings, on motion of Director Barber.