We're testing a new device to reduce exhaust pollution.

District moves ahead in Air pollution reduction.
Diesels and Clean Air

THE POLLUTION STORY—Buses in photograph are carrying the same number of commuters as are riding in autos...and the gasoline engine is the main culprit in air pollution.

Diesel buses contribute so little to air pollution the amount hasn’t even been measured in the Bay area.

In Los Angeles, where air pollution is of top concern, diesel buses and trucks together contribute less than one percent to the problem, according to John McClendon, associate engineer, vehicle control program, State Air Resources Board.

Of the millions of tons of major air contaminants released each year, diesel vehicles contribute 0.9—gasoline vehicles 85.8—the largest single source, McClendon said.

McClendon’s own experience has shown one bus with 40 passengers emits the same amount of pollutants as one small vehicle with a gasoline engine.

Also diesel emissions present no known health hazard, while gasoline emissions contribute heavily to harmful effects.

One of the biggest steps that can be taken to help cut down on air pollution can be taken by the public, he said.

Each full bus removes 35 to 45 cars from the road—and the auto is the major pollution culprit.

THE COVER—Thomas Lynch, left, Northern California general manager, Metro Transit Advertising, and George Zimmerman, operations manager, post first sign on buses with anti-pollution kits.

Exclusive lanes help speed buses

Bus commuters celebrate two anniversaries this month as they whisk by bumper-to-bumper traffic.

It’s been one year since an exclusive lane was opened at the Bay Bridge toll plaza, permitting buses to zoom by without stopping.

It’s been 13 years since the trains were taken off the bridge, leaving buses with another exclusive—special ramps leading into and out of the Transbay Transit Terminal.

The by-pass lane is used by 569 AC Transit and Greyhound buses during the 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. commute period, speed up schedules which previously ran late.

AC Transit buses now run on time or—on some lines—two to five minutes faster than before.

Buses whip through the lane every nine seconds during the top of the commute, and every 14½ seconds the rest of the time—a major difference from a train every 75 seconds, the headway when Key System and Southern Pacific were routed over the bridge in 1939.

Although nostalgic commuters mourned the passage of the ferry boats, inauguration of train service on the Bay Bridge was greeted with enthusiasm and expectation.

Two special Key System trains loaded with officials were routed from 22nd and Broadway to the San Francisco terminal for dedication ceremonies on January 14, 1939. As the first train crossed the span, a plaque was dedicated to James P. Potter, first superintendent of the Key Route and father of D. J. Potter, AC Transit transportation manager.

Early the next morning, a Southern Pacific “Red Train” made the first revenue run from the Dutton Ave. terminal in San Leandro.

On the first day of commute service, January 16, problems erupted and there were numerous delays. By the time things ran smoothly, tolls were reduced on the bridge and many deserted the electric trains for autos. Buses also were proving their economic mobility.

Both S.P. and Sacramento Northern discontinued service in 1941. World War II brought many riders back to rails, giving Key its biggest year in 1945, when 26.4 million riders were carried across the bridge. But only 5.2 million rode the trains in 1957, last full year of operation. The last train in ran on April 20, 1958.

Buses, which had been loading and unloading at street level, didn’t inherit the exclusive ramp into the terminal immediately. Rails were removed, the roadway was paved and it was on Oct. 26, 1958, that the first Line F bus rolled into the terminal.

Hundreds of thousands of commuters since have had the advantage of the exclusive roadway, a decade or more before similar exclusive lanes are speeding travel in cities across the nation.

INTO TERMINAL—A familiar scene in 1956. A Line F commuter train pulls into Transbay Transit Terminal, taking advantage of an exclusive ramp now used by buses.—Harre Demoro photo.
Board members reach agreement on Matters affecting bus, rail services

Board members from AC Transit and BART are working together productively this month to develop policy decisions on coordination of the two systems. Also, meeting, on a staff level, were management representatives from the two agencies and San Francisco Municipal Railway. This liaison committee was continuing efforts to reach accord on rerouting proposals, transferring between systems and fare collection procedures.

