The Globe trotter

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The TRANSFER CONCEPT

(The sixth of several issues on this subject)

"TIME LIMITS ON TRANSFERS"

GLOBE TICKET COMPANY

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A Nation-Wide Service

Time Limits on Transfers

The purpose of the transfer privilege is to make it possible for a passenger to reach his destination within the area serviced by a transportation system, although the routing is such that he cannot do so without changing from a vehicle of one route to that of another. The privilege is based on a continuous ride, interrupted only by the time taken in making the physical transfer from one vehicle to another. In order to make reasonably sure that transfers are used as intended and not made the means of obtaining free rides, a time limit is usually placed on their use. It is obvious that, without this, trafficking in transfers would creep in, as has been experienced in the past, when passengers obtained transfers as a matter of course, regardless of need, when boys were waiting at transfer points, asking for them, and sales of transfers were made at reduced rate by street sellers and others.

Proper limitations as to date and time are indispensable in the well organized transfer system. Time, in fact plays an important part not only in the prevention of trafficking in transfer rides mentioned before, but also in holding to the minimum the inducement to make return rides on transfers, in cases where the layout of the routes makes it difficult to restrict transfer use because of the disproportionate effect upon legitimate transfer riders. In setting and enforcing close but adequate time limits, much of the inducement for such return-riding can be taken away, by giving passengers enough time to transfer legitimately, but too little to undertake worth while shopping trips and attempts at return to or near their starting point.

In fact where routing makes it difficult to effectively prevent the possibility of round tripping, close observation of date and time limits can well serve as the primary control of abuse.

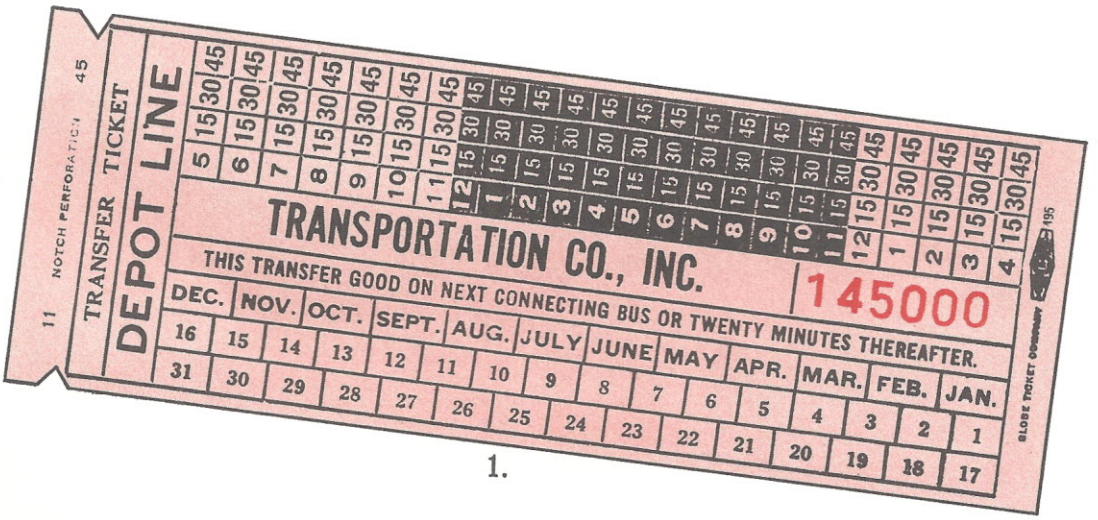
Indication by punch-out

As in the case of dating, in previous years the indication of time by punch marks was quite common but has given way in more recent years to the well known tear-off time indication with its several variations.

Illustration 1 shows a time scale for punch-out. Punch-out scales may include the entire range of common operating hours, such as 5 a.m. to 12 midnight or 1 a.m., or they may run from 1 to 12, with separate indication of A.M. or P.M. either by punch-out or by the use of a P.M. coupon.

