

Metro-MTC single smart card by year-end

Upgradation Of Software For Compatibility On

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Chennai: You will soon be able to park your vehicle at a metro station, hop on and off a metro train to a feeder MTC bus and vice versa with the tap of a card. With the testing of single smart card or a common mobility card across the two modes of transport in the city under way, metro rail officials said the card would likely be introduced before the end of 2018.

“We have tested the card at metro rail stations and MTC’s electronic ticketing machines. We may introduce it before the end of this year,” a metro rail official said.

CARD OF CONVENIENCE

A contactless smart card has magnetic strip that works on near-field communication technology (i.e when it comes in contact with another device)

Data like station codes, bus stops, recharged amount can be stored in the card

Station code is encrypted in the card when placed before a reader machine at the AFC gate while entering

The machines will be fed with distances and money to be deducted

The card when placed before a reader at the AFC gate while exiting

CMRL managing director Pankaj Kumar Bansal said they have been working with MTC to launch the facility

deducts money by calculating distance travelled

A similar reader installed in Electronic Ticketing Machines

used by the MTC will deduct money when the card is placed close to it and amount to be deducted is entered

Officials said they began testing the smartcard for compatibility by upgrading hardware and software.

CMRL managing director Pankaj Kumar Bansal said during an event in November 2017 that trials for the smartcards were on and that they have been working with MTC to launch it.

An official, who is in the know, said the electronic ticketing machines at present used by MTC conductors already have a hardware - a reader to scan smart cards. “All they need is to update the software and make it compatible with the system used by CMRL,” he said.

The contactless smart cards used by commuters in metro rail



there in electronic ticketing machine used at metro station parking lots and in MTC buses.

While the common card may soon be introduced for metro rail and MTC buses, state transport secretary PWC Davidar said “it is only a start, as the plan is to eventually use the card across all state-run transport corporation.”

“It is going to be not just metro rail and MTC. What we want is an open loop card that can be used throughout the state in our seven transport corporations. But there is a lot to be done, as it involves technology and we need to be careful especially when payments are involved,” he said.

While a majority of the state-run transport corporation operates with electronic ticketing machines, the secretary said they are yet to be made payment compatible to ensure that the money goes to the respective transport corporations.