Directors, who are meeting every two to three weeks, report progress in these areas:
- Agreement to concentrate efforts at this time on the Southern Alameda County leg of BART, since it will be the first to go into service and presents a good opportunity to work out common problems.
- Recognition of the need for AC Transit to continue full-scale transbay service during the interim period before BART goes into full service.
- Recognition that BART and AC Transit will experience financial difficulties during the first phase of rapid rail service, unless aid is forthcoming.
- Agreement to work together to seek operating subsidies, necessary if coordination of services is to be maximized and new customers attracted to transit facilities. Directors from both properties agreed to explore potential financial resources at State and Federal levels, noting that fares and local property taxes could not underwrite the full burden of optimizing transit services.

Representing BART on the Transit Coordination Committee are Directors Arnold Anderson, chairman, Richard O. Clark and Nello J. Bianco.

Representing AC Transit are Directors Robert M. Copeland, chairman; E. Guy Warren and Claude Daughtry.

Richmond drivers top Safety goal again

Bus drivers at AC Transit's Richmond Division, who make a habit of exceeding their safe-driving goal, did it again during March—for the ninth straight month. Richmond operators scored 19,809 safe-driving miles per accident during March, a mark of 6559 miles beyond the goal of 13,250 miles.

Emeryville Division operators also topped the goal during March with 14,025 miles per accident.

AC Transit wins Maintenance award For ninth time

AC Transit has won its ninth award for maintenance efficiency—and moved another notch closer to a goal which may give it a "first" for the transit industry.

The award, presented by Fleet Owner trade magazine, was accepted in Chicago by R. H. Bertz, maintenance superintendent at Seminary Division.

Other accolades were forthcoming from the same magazine over AC Transit's expectation of operating "new look" buses purchased back in 1961 for 1,000,000 miles before major engine overhaul. It is unprecedented for a coach to go this many miles without an engine overhaul, according to A. R. Lucchesi, maintenance manager.

The 250 buses now have an average of 500,000 miles—and some have traveled 800,000 miles—with no appreciable wear on the crankshaft, timing gears and camshaft bushings, Lucchesi said. He expects the buses to pass the million mile mark in four years.

When the first of the "new" buses reached 500,000 miles, two engines were torn down and the wear points gauged. At 600,000 miles, two more were pulled for inspection. No signs of significant wear were found. An excellent preventive maintenance program is credited with the system's top record for bus efficiency.

The program begins with a 1,000 mile check, progressing to 3,000 and 6,000. Sub-assemblies are changed on a mileage basis. Differentials are changed at 300,000; starters at 110,000; generators at 220,000; blowers at 300,000 and air compressors at 250,000 miles.

Miles per road call during 1970 were 16,580. Mileage on new tires was 86,300, with 35,750 miles on recaps.
To the boss:

Dear Sir,

I was riding on one of your buses and the guy there was so nice, and the bus was very clean, not a paper or a gum wrapper, it was very, very clean. I don’t remember the number bus, but I tell you AC Transit is the best bus I ever knew.

You train your men very nicely and I thank you. I’ll always go on AC Transit.

I do not mind walking generally, but it is hellish when it rains. . .

P.S. Write to me, please.

A ten year old girl
Mary Marchi
Castro Valley

P.S. I think you need better buses. They are very uncomfortable.

P.S. Write to me, please.

Barbara H. Hooper
Kensington

I wish to commend your bus driver, Miguel A. Guerra, who was driving a 34 bus on Broadway this date. This gentleman is courteous, considerate and efficient.

I feel he is a credit to your company.

Mrs. Lillian Q. Love
Oakland

I was on your Line 58 bus going East on Santa Clara Ave. in Alameda. Your driver, James Davis, picked up a passenger and he was so concerned and cautious as the passenger should not have been out alone due to his health that the driver shielded him from the front glass and did not start until he was seated.

Mrs. A. Jones
Alameda

I board a Line 40 bus at Telegraph and Alcatraz on my way to work. I was so impressed with the driver, Gerald T. Jacobs, that I felt I should write you a note about him.

He is friendly and polite, and extremely helpful to passengers . . .

Mrs. Clarice Isaacs
Berkeley

During the past five years particularly, it has been a joy to step onto one of your buses. The operators have always been courteous and helpful. I have no complaints at all. You have some wonderful men and women in your employ—and it’s high time someone told you so.

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Two bus operators receive top Awards for courageous actions

Two AC Transit operators received highly coveted awards during March for exceptional services each performed. Larry Slate of Richmond Division received a Distinguished Service Award from Governor Ronald Reagan in ceremonies at the State Capitol. Slate also received a $200 U.S. Savings Bond.