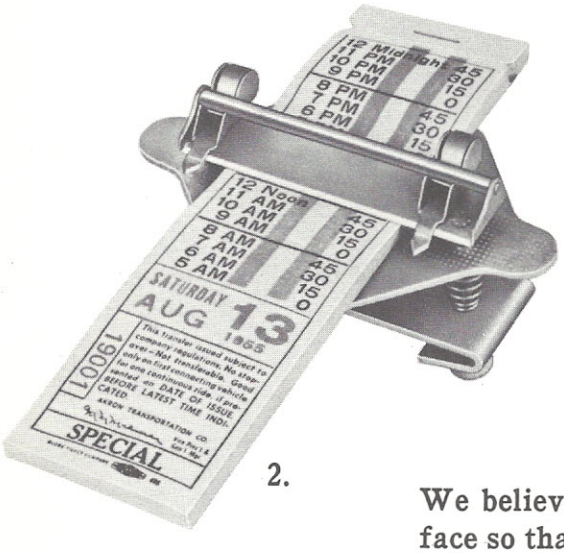
The punch-out type of time scale has the same short-comings as punch-out indication of the date. Spaces assigned to time indication are small, pellets may go back into the holes. Time indication made in this fashion requires two holes where hours and fractions of hours are involved; it requires three holes where separate indication by punching of A.M. or P.M. is used. If date indication should also be done by punching, as it usually is on time-punched transfers, the transfer will present to the receiving driver a multitude of small holes, all of which he is expected to interpret at a glance under not too favorable conditions.

No wonder that the tear-off type of time indication has gained so much favor.



1.

Time indication by tear-off

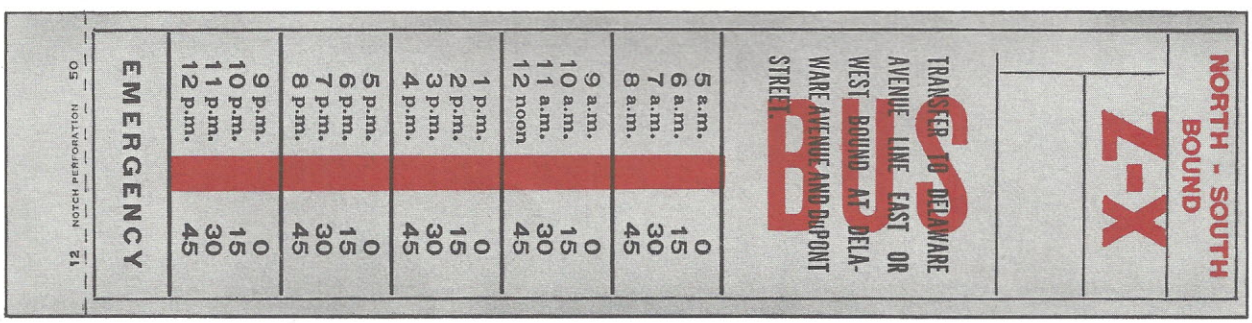


2.

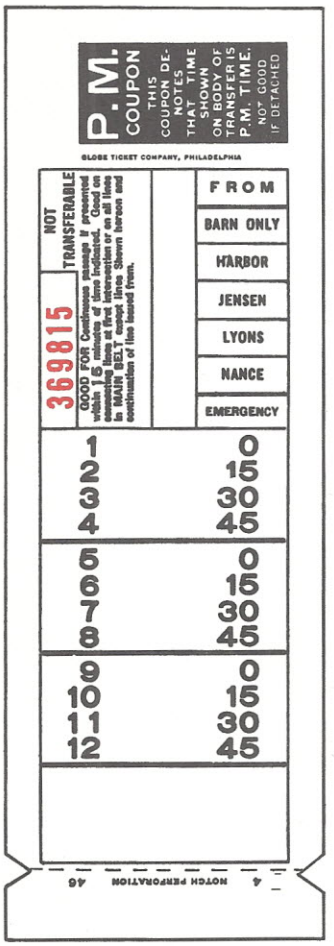
In designing a tear-off transfer it is good to determine which is the most convenient and comfortable way for the driver to tear-off the transfer, depending on the layout of the vehicle. Different positions should be tried on the vehicle, before deciding the one which permits most effortless handling of transfers and on which the least interference is encountered from parts of the vehicle or from fare box or change maker.

