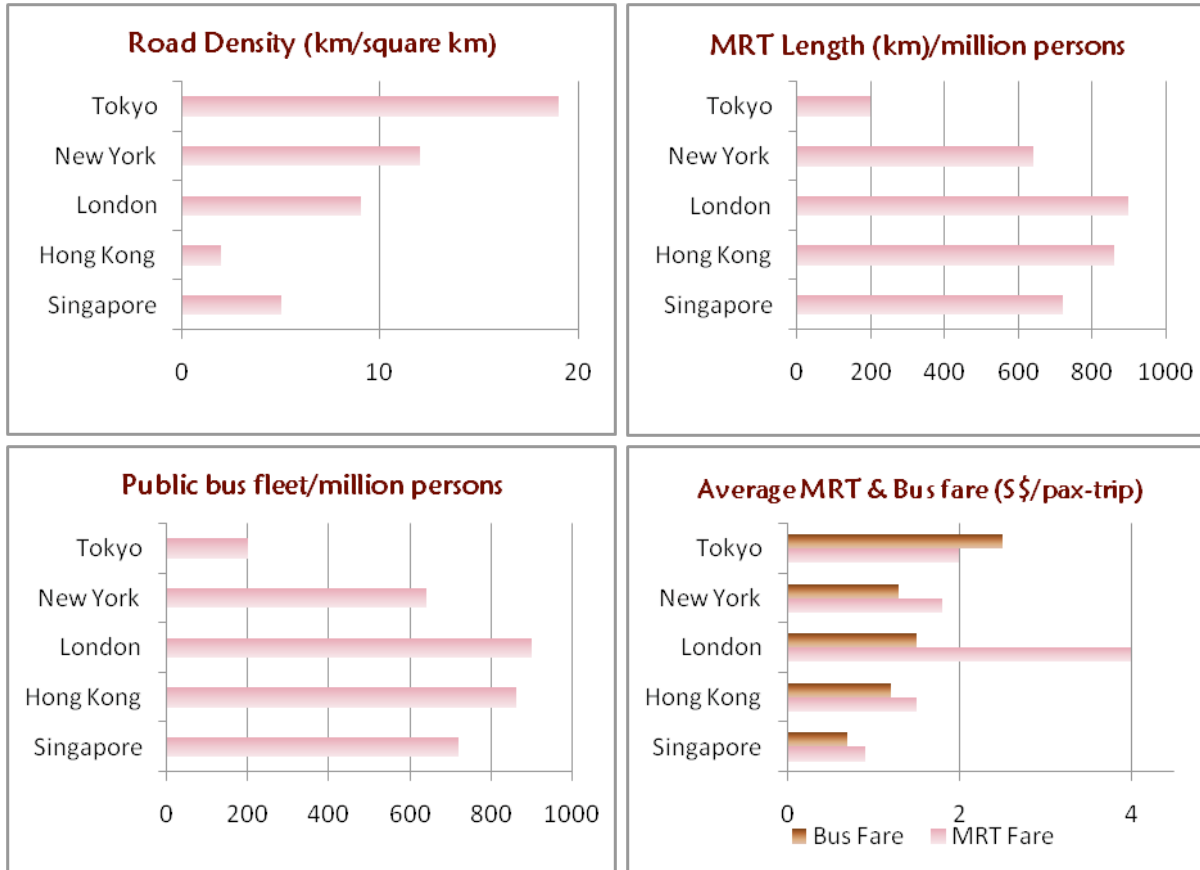


GETTING AROUND

Chapter
6

As a result of our coordinated effort to develop an extensive, efficient and affordable public transportation system, the International Association of Public Transport (UITP) ranked Singapore as among the best in the world in overall operation. We now have an efficient network of taxis, buses and the modern Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) rail system that is highly integrated, and is hassle-free and affordable. In fact, the standards of our public transportation is comparable (if not better than) to standards in other major cities!



Source: Singapore Land Transport: Statistics in Brief 2007, www.lta.gov.sg

Modes of transportation



Taxis

There are over 15,000 air-conditioned cabs island wide provided by 6 taxi companies, namely Comfort Transport, Citycab, Trans-Cab, Smart Automobile, Premier Taxis and SMRT Taxis. These taxis provide comfortable, hassle-free travel at a very reasonable cost. They can be flagged down 24 hours a day on most roads, with well-marked taxi-stands available outside most major shopping centres and hotels.

All taxis in Singapore charge by the meter. The flag-down (inclusive of 1st km or less) starts from \$2.80 - \$3.20 and the subsequent charge is \$0.20 for every 330-385 metres thereafter or less up/after 10 km. There are also other surcharges hiring taxis during peak hours, mid-night, eve of public holidays, and trips starting from city area etc.



Buses

Public bus transport is provided by 2 operators, namely SBS Transit and SMRT. Both operators serve their own network of routes and bus interchanges throughout Singapore. The buses operate from 0530 hrs to 0000 hrs. The bus fares range from S\$0.80 to S\$1.50 for non air-conditioned buses and S\$0.90 to S\$1.80 for air-conditioned buses if you paying with cash. We also have a system of ez-link card that allows for cashless transactions on buses as well as on the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) and Light Rapid Transit (LRT). Bus fares for payment with ez-link cards ranges from S\$0.62 – S\$1.33 for non-air-conditioned buses, and S\$0.67 – S\$1.58 for air-conditioned buses. Details of bus routes and fares are displayed at bus stations. SBS Transit also has a wireless service that offers bus arrival time estimation on a real time basis through GPRS or SMS on mobile devices.

Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) and Light Rapid Transit (LRT)

Transport operator SMRT has clinched the "Best Passenger Experience" award at the inaugural Metro Awards 2008 in Copenhagen, Denmark⁵



The MRT is an air-conditioned passenger train service with stations island-wide with three main lines – the North-South line from Marina Bay to Jurong East, the East-West line from Changi Airport/Pasir Ris to Boon Lay, and the North-East line from Harbour Front to Punggol. The fares range from S\$ 0.90 to a maximum of S\$1.70 depending on the distance travelled. The trains arrive at the station at interval of between 2.5 minutes and 8 minutes from 0530 hrs until 0030 hrs.

You can also check for precise arrival/departure timings at respective MRT stations. The LRT system was added to the MRT network to commute within a particular estate (namely Sengkang, Punggol, Bukit Panjang). For more details of the MRT and LRT network, please refer to this website: <http://www.smrt.com.sg>.



Private Cars

Driving is on the left side of the road in Singapore. If you are not used to a right-hand drive vehicle, you should be extra careful. You will need a driving license to drive in Singapore. If you have an international driving license, you are required to apply for a Singapore driver's driving license and pass the basic driving theory.

In an effort to control traffic congestion on the island, Singapore has implemented a Vehicle Quota System, where the government determines the number of new vehicles allowed for registration through the release of Certificates of Entitlements (COEs). Interested vehicle purchasers are then required to bid for these COEs, before they are able to complete the purchase. For more details of car ownership, please refer to these website: <http://www.lta.gov.sg> or <http://www.onemotoring.com.sg>.

⁵ Metro Awards is part of MetroRail, an annual conference of the urban rail industry worldwide which met from 1 to 3 April this year. Source: Channel News Asia