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# Five-door train cars for Thomson-East Coast Line

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Commuters using the Thomson-East Coast Line (TEL), which opens progressively from 2019, can look forward to a more reliable and comfortable ride. Train cars used for the line will feature five doors on each side – instead of four on other MRT trains – to facilitate quicker and smoother boarding and alighting.

About 60 of the fleet of 91 four-car trains will also have tip-up seats, which will offer more stand-

ing space for commuters during rush hours. There will be 10 rows of tip-up seats per train. Details of these features were shown to Transport Minister Khaw Boon Wan yesterday when he visited the Mandai Depot and was given a tour of the first train, which was delivered from China in May.

The TEL trains will also be fitted with a new LCD board, to provide commuters with information such as the MRT network map, train travel direction and which side of the train doors will be opening.

The 43km TEL will open progres-



Details of the Thomson-East Coast Line train features were revealed yesterday at the Mandai Depot during a tour of the first train, which was delivered from China in May. The line will open progressively from 2019. ST PHOTO: GAVIN FOO

sively from 2019 and be fully completed in 2024. The 31-station line, from Woodlands North to Sungei Bedok, will connect commuters in the eastern region to the city centre, as well as those living in the Woodlands and Thomson areas.

The Land Transport Authority (LTA) yesterday said two of the TEL trains will be fitted with the automatic track inspection system comprising cameras, lasers and sensors. These can help detect defects on the tracks, such as rail cracks, missing track-rail fasteners or even foreign objects, LTA said.

The 91 TEL trains are manufactured in China by a consortium formed by Japan's Kawasaki Heavy Industries and China's CSR Qingdao Sifang Co. The consortium won a \$749 million contract in 2014 to supply the trains. The remaining 90 trains will be delivered from next

month, with about two trains arriving every month. The TEL trains will be stabled at the 32ha Mandai Depot, an integrated rail and bus depot about the size of 44 football fields. Construction of the depot started in December 2013 and is on track to be completed in 2019.

Senior Minister of State for Transport Janil Puthucheary, who was at Mandai Depot yesterday, said the TEL was announced in the Land Transport Masterplan in 2008 and a decade in the making. Dr Janil said the latest masterplan, to be launched next year, will look to increase the density, reach and accessibility of public transport, while also examining how to integrate buses and trains with other first- and last-mile options like bicycle-sharing and ride-hailing services.

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