WORKING TO KEEP BUSES AND TRAINS GOING

Long after the last commuter taps his card on the card reader, engineers and technicians are still hard at work. Under their charge are trains and buses; these are industriously cleaned and maintained before they return to service the next day, DANSON CHEONG reports.

Cleaning

A team of five cleaners wipes the windows of a SMRT train using a special glue. A Rail Grinding Vehicle then rinses the bottom of the train carriages to make a smoother ride in the morning. Back at the depot, technicians check train systems such as the air-conditioning, lighting and public announcement systems.

Maintenance

The moment they arrive at the depot, buses are topped up with diesel. A full tank will last a full day of service. Pump attendant R. Venugopal (50), says he refuels more than a hundred buses every night.

Twenty buses are scheduled for a weekly scrub down by a team of about four cleaners. It takes about 25 minutes to clean a double-decker bus and slightly shorter for a single-deck one.

Each coin box is dismantled and cleaned every two days. Depending on the route, the amount of cash in the box varies.

A long line forms outside the Soon Lee Bus Depot in Punggol where 350 buses are parked each night. Each returning bus queues to get refueled and washed. At the North East Line (NEL) depot in Sengkang, a team of 15 cleaners and washers are on standby while the first train arrives each night at 12:00AM. The depot houses all of the NEL’s 52 trains.

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