

Singapore Government

PRESS RELEASE

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SPEECH BY MR LEE YIOK SENG, SENIOR PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY
(NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT) AT THE OPENING OF THE COMPUTERISED AREA
TRAFFIC CONTROL CENTRE AT PENTHOUSE NEGARA,
NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT BUILDING ON 19 FEBRUARY '82 AT 10.00 AM

Over the past few years, the Public Works Department (PWD) has made efforts to improve the traffic management measures and upgrade the road communication network. The implementation of the Computerised Area Traffic Control System in July 1981 at a cost of \$6.5 million, is but one of the many measures to achieve the target of better traffic movement set for PWD. This implementation also signals a new era of high technology application to problem solving in Singapore. I am therefore most pleased to officially open the Computerised Area Traffic Control Centre today.

The Central Computer has under its control 151 traffic lights within the city area. It links each of the lights together and therefore co-ordinates the timing of each of the phases of time. One obvious benefit of computerised traffic control to the motorist is the continuous green wave effect as he travels from signal to signal in the Central Area. Undoubtedly, his motoring has been made more pleasant than before.

The system also puts the traffic signals within the city area under constant surveillance. Faults in any of these signals are identified immediately by the computer, making it possible for the controller to rectify them within the shortest possible time. Signal faults are therefore kept to a minimum enhancing traffic flow and road safety. Surveillance by computer has helped PWD to dispense with the regular maintenance patrols to spot signal faults. Scarce manpower resources are now therefore put to other more productive use.

In addition to fault detecting, the computer keeps tab on the volume and speed of traffic movements within the city area.

This allows the operator in the Control Room to know instantly the traffic conditions within the various parts of the city, enabling him to vary the timing of change of each of the traffic lights to suit the particular conditions of the day. This has helped to minimise traffic congestion at key road junctions and maximise the capacity of city roads.

The PWD evaluates the success of the Area Traffic Control System by traffic data monitoring. So far, the studies have shown that travel speeds, because of the continuous green wave effect available to the motorist, have increased by about 20 per cent since the implementation of the Computerised Control System. Translated into dollars and cents, this has enabled the motorist to save on fuel which otherwise would have been expended when he stops at a set of unco-ordinated traffic signals. The aggregate savings at today's prices amount to \$35,000 per day for vehicles using the city area. However, in order to maximise the benefit from this system, it is important for road users and motorists to observe the traffic rules and regulations.

Many people have contributed to the successful implementation of the scheme, in particular, GEC Traffic Automation of the United Kingdom, General Electric Company of Singapore, Wilbur Smith & Associates, Telecommunications Authority of Singapore and Public Utilities Board. The assistance and co-operation provided by them to PWD has been most invaluable.

It is now my pleasure to declare open the Computerised Area Traffic Control Centre of Singapore.

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