

----- Start of forwarded message -----

Subject: Re: Trident report
To: Michael TaylorNoonan <mtn@canada.com>
From: Ba See Lo
Date: Wed, 5 Sep 2001 16:49:49 -0700

Some friends of mine and I recently made a day trip to Victoria to ride the Trident double-deckers and the Dart low-floor buses. The transit strike in Vancouver is leaving us gunzels with withdrawal symptoms!

The drivers seem to love the vehicles, both manufactured by Dennis.

The Tridents have a Cummins ISM engine coupled to a Voith transmission. The torque is so strong that the drivers are instructed to apply the parking brake while stopped at a red light. Acceleration from a stop is amazing. The coach we were on went up to 80km/h before we even realized it!

The doors on both the Darts and the Tridents are by Deans Powered Doors. Both the front and rear doors are driver-opened and driver-closed.

The Darts have slide-glide doors both front and rear, and they've experienced some rear door/passenger conflicts as the doors open inward. They've caught a few passengers' feet...

The Trident's rear doors are parallelogram plug, which makes for interesting stopping hazards. If the rear doors are stopped beside street furniture (e.g. newspaper box, fire hydrant, lamppost) the outward opening doors will crash into them! Also, as the rear doors close, a loud chime is sounded to warn passengers that the rear doors are closing. The volume of the chime has already been decreased after numerous passenger and driver complaints. We've heard that the chime will be removed altogether.

The operator door controls are rocker switches located on the left-side dash panel, one switch for each door. The common complaint amongst operators is that the switches are not as intuitive as the more common door-control lever. Whereas operators don't need to look

for the door-control lever (they can find it by feel) the rocker switches must be searched for, thus the driver must take his/her eyes off of the road while pulling into a bus stop. The problem is more pronounced on the Darts, as the position of the rocker switches make them almost impossible to find by feel. We were told that they would be retrofitting one of the Darts with a standard door-control lever as a prototype, and if the drivers comment favorably, the rest of the Darts will be retrofitted.

The height of the Tridents is proving to be a problem in downtown Victoria. Most lampposts downtown have an ornamental 5-globe cluster, which hang close to the curblin. The camber of the road often causes the buses to lean toward the curb, with the unfortunate effect of whacking off the globes. We noticed 5 such damaged lampposts on the ride from downtown to Swartz Bay.

The Tridents and Darts both have a huge rear overhang (distance from rear axle to rear bumper) that causes a huge rear-corner kick-out while the coach is turning. The Trident's rear kick-out is 27 inches! Because of this kick-out and the above height problem, the Trident operators have been trained to nose into the bus zone while aiming BETWEEN lampposts, and to stop with the rear-end out blocking traffic so that when the bus leaves the zone, the rear kick-out will not contact any street furniture. To compare, a New Flyer Industries D40LF rear kick-out is (if my memory serves) 21 inches.

At 16:19 -0700 07/27/2001, Leslie B. Broughton wrote:

>On Wed, 25 Jul 2001, Ba See Lo wrote:

>

>Derek covered most of the major points re the Darts and tridents in the

>part of the message I cut.

>

>A couple of additional driver observations/gripes.

>

>Stalk mounted turn signals not well received, after decades of foot

>mounts. Drivers I have spoken to would prefer if the signals did not shut

>off when wheels centred. Also, turn sigs wired to ignition, so they shut

>off on layover.

I forgot to mention this one. The Darts may be retrofitted with foot-operated turn signals.

Some of the ex-CT Flyer D800's that Victoria "borrowed" from Vancouver initially arrived with stalk mounted turn signals. In this case, they DIDN'T cancel when the steering wheel was centred, so on several occasions I saw them driving down Granville Street with the left blinker going. I thought I was in Florida!
:)

Also, the AC on the Trident that we rode (same coach both ways, amazingly enough) didn't seem up to stuff. Downstairs was fine, but upstairs the AC wasn't doing a good enough job.

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I also forgot to mention the non-opening windows of the Tridents. According to one driver, the windows are an integral part of the bus' structural integrity.

If a window is found to be cracked, the bus is to be IMMEDIATELY taken out of service.

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Transit Enthusiast * Secretary, Transit Museum Society

----- End of forwarded message -----

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