

New Look...New Deal...in the Bay Area



*... for Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District,
passenger gains during the first year*



Coming into San Francisco off the Bay Bridge, coaches travel to the terminal on their own exclusive road.

A 5.81% boost in Transbay revenues



In this former bridge train terminal in San Francisco, tracks were removed and pavement laid for buses. 1038 schedules operate in and out of the terminal on week-days.

About one-third of the District's mileage involves service between East Bay communities and downtown San Francisco. All lines operate across the Oakland Bay Bridge, and use the former bridge train terminal in San Francisco as a depot.

There are 13 basic routes, plus 17 additional peak hour branch lines. Service is predominantly with new equipment—air conditioned suburban model SDH-4501's with comfortable high back seats, and sans package racks for more headroom.

These coaches are specially equipped with fluorescent lighting, and this feature, together with the

smooth Air Ride, has produced much favorable comment from passengers who like to read while they ride.

It is in this transbay service where the greatest revenue gains have been realized—5.81% for the nine month period.

On these lines, too, there has been a gratifying increase in mid-day riding, which indicates high acceptance among women shoppers.

These revenue gains are all the more impressive by contrast with generally lower riding throughout California.

New express service shows regular gains; charter business up nearly threefold

Revenue losses in local East Bay service were 3.3% during the last three months of 1960, but the introduction of 125 model TDH-5301's changed that.

Starting in January revenues began increasing, and for the nine-month period ending September 30, averaged 3.21% higher than the same period of 1959.

These gains were made without benefit of air conditioning.

Service extensions. To bring the system abreast of the area's growth, the District inaugurated 11 new lines, extended service on another 11, and increased mid-day frequency on 2 additional lines. One-way route mileage was increased by 143 miles.

Total increase in scheduled miles with these changes amounts to more than 2 million annually.

Some of this new service has been offered in so-called "silk-stocking" areas. And capitalizing on the style, comfort and beauty of the new equipment, the District's advertising has sought to raise the status of bus riding, and increase patronage among higher income groups.

Express service. Another innovation has been express service, which has showed fairly steady growth.

Four new lines, connecting Berkeley, Oakland, San Leandro and Hayward were inaugurated in March.

Total one-way mileage is 54.5. Equipment is all

model TDH-4516 — air conditioned. 18 units are scheduled for base service and 28 for peaks.

Scheduled speeds range from 18.9 miles per hour to 28.11 at mid-day. Two of the lines operate 49% of their mileage over the Nimitz Freeway. Construction of another freeway will ultimately aid the other two lines.

Unprecedented hot weather this past summer, when temperatures reached 110°, made this service especially attractive, and focused wide attention on the system's air conditioned coaches.

Increases in riding became most pronounced during hot weather.

A survey conducted among express passengers showed 32% were new customers to transit.

Charter gains. New equipment, supported by aggressive sales promotion, produced a 209% increase in charter volume. One movement of students required 119 coaches.

Enthusiastic comments from groups using the new service, indicate this phase of business will continue to grow.

Promotional activities. Well aware of the importance of good public relations, the District maintains a full-time Public Relations Director.

Press conferences are held at regular intervals, and press releases prepared covering newsworthy developments.

For advertising, three quarters of one percent of gross is budgeted, but is not all being spent.

Regular advertising is scheduled in local papers and via radio and TV. Billboards are also used.

Ride promotion includes outdoor billboards.



Air conditioning has aided charter business, too.





Expanding freeway construction has made possible faster schedule speeds, and helped make a success of new express service.

A newsy, well-edited periodical, filled with information about District personnel and operations, is published monthly.

Before the new GM fleet was delivered, much effort went into development of an eye-appealing, new interior and exterior decorative scheme, which subsequently won a national award.

Still another action with tangible public relations value has been the insistence on fuel specifications and a standard of maintenance pointed toward elimination of exhaust smoke.

Maintenance savings. Despite an annual increase of 2,250,000 miles, no increase in shop manpower has been required. Maintenance requirements have actually been lower. Surplus maintenance availability is being currently used for rehabilitation and modernization of 276 Diesel coaches acquired from the predecessor company.

A large group of gasoline-powered coaches were retired last summer. The rehabilitated Diesels are used for tripper service and on neighborhood lines.

Two and a quarter million miles of added service with no increase in shop manpower.



Riding trend reversed with new GM coaches ... expanded service ... and salesmanship

Striking testimony to the effectiveness of new GM equipment in helping to gain and hold riders can be seen in the experience of the new Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District, according to John R. Worthington, General Manager.

Month-by-month revenue figures for the first year of operation (which began October 1, 1960) pinpoint the passenger gain as starting in January, which coincides with first deliveries of 250 "New Look" GM transit and suburban models.

For example, during the District's first three months of operation, with older equipment, the downward trend of revenues continued — averaging 2.36% systemwide, when compared to the same period of 1959.