We believe that it is a good idea to have the printing on the transfer face so that the driver can read it without standing on his head when he resets the time limit. Consequently, the form shown, for instance, as 3 should normally be held so that the binding stub points toward the driver—usually at a downward slant. On the other hand, the form shown as 2 should be placed so that the binding stub points away from the driver, this time with an upward slant. This is illustrated by showing this transfer in a transfer cutter. The binding stub is at the top, away from the driver. Generally this is the most advantageous position and direction of printing. The operator takes hold of the transfer at the lower end and, in a sweeping motion upwards and to the right, he tears it off along the cutting bar and, at the same time, brings it up close to the passenger.

A good many time scales for tear-off transfers are made up to include the hours from 1 to 12, plus the necessary minutes, with separate indication of A.M. or P.M. We know of one case where a separate transfer form is used for A.M. and P.M. hours, but as a rule A.M. or P.M. designation is accomplished by punch-out in a space provided for this or by the use of a P.M. coupon, as in 4.



3.

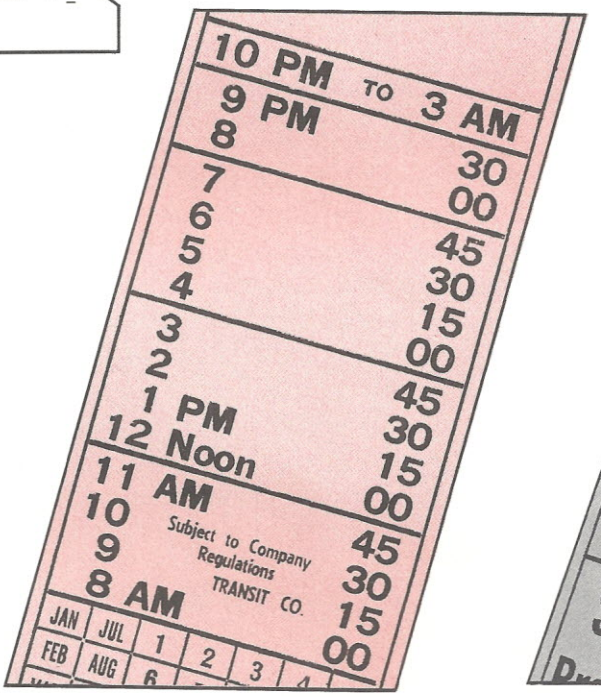


4.

This system permits the indication of all 24 hours of the day, in addition to such minute intervals as are desired. In recent years many transit companies have abandoned the use of separate A.M. and P.M. designation, in favor of a continuous time scale running from early morning hours to midnight or shortly after.

The scale may begin at 5 a.m. and run until 12 midnight or, with minutes in 15 minute intervals added, until 12:45 a.m., see No. 2. The many users of this type of transfer argue that there is no intelligent purpose served in the close checking of time limits during the period from 12:45 a.m. to 5 a.m. Issuing conductors need not worry about separate A.M. or P.M. indication through punching or removal of the P.M. coupon. The straight time scale makes the reading of time limits easier, because receiving conductors or drivers need check time only at one single point, the time scale; they need not make the additional check for A.M. or P.M. indication.

The scale may be reduced still further, as shown for instance under 5, 6, 7 and 8. Under 5 particularly the motivation for this form lies in the fact that the inducement for return-riding becomes a lesser problem as the evening progresses. Hence, the time indication in half hour intervals between 8 and 9:30 p.m. Again between



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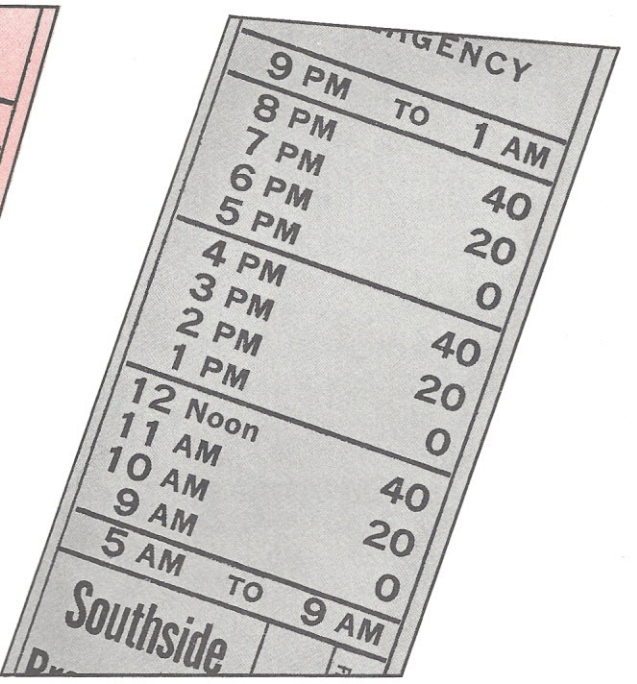

