Fare exchange

Victorian public transport users are now part of the smartcard age. Here's what the new ticketing system – called *myki* – means for you. Report: **Brian Negus**

Melbourne is in the throes of catching up with major world cities in providing a smarter way to use public transport tickets.

The system – called *myki* – has been a long time coming, and travellers have had to be patient during the roll-out. Commuters have had to begin to get used to *myki*, and *myki* has had to get used to the needs of Victoria's public transport users.

But *myki* is here to stay. Initially it can only be used on metropolitan trains and in certain regional centres, but eventually it will be rolled out to all trams and buses. When it's fully operational, commuters should be able to appreciate the advantage of a re-usable smartcard over the old paper ticket system.

RACV supports *myki*, as it forms part of an integrated public transport system that's vital to the mobility of Victorians. Similar systems, especially in such diverse places as London and Singapore, have been very successful.

But many Victorians still don't understand just what *myki* is and how it is meant to work. Here's RoyalAuto's guide to the system.

WHAT IS MYKI?

myki is essentially a re-usable plastic smartcard that stores credit and deducts the fare each time the user travels. This is done by the traveller holding the card flat again a *myki* reader when boarding and leaving public transport. *myki* calls this 'touching on' and 'touching off', and it's like using a barcode reader.

For trains, the *myki* readers are found where you have always fed paper tickets through the Metcard machines at the gates to stations or individual platforms.

On trams and buses, the *myki* readers are closer to the doors than the Metcard machines. This is because, unlike with Metcards, the *myki* card must be touched on when you board the bus or tram but also touched off as you get off.

It is vital that travellers touch off when leaving buses and trams, and train stations. The *myki* system doesn't know how far you have travelled unless you touch off, and you will pay a default fare that may be more than you need to pay.

MYKI PASS OR MYKI MONEY?

There are two types of credit that can be stored on a *myki* card.

myki pass is best for travellers or daily commuters who regularly travel the same

route. It can be for either seven days, or anywhere between 28 and 365 consecutive days, so it's like a weekly, monthly or yearly ticket.

myki money is best for irregular travel or those who prefer to pay as they go. Credit on the cards can be topped up, and when travellers touch on and off, the system gives them the best available daily fare for their trip.

myki money and a *myki pass* can both be stored on the smartcard. The system calculates whether you've already paid for your travel because it is covered by a current pass or if money needs to be deducted from your *myki money* balance.

Travellers must make sure their *myki* account always has a positive *myki money* balance.

For travellers without a *myki*, two-hour or daily short-term tickets will be available, but they will cost more than *myki*.

WHERE TO GET MYKI

myki cards can be bought and topped up online at www.myki.com.au, or by calling 13 myki (13 6954).

Once the retail network is completely rolled out, passengers will be able to buy and top up at railway stations, tram platforms and bus interchanges, the MetShop on the corner of Swanston and Little Collins Sts, Melbourne, or from 720 retail outlets, including 7 Eleven stores in Melbourne and selected Australia Post outlets in regional Victoria.

Once *myki* is fully introduced, you will be able to top up a *myki* or buy short-term tickets on trams and buses.

REGISTER FOR MYKI PROTECTION

Travellers are advised to register their *myki*. If the card is lost or stolen, report it and the balance will be protected. Registration also allows you to manage your account online, including automatic top-ups of the account by direct debit. Note that top-ups may take up to 24 hours to be processed, so it's best to be aware of your *myki* balance. This is displayed on the card reader when you touch off, and registered users can see their balance online. But again, recent travel and the cost of that travel may take up to 24 hours to be shown on the website.

For more details, go to www.myki.com.au or call 13 6954 (13 myki).

Brian Negus is RACV general manager of public policy

> how much

It costs $10 (full-fare) or $7 (concession, child or seniors) to buy a *myki* card. This does not get you any credit on the card; this must be added to the card by an initial payment and subsequent top-ups.

> MYKI MONEY

To get the *myki money* best fares, you must touch on and touch off. If you don't touch off, a default fare is charged which may be more than the fare required. The default fare amount depends on the mode of travel and route. Passengers are protected by a daily cap and won't pay more than the cap shown below (50% for concession customers).

2-hour or single trip: full fare		Daily cap: full fare
zone 1	$2.94	$5.88
zone 2	$2.02	$4.04
zones 1&2	$4.96	$9.92
City Saver	$2.18 (one trip only)	

The daily cap on weekends and public holidays is $3.00.
The fares are equivalent to the current 10 x 2-hour or 5 x daily advance-purchase Metcards but cheaper than the equivalent single-purchase two-hour or daily Metcard fares.
The $3 weekend/public holiday fare is unchanged.

> MYKI PASS

The *myki pass* includes weekend travel. *myki pass* fares are the same as the equivalent Metcard tickets. They are valid from the first touch-on.

Weekly rate for 7-day pass

	zone 1	zone 2	zones 1&2
Full fare	$29.40	$20.20	$49.60
Concession	$14.70	$10.10	$24.80

Daily rate for 28-365 day pass

	zone 1	zone 2	zones 1&2
Full fare	$3.60	$2.40	$5.56
Concession	$1.80	$1.20	$2.78

Public transport travellers who are eligible for a concession fare, including seniors and students, can buy a concession *myki* with fares equivalent to the current Metcard concession prices. These prices are about 50% of the full fare.