

Transport for London

London Underground

Factsheet



>What is London Underground?

London Underground Limited was formed in 1985, but its history dates back to 1863 when the world's first underground railway opened in London.

Historically, it has played a vital role in positioning London as a world city and today it is fundamental for the smooth running of business and tourism in the Capital.

Also known as the Tube, the Underground is one of the world's most famous metro systems and is responsible for more than three and a half million passenger journeys a day. It has 11 lines covering 402km of route and serving 270 stations. In the peak hours, more than 500 trains are in operation.

>What does it do?

London Underground (LU) has been part of Transport for London (TfL) since July 2003, when it transferred from the Department for Transport.

Before the transfer, management of the Tube had been restructured, with the introduction of a Public Private Partnership (PPP) arrangement by the Government.

Under the PPP, LU is responsible for operating the Tube, which means running the trains, stations and control centres, ensuring it is safe and secure, and collecting and protecting fares revenue.

At the same time, infrastructure companies, or Infracos, are principally responsible for the maintenance and renewal of the Tube's infrastructure (see 'How does the PPP work?').

The Underground is now busier than ever before with nearly 1.1 billion passenger journeys made in 2008/9.

>How does the PPP work?

Despite TfL's concerns about the PPP structure, the Government adopted it as its preferred solution for investing in the Tube, before it was transferred to TfL.

Under the 30-year contracts, Infracos are responsible for the maintenance and renewal of LU's assets – its trains, stations, track, tunnels and signals.

Under the PPP contracts, the Infracos are contractually required to deliver a certain level



of daily asset performance and to upgrade the network to deliver improved capability in the longer term. The contracts made the Infracos subject to financial incentives or penalties based on their delivery against the performance levels set out in the contracts.

The Tube network was divided into three Infraco groupings. Tube Lines is the Infraco responsible for the Jubilee, Northern and Piccadilly lines. Metronet Rail was the company responsible for the remaining lines, which were split between two contracts:

- > BCV – which covers the Bakerloo, Central, Victoria and Waterloo & City lines
- > SSL (sub-surface lines) – covering the Circle, District, East London, Hammersmith & City and Metropolitan lines.

After a period in administration, the Metronet rail companies transferred to become part of TfL on 27 May 2008. Subsequently all Metronet staff transferred to LU in December 2008 and the work to maintain and upgrade the Tube continues under a new LU structure.

>Transforming the Tube

LU is undergoing a massive, multi-billion pound investment programme to transform the Tube.

A full Jubilee line upgrade, with the installation of a new state-of-the-art signalling system, is due to be completed by the end of 2009 which will enable a capacity increase of 33 per cent and cut journey times by 22 per cent.

A full upgrade of the Victoria line will be complete by 2012, with new trains and signalling. A new signalling system will also be introduced on the Northern line by 2012, increasing capacity by 20 per cent.

A major upgrade of the Circle, District, Hammersmith & City and Metropolitan lines is also taking place over the next decade. This will see the introduction of 191 new air-conditioned trains between 2010 and 2015, with a new signalling system to follow. The improvements will bring about faster, more frequent services along with improved reliability, customer information, accessibility and enhanced safety and security.

Upgrades of the Piccadilly and Bakerloo lines, including new trains and new signalling, will be in place by 2014 and 2022 respectively.



>Key facts

- > Every Tube train travels around 76,800 miles each year
- > The Tube carries around 28 million individual passengers annually
- > More than one billion passenger journeys are made each year
- > The Underground has been known as the Tube since 1890, when the first deep-level electric railway line was opened
- > The Underground name first appeared on stations in 1908
- > There are 412 escalators and 122 lifts to keep passengers moving throughout the system
- > LU's world-famous logo, the roundel – a red circle crossed by a horizontal blue bar – was designed by calligrapher Edward Johnston and first appeared in 1908
- > Waterloo station has the most escalators, with 23 plus two passenger conveyors
- > During the three-hour morning peak, London's busiest Tube station is Waterloo, with 51,100 people entering. The busiest station in terms of passengers each year is Victoria with 78 million