

Metro phase-2 to have driverless trains

Rolling Stock May Not Be Operated On Phase-1 Lines

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Chennai: Six years from now, commuters may get an operator's view as they travel by driverless trains along phase-2 metro corridors, but may not enjoy the same experience on phase-1 lines as the new rolling stock cannot be run on the existing 45km line.

CMRL has plans to operate driverless trains in the three corridors of the 118.9km phase-2, where the entire opera-

ON AUTOPILOT

THIS IS HOW PHASE-1 TRAINS WORK

- Running of trains automated
- Train operators have to stop and start and open doors in every station

THIS IS HOW PHASE-2 TRAINS WOULD WORK

- No train operators
- All train operations to be automated; operations to be monitored from control centre through 16 CCTV cameras installed on each train
- Small operating console available only for emergency



ESTIMATE FOR PHASE-2 (*3-car train)



tion of a train will be automatic. However, trains on phase-1 will continue to be operated by drivers.

A metro rail official said the signal systems required for the driverless train are different from those being used for

trains on phase-1. Hence, trains on both phases cannot be interchanged.

"The signal software controls the entire operation of the train as well as its associated systems. The rolling stock may look the same, but the software

will vary in both corridors. So, we cannot operate a train designed for phase-2 on phase-1," an official said.

An estimated 138 three-car trains would be run at 4-10 minute frequency to carry a projected 19.2lakh riders daily,

when the first leg of phase-2 begins operation in 2025. CMRL plans to increase the fleet to 254 trains in three decades to cater to an estimated daily ridership of 43.5lakh. Signal software controls operation of the train, automatic train announcements on train and in stations, platform screen doors, automatic fare collection gates and information display boards on the platforms.

Due to the technologically incompatible rolling stock, commuters will have to exit phase-2 stations and reach phase-1 lines through exclusive subways and walkways planned. There will be interchanges linking stations of both phases in at least six locations, including KMC, CMBT, Anna Nagar, Vadapalani, Nandanam and St Thomas Mount. "It is not because of the trains,

but the stations planned in phase-2 would not be built on the same road as phase-1. For instance, KMC station will come up on Barnaby Road while the present Kilpauk station is on Poonamallee High Road. Commuters will have to use a walkway we will build to link the stations for switching corridors," an official said.

In phase-1, train operators manually stop and start the train at stations and open/close the train doors.

However, in phase-2, officials said the console will be less than one-fourth the size of those in the present fleet and will stay locked. In case of emergencies, the operations control centre (OCC) staff will take control of the operation until a controller of the nearest station, trained to operate a train, reaches the spot.