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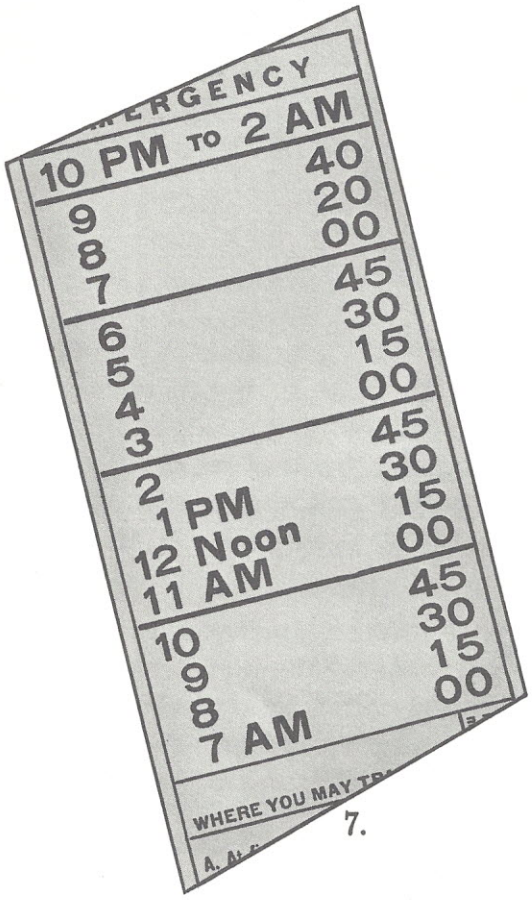

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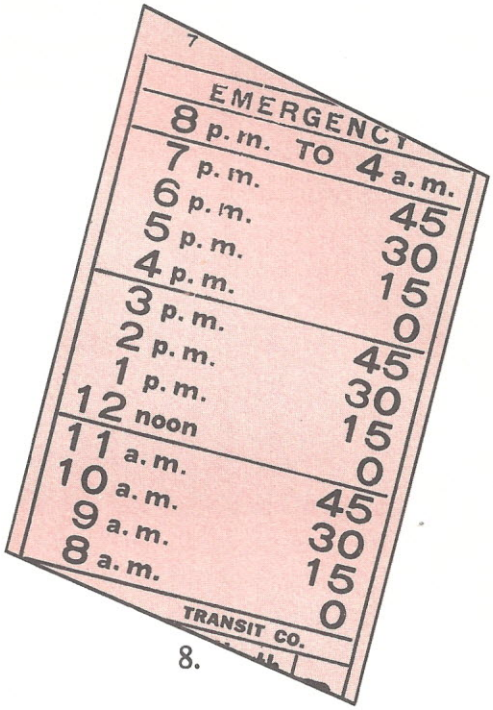

8.

10 p.m. and 3 a.m. and between 3 a.m. and 8 a.m. there is no point in close time control. Form No. 7 shows a similar arrangement.

Intervals used on time scales vary from those of a full hour to intervals of as little as 10 minutes. Quarter hour and 20 minute intervals probably are in the majority. It is good to keep in mind that the selection of the final minute time intervals to be shown on a transfer should have nothing to do with the time which it is desired to allow to passengers for the making of the actual transfer from one vehicle to another, nor with the headway time on various lines. The selection of shorter intervals such as 10 or 15 minutes, as against the longer intervals of 20 minutes, 30 minutes or an hour have a bearing only on the closeness with which any selected expiration time can be indicated on the transfer. We believe that the intervals should be as short as possible, since it will naturally be desirable to make the indication come as close to the desired figure as possible.

On tear-off transfers the space required by the hour scale determines the space to be taken up by the time scale. Because of this there is usually ample space for minute indication in 20 or 15 minute intervals (see 5 and 6).

In the use of tear-off transfers the cutting bar is set, at the end of the line, for the time up to which the transfers issued on the forthcoming run will be valid. This setting remains unchanged for the entire run.