Donald Hebel, Seminary Division, was awarded the District's Community Service citation by General Manager Alan L. Bingham. Hebel received the award at a Board of Directors meeting.

Slate was honored because, last July, he helped save the lives of three people caught in a burning house.

He was driving an "Owl" Line 72 bus in Richmond when he noticed smoke pouring from a home. He notified Central Dispatch by radio of the fire then, telling his lone passenger to "sit tight," he dashed to the fire and attempted to guide a man, his wife and ten-day-old son through the heavy smoke and flames.

Alerted by Slate’s radio call, firemen quickly arrived and were able to complete the rescue.

Governor Reagan particularly noted the use of radio in the emergency and cited Motorola for sponsoring the “Community Radio Watch” - a nationwide program in which citizens are encouraged to use two-way radios to notify police or firemen of emergency situations.

Hebel, a 220-pound ex-deputy sheriff, earned his citation for subduing a man aboard his bus. The man allegedly had attacked a teen-age girl and was choking her when Hebel intervened.

Donald R. Hebel

The husky operator dragged the attacker to the front of his bus and held him until police arrived. When the man hit one of the arresting officers, Hebel subdued him a second time.

The man was charged with battery, resisting arrest and disturbing the peace. Police credited Hebel with possibly saving the girl’s life.
Voss to roll on retirement trail

Herbert R. Voss, who retired April 1 after some 25 years operating trains and buses, has his retirement plans all laid out.

"I expect to drive from Mexico to Canada, and see everything in between," he says.

"But this driving will be different," Voss declares, "I won't pay any attention to schedules or routes."

Voss, 66, started his transit career on Aug. 24, 1945. He quit in November, 1951, but came back the following June and drove for another 19 years.

During his career, Voss enjoyed a number of interesting "lasts." He drove the last train across the Bay Bridge in 1958, the last train to Havenscourt, and the last train to Oakland Avenue.

"It wasn't really an exciting life," Voss says, "but I worked with an awful lot of nice people, and I enjoyed almost every day of my time with AC Transit."

Voss and his wife of 30 years, Jane, live at 17068 Via Medica, San Lorenzo. Their teen-age son, David, lives at home. Other children are a son, Jerome, and a daughter, Mrs. Gervaise Brouns.

Voss has another son by a previous marriage, Philip, who has followed his father into the ranks of AC operators.

District supports MTC's regional role

The Board of Directors this month declared their intent to work closely with the newly-formed Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) on future regional transit planning.

Directors instructed AC Transit management to assist the MTC in preparations for a $2,000,000 grant to underwrite a transit planning study for the nine-county Bay area region.

The MTC hopes to enter into a joint powers agreement with existing operating agencies, including AC Transit, to carry out the planning project.

MTC has the job of providing and maintaining a comprehensive and coordinated improvement plan for public transit consistent with a regional transportation plan and general planning for metropolitan development.

The commission is attempting to assume full two-thirds eligibility for this region under requirements specified by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. To obtain full federal aid, transit projects must conform to the improvement plan.

Federal grants have been made on a 50-50 basis, rather than the full two-thirds, on grounds regional planning has not been completed.

The commission also will evaluate various systems of highway and mass transit and select the system best suited to solve a problem.

Joseph Bort, Alameda County supervisor, is first chairman of the commission, which was formed by the state legislature.

NEW EMPLOYEES

AC Transit welcomed these new workers in January, February and March

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Driver leads Handicapped Scout troop

A Boy Scout troop with only eight boys in it doesn't seem very large, nor all that much of a challenge to scoutmasters who have guided as many as 100 boys in other troops.

But Troop 228 in the Fruitvale area of Oakland is a different type of Boy Scout operation—and it requires an unusual type of scoutmaster to head it.

All eight boys are handicapped.

The handicaps include muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis and hemophilia. Some have trouble controlling their muscles, others have speech problems. One was born without arms and another is confined to a wheelchair.

None of this bothers scoutmaster and AC Transit bus driver Warren Miller.

"Heck," Miller says, "these kids need someone and I'm glad for the opportunity to work with them."

Miller, 24, has been involved in scouting in the past and doesn't see his role with Troop 228 as being all that different.

"We can do just about anything a regular troop can do," he says. "It just takes them a little longer, that's all.

"These fellows are very capable and they don't pay too much attention to their own handicaps. They do help each other a lot, though," Miller declares.

