



PHOTOS BY BILL HEARD

## Siemens P-2000 Cars Due for Weekend Rollout on Metro Green Line



Above, Rail Supervisor Don Lautenbach monitors the computer-controlled automatic operation of a Siemens P-2000 car in a test run on the Metro Green Line. Below, the 76-seat P-2000 car features contoured, padded seats with seagreen upholstery.



By BILL HEARD, Editor

(April 5) Sleek new Siemens P-2000 rail cars go into limited revenue service on the Metro Green Line this weekend. Metro Rail operators have been conducting intensive tests with the cars this week to ready them for service.

Two double-ended cars will begin regularly scheduled runs Sunday during offpeak, daylight hours, according to Ralph de la Cruz, deputy executive officer, Rail Operations. Beginning Monday, April 9, two cars will be in revenue service while two others are being tested.

For passengers, the most noticeable features of the \$3.8 million cars will be the swept-back windshields, bright interiors and seagreen padded and contoured seats. One small feature also will catch the eye: mounted on stanchions beside each exit is a lighted button passengers can push to open the doors.

Undetectable to passengers aboard the P-2000 cars, but important to operators is the Automatic Train Operation (ATO) equipment.

### 'Easier to Operate'

"In automatic mode, this train is much, much smoother," said Rail Supervisor Don Lautenbach, who was testing a P-2000 Wednesday morning. "I think most of the operators will find them easier to operate in the automatic mode."

In automatic, the on-board computer accelerates, maintains track speed, decelerates and brakes the train to a halt alongside the platforms. The operator monitors the automatic operation, keeps a safety eye peeled, makes announcements and opens and closes the doors.

In manual operation, the operator controls the P-2000 car in much the same way as any other light-rail car is operated. However, some of the controls, including the

speedometer, are slightly different.

During practice runs on Wednesday, a test train operated smoothly in both manual and automatic modes. During the first week of operation, the P-2000s will be operated in the manual mode.

"As we've been operating cars in test mode on the Metro Green Line, a lot of passengers have been asking about them," said Transit Operations Chief Tom Conner. "They're looking forward to riding in them."

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