



# A new ticketing system for public transport in Adelaide

## SNAPSHOT

In 2012 the government replaced its public transport ticketing system with the Metrocard. The old system was obsolete – parts could not be replaced and it could not cater for new initiatives. The failure rate of the system had reached unacceptably high levels; it was past end-of-serviceable-life.

### Background

For 25 years prior to the Metrocard, Adelaide public transport travellers used a magnetic strip ticketing system and before that a paper ticket that required punching. A smartcard was a significant change.

Other Australian states had found implementing similar smartcards highly problematic and incurred significant budget blow-outs. Their systems had teething problems and passengers hadn't coped well with new complicated fare structures. Learning from this, an existing "off the shelf" ticketing system that was proven and stable became a pre-requisite for procurement in South Australia.

### The initiative

Initially the new system replicated the functionality of the previous ticketing

system, collecting revenue, and tracking ticket validations to assist transport planning and contract management.

Customers simply needed to adjust to a smartcard. Ticket validators accepted magnetic tickets and Metrocards. New functionality allowed for the storage of credit on a Metrocard.

Over time, auto-recharge, payWave on vending machines, smartcard registration, a greater variety of fare products, bike lockers and park 'n' ride features were added to the Metrocard system.

Customers could recharge cards at over 300 Metrocard agents, on and off-board vending machines, website and telephone services. A "real-time" system was also implemented, predicting vehicle arrival times at stops.

## PUBLIC VALUE FRAMEWORK



What outcome will be delivered?



Whose support is necessary?



## EVALUATING FOR PUBLIC VALUE

### Public value

**Positive social impact:** Travelling by public transport was made much easier with real-time information, easy payment options including payWave, and improved Park'n'Ride facilities.

Metrocard made public transport easier for regular users as well as visitors to South Australia and less frequent travellers.

**Increased effectiveness:** The Metrocard system has an exceptionally low failure rate and data used for fleet monitoring has also improved contractor on-time running.

Fare evasion by people exiting the Adelaide Railway Station through gate controls has dropped by 30 per cent.

**Public engagement:** The introduction of Metrocards was accompanied by a strong co-designed engagement strategy.

A 400-strong test group of public/customers was established to test initiatives. Open feedback was encouraged and resulted in several technology and process improvements including the development of the Real-Time Arrivals app through the government's open data competition.

### Legitimacy & support

**Clear objectives:** Metrocard contributes to strategic priorities by delivering a community and customer-focused public transport ticketing system, and providing a significant amount of planning and monitoring information. It meets the strategic objective of *enhanced liveability and connectivity between people and places, business and markets*, by allowing integrated public transport across tram, rail and bus.

**Political support:** Good operational performance and fiscal management, robust quality implementation of solutions and great customer satisfaction has resulted in continuing political and management support for Metrocard.

**Stakeholder & community support:** Extensive stakeholder engagement occurred. Everyone who had a role to play in implementation was included.

Metrocard was trialled extensively with employees and members of the public. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

## Operational capability

**ICT and other resources:** Metrocard is an “off the shelf” product, used internationally, configured to meet local needs. Ongoing robust change management processes are in place. Equipment and software is developed and tested by contractors in France, before local rigorous pre-implementation testing and piloting prior to rollout.

With the introduction of credit card payments significant work was required to ensure the safety of cardholder data and ensure secure payment solutions.

**Human resources:** Staff in the Metrocard Unit have managed and operated the

system since its introduction. Where changes are considered, constrained resourcing and upskilling time is factored into implementation requirements.

A customer experience team worked closely with the Metrocard Unit to transition the use of the new system and new initiatives.

Strict data ownership and governance responsibilities have been managed to comply with security requirements and the privacy principles.

**Financial:** Metrocard maximised return on an infrastructure investment which cost significantly less than similar systems installed by interstate counterparts.

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