The troop, formed in January, has a list of ambitious plans for the Spring and Summer. The plans include hiking and camping trips as well as a cook-out and other traditional scouting activities.

As it is, the troop meets every Tuesday—and Miller's day off—at the Whitton School on E. 18th St. Whitton is a special school for handicapped youngsters. It offers special equipment, teachers trained to handle the children, and a protective environment.

The boys have another need. "Our biggest problem right now is money," Miller explains. "None of the fellows come from wealthy families and their parents already have financial burdens because of the boys' physical handicaps.

Equipment needed

"We need about $500 to buy uniforms and equipment and the boys are doing their best to raise it themselves," Miller says. "They've gone out and collected books of Blue Chip stamps."

Oakland Elks Lodge No. 171 and the Jaycees have pledged money so far.

Since the troop is the only one of its kind in the Oakland area, Miller expects it to continue to grow. "I don't see any particular upper limit," Miller declares.

"There's a definite need and if we can get some help from the community, we can fill that need," the young driver states.

Blue Chip stamp donations may be sent to Mrs. G. L. Modjeski, AC Transit, 1140 - 45th St., Emeryville 94608.

February figures hold even

Revenue and passenger riding held nearly even during February, with a slight dip in East Bay revenue offset by a slight gain in transbay income.

Total passenger revenue for the month was $1,191,232, down $7,626 or .64 percent below the $1,198,858 collected during February, 1970. East Bay revenue was $633,721, down $18,015 from the $651,736 dropped into fare boxes a year ago—a decrease of 2.76 percent. Transbay revenue for February was $557,511, an increase of $10,389 or 1.90 percent above revenue of $547,122 collected during February, 1970.

Commute book sales totaled $252,114, up 1.7 percent above sales of $247,973 during the same month in 1970.

AC Transit carried 4,063,560 passengers during February, down 87,316 or 2.10 percent below the 4,150,876 carried during the month of February, 1970. East Bay buses carried 2,919,310 passengers, down 82,781 or 2.76 percent below the 3,002,091 who rode during the same month a year earlier. On transbay lines, patronage for the month totaled 1,144,250, down 4,535 or .39 percent below February, 1970.

Operating costs during the month were $1,658,028, up $139,881 or 9.21 percent above year-ago expenses of $1,518,147. The system operated 1,922,830 miles of service, an increase of 26,970 miles or 1.42 percent above the February, 1970, mileage of 1,895,865.

Total income of $1,928,713 covered operational costs, depreciation and bond debt requirements, leaving a surplus of $74,316.

3 year passenger revenue comparison

JAN.  FEB.  MAR.  APR.  MAY  JUNE  JULY  AUG.  SEPT.  OCT.  NOV.  DEC.

1.220,000
1.240,000
1.260,000
1.280,000
1.300,000
1.320,000
1.340,000
1.360,000
1.380,000
1.400,000
1.420,000

1969
1970
1971
Actions of the Board

At a regular meeting Apr. 14, the Board of Directors:
• Endorsed in principle the objectives of the newly formed Metropolitan Transit Commission and directed the staff to work with the Commission, on motion of Director Bettencourt. (See story, Pg. 8)
• Withdrew AC Transit from further participation in the Oakland Airport Access study, on motion of Director Bettencourt.
• Discontinued Saturday service on Route 46—Maxwell Park, because of lack of patronage, on motion of Director Bettencourt.
• Awarded a contract for purchase of diesel fuel and other petroleum products to Shell Oil Co., on motion of Director Berk.
• Authorized using combined services of General Appraisal Co. for reappraisal of equipment, and of an insurance company for reappraisal of buildings, on motion of Director Daughtry.
• Accepted amendments to existing earthquake and vandalism insurance coverage contracts, on motion of Director Daughtry.

Operating rules were different once

AC Transit drivers believe in being courteous toward all passengers—but rules change over the years. The following are official regulations laid down for conductors by the Adelaide, Australia, tram railway in 1880:

"The tram conductor must welcome and shake hands with all passengers, and conduct ladies to their seats. He should dust each seat before the passenger sits on it. The conductor must next inquire if everyone is comfortably seated."

"On the route he must call out the names of all intersections, junctions, and the various stores. At crossings the conductor must walk ahead of the tram with a red flag by day and a red lamp by night. He must also hold up cross traffic with a red flag and signal the tram to proceed by waving a green flag."

Then, again, driving through traffic was a bit less hectic 90 years ago.