



The new trains will have gap fillers (above) – rubber strips to reduce the gap between the platform edge and train floor – and more strap-hangers (right) for passengers to hold on to.

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Four more trains for Circle Line as ridership rises

They are first of line's 24 new trains; 6 new trains to go on N-E line in Aug

By ADRIAN LIM

FOUR new trains have been added to the Circle Line to help boost capacity and reduce waiting times.

The new trains will increase capacity by 10 per cent and commuters can look forward to shorter waits and less crowded rides, said the Land Transport Authority (LTA) yesterday.

"Between HarbourFront and Promenade, where certain stretch-

es see higher ridership, waiting time during the peak period will be reduced from the current 3.5 minutes to 3.2 minutes," said LTA in a press release.

The four trains are the first of 24 to be added. Seven more trains, currently undergoing testing at Kim Chuan depot, will be injected into service later this year, while the remaining 13 will be deployed by the middle of next year.

When all new trains are in ser-

vice, the capacity on the Circle Line network will be boosted by 60 per cent. Compared with the current fleet of 40, the new trains will have more strap-hangers for passengers to hold on to, and gap fillers – which are rubber strips to reduce the gap between the platform edge and the train floor.

Ridership on the Circle Line has been growing in the past few years. Operator SMRT said that as of last month, the daily ridership was 398,000 – 11 per cent more than the 360,000 in May last year and 13 per cent more than the 351,000 in May 2013.

The LTA added that the new trains will also have a "Dynamic Route Map Display" located at the top of each door. This display will indicate to commuters their current location, route information and the side the train doors will open at the next station. Such displays are currently used on the Downtown, East-West and North-South MRT lines.

In total, the new Circle Line trains will cost \$184 million.

Also giving an update on the North-East Line yesterday, LTA said six of the 18 new trains have arrived and are undergoing testing. They will be put into service from August. "LTA will continue to monitor the ridership along the various rail lines and work with the operators to augment the capacity to meet the long-term projected demand," it said.

Account manager Czarina Cabuyadao, 28, who takes the Circle Line every morning, said: "The crowd is not too bad. There's standing room but it's breathable space. The seats are usually occupied when the train reaches Bishan, where I get on."

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