The time indicated may be the time when the vehicle is expected to reach the last transfer point on its route, usually the central city area or a central city point, or it may be that time, plus a certain number of minutes which it has been decided to allow passengers for effecting the actual change-over from one vehicle to another.

The first mentioned method of showing the scheduled arrival time at the last or a key transfer point, is used, as a rule, in cases where headways on the various routes differ a great deal, and where, for this reason, the time allowance for making the change-over would have to be made very liberal, in order to have it take care of all lines, including those with long headways. It has the disadvantage that receiving conductors must add to the time shown a certain number of minutes, determined by the headway on their route. Since this must be done usually at crowded transfer points and for each and every transfer accepted, it means a lot of figuring and therefore creates many chances for errors and laxity. Also this method does not carry as clear-cut a proof of expiration with offending passengers, as does the second method which shows the final expiration time.

This second method requires the addition of a predetermined number of minutes to the scheduled arrival time at the key transfer point only once for each run, when the issuing driver sets his cut-off bar at the end of the line. Receiving conductors have no additions to make. The last time figure shown is the final time, and all transfers presented later than this time can rightfully be refused. Many transit companies feel that this more positive method is preferable, even if the time allowance for making the actual transfer may have to be set a little more liberal, in order to have it include lines operating on fairly long headways.

There is a method which may be used as a compromise between the two previously described. It calls for all transfers to be issued to show the time of arrival at the key transfer point, plus a certain number of minutes, for the time necessary to effect the transfer. This time allowance is such that it will furnish sufficient time under the headways existing on the majority of lines. On these the transfer is accepted only up to the final time shown.

On a few remaining lines that may operate under headways substantially beyond those of the majority, an adjusting addition of the necessary number of minutes is made by the receiving operator, in order to insure that passengers transferring to these lines will be able to board the first vehicle reaching the transfer point, within the permissible time limit.

This compromise maintains the advantage of a final expiration time on most lines, without unduly extending the time allowance on transfers.

Clauses on the transfer usually reflect the method employed, by stating that the transfer will be acceptable on certain lines if presented before expiration of the latest time shown, or in the other case that it will be good within a definitely set number of minutes after expiration time. Again they may state that the transfer must be presented on the first vehicle reaching the transfer point after the latest time shown, or perhaps that it is acceptable if presented before latest time shown or on first vehicle reaching the transfer point.

It seems good to set a definite expiration time wherever the difference in headways is not altogether too great, and to have the issuing rather than the accepting driver add the time

allowed to make the transfer. More is gained, we believe, by having a definite final time, even if the time allowed for transfer to some of the vehicles that happen to have short headways should be fairly liberal, rather than put the burden of figuring out the time validity of transfers on the receiving conductor to whom most transfers are presented in crowded central city areas under rush conditions. The issuing operator mostly makes his setting at the end of the line, before he starts his inbound run; he has more time to make the simple addition of a set number of minutes to his scheduled arrival time at a certain point. By being a bit more liberal in the time allowed we gain through ease of recognition.

It is understood, of course, that under the method of keying transfer time limits to the arrival time at the last transfer point, passengers making their transfer at points before reaching the final transfer point will have additional time. Generally the difference will be small and, since most transferring takes place from lines running into central city areas to lines running out of these areas, it occurs mostly in central city areas, where the last transfer point is usually not too far removed from the heaviest central transfer point.

But this is not always so. On systems laid out in grid-iron fashion, where transfer points naturally exist at many far separated points throughout the system, and on through lines which are intersected at outside points by crosstown or belt lines, the last transfer point may be far removed from the central city area. On such lines the designation of the last transfer point as the key for time setting might give passengers using intermediate points more leeway in effecting their transfer than desirable.

In such cases suitable variations from the system described will be in order. One of these may be to set the time for a key point that handles the heaviest transfer traffic, showing the final time including time allowed for the actual transfer, and to let conductors accepting transfers from this line beyond that point add established numbers of minutes to the time shown on the transfer when taking it up, in order to account for the additional travel time from the key point to the acceptance point.

(This is the sixth of several issues of our GLOBE TROTTER on THE TRANSFER CONCEPT. The seventh issue will follow in about a month. The issues will be useful for reference, if kept in a binder.)