But beginning in January, with first deliveries of new coaches, riding showed a marked increase, which continued through the remaining nine months for a systemwide gain of 4.16%! Since there has been



"Acceptance of public transit beyond anything known here in recent years," — Jack Worthington, General Manager.



"We are service-minded, rather than profit-minded."

no change in fares, the gain is due entirely to increased riding.

Actually, however, new buses have played only one part. Some new ideas by management . . . service innovations . . . smart merchandising . . . and good public relations have made up the winning combination.

Air conditioning has played a significant part.

And since original projections regarding revenues and riding have been largely achieved, it all adds up to a pretty successful first year.

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The Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District is a public agency formed in 1956 and headed by a 7-man board of directors.* Responsible for operations is

John R. Worthington, General Manager, a veteran transit executive.

The District embraces the most densely-populated areas of Alameda and Contra Costa counties, which lie along the east shore of San Francisco bay, starting with San Pablo and Richmond in the north, and extending southward to Hayward. Focal point is Oakland, where the District is headquartered.

Approval in 1959 by the voters of a \$16,500,000 bond issue cleared the way for the District to acquire the existing privately-owned company. Operations began in October, 1960.

Promises of improved service were made good with the purchase of 250 new GM coaches as follows: 57 SDH-4501 . . . 50 TDH-4516 . . . 5 SDM-4501—All Air Conditioned. 125 TDH-5301 and 13 TDH-4517.

"Evidence of much better driver-passenger relationships."



*Board of Directors: William J. Bettencourt, *President*; Robert M. Copeland, *Vice President*; Robert K. Barber, William E. Berk, William H. Coburn, Jr., E. Guy Warren, John L. McDonnell.

AC TRANSIT SUCCESS

Air Conditioning Gamble Pays Off

AC Transit's \$500,000 gamble on air conditioning has proved so successful that all future buses bought by the district will contain cooling equipment.

John R. Worthington, AC general manager, gives air conditioning units on 112 new coaches primary credit for the district's unexpectedly high revenue this summer.

"Passengers are on Cloud Nine," Worthington said. "They couldn't believe a bus ride could be so comfortable."

The 112 cool coaches are used for transbay, express and Southern Alameda County service. Worthington says he will recommend to the district board that all buses bought hereafter be air conditioned so that every AC customer can ride in comfort.

PIONEERS PROJECT

AC Transit is the pioneer of air conditioning for city bus systems on the West Coast.

Western transportation companies have felt for years that cooling systems are an unnecessary expense, according to Worthington.

But now that AC has shown the way, other bus firms are ordering air conditioned buses — starting with Sacramento and Fresno.

"We run against the current of thinking in the West," Worthington explained. "Let's face it. We're mavericks."

Worthington was able to convince his board that \$4,500 for a cooling unit isn't really much money.

He points out that when the \$4,500 is depreciated over 20 years, the annual cost is minor.

Furthermore, he predicts that in 20 years all new coaches will come equipped with air conditioners. It will be next to impossible to sell old coaches without coolers, the general manager claims. But the 112 AC buses will be highly marketable.

Worthington says that cooling is only one job accomplished by air conditioning units. They also keep windows fog-free and the buses clean.

"Air conditioners play a key role in gaining social acceptance for the bus," he added.

EXAMPLE CITED

And he cited the transbay C line serving Piedmont and parts of Oakland.

"The C never used to do anything. It was what we call a dead soldier," Worthington

explained. "Now it's our second highest line in revenue production, and most of the credit goes to air conditioning."

Drivers have reported that on lines where both regular and air conditioned buses are operating, passengers frequently allow the regular coaches to pass so that they can catch the ones with the cooler.

MORE NEW RIDERS

Operators also have observed that they get more new riders on hot days—evidence that commuters conclude they can travel more comfortably by bus than by auto.

Worthington reports that cost of operating the cooling units is under one cent per mile. And maintenance of the air conditioning units is no problem. Not a single bus has been taken out of service because of the cooling equipment.

"In every respect," Worthington said, "I'm hot for cooling."

Oakland Tribune—Aug. 29, 1961

As can be seen from the above, the past season's experience with air conditioning has completely sold the District's management on this feature.

In addition to making riding more attractive, operators report less fatigue at the end of the day.

"We're just not as tired," one driver explained. "And there's certainly a big difference in passengers. Instead of being irritable, they relax and enjoy the ride."

Because windows are kept closed, coaches also remain cleaner.

In service between East Bay communities and

San Francisco, where air conditioned coaches are used, the usual summer lull in riding did not occur this year.

In view of the benefits, cost is considered nominal. At a cost of \$4,300, depreciation amounts to less than \$1.00 a day over 15-year life.

Additional fuel required to operate the air conditioning unit amounted to 0.75 gallon per hour operated.

Maintenance to date has been virtually nil, without a single coach having to be taken out of service because of air conditioning failure.

GMC Truck & Coach

Division of General Motors Corporation

Pontiac, Michigan

In Canada: General Motors Diesel Limited, London, Ontario

