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TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2019

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\$2.38 plus tax at retail \$2.86 in outlying areas

TRUDEAU IN HOT SEAT



SEAN KILPATRICK/POOL VIA REUTERS

Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer didn't waste any time going after Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau in the federal leaders' English-language debate on Monday. Scheer accused Trudeau of being a phoney and a fraud. *NP1*

Transit future arrives with compliments, complaints

ANDREW DUFFY

OC Transpo officials expressed satisfaction Monday as the future of commuting in Ottawa began with little sign of the chaos and confusion that many had feared.

Although some riders complained about crowded trains, more transfers and longer commute times, the city's \$2.1-billion LRT passed a fundamental stress test.

"It's going to take a few days to get through the transition for everybody. It's running well overall," declared the city's general manager of transportation services, John Manconi.

OC Transpo implemented more than 100 route changes — affecting

240,000 daily customer trips — to take advantage of the city's shiny new LRT. Many routes were renumbered, eliminated or divided into two. OC Transpo also ended the parallel bus service that it provided during the Confederation Line's first three weeks of operation.

The changes largely eliminated the express buses that normally choke Albert and Slater streets.

It meant that, for the first time in a generation, downtown was not chock-a-block with buses at rush

Instead, commuters were routed to key transfer points — Tunney's Pasture station in the west, Blair station in the east — where they boarded the LRT for the final leg of their trip, which took them underneath the city's downtown streets. The process was reversed for the afternoon rush hour.

Both Tunney's Pasture and Blair stations managed the influx of new commuters without major incident Monday. Hurdman station received commuters arriving on buses from the southeast.

During the morning rush hour, commuters went smoothly from buses to trains at all three stations, although the platforms were sometimes crowded. OC Transpo had extra staff on hand to answer commuters' questions.

At Hurdman, a recorded message kept urging people to move farther down the platform "for safe and efficient boarding." Most commuters, however, ignored the request.

At Blair Station, commuter Eric Nadeau was testing a new route from his home near Tenth Line to downtown Ottawa.

SEE LRT ON A4

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KRYK

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