

# Joint study by NUS-ISS and LTA to look at factors that affect commuters' choices

**Singapore, 17 July 2012** – The Institute of Systems Science of the National University of Singapore (NUS-ISS) is conducting an in-depth research study into the decision choices of commuters taking public transport, with the support of the Land Transport Authority (LTA).

The study will investigate commuter behaviour taking into consideration their transport need, cost, time, convenience, habit, affect, information certainty, stress, social norms, and their attitudes toward environmental sustainability. The insights gleaned will be used to propose solutions aimed at improving commuters' overall public transport experience and the design of future transport solutions that will meet the changing needs of the public.

To be completed by September 2013, this one-year study is led by Principal Investigators Dr Virginia Cha, Dr Pallab Saha and Dr Guo Lei from NUS-ISS, and will contribute to the field of transport innovation by expanding upon research on mode-change decision making, the role of habituation in transport choices, and sunk cost psychology.

“Over the next two decades, Singapore will be exposed to and impacted by several economic, socio-psychological, physical, technological and demographic changes that could bring both risks and opportunities for sustainable growth in land transport. These changes will most likely be triggered by forces that will have lasting impact on the land transport landscape. A firm understanding of commuter behavior is imperative for effective planning and governance,” said Dr Pallab Saha.

These forces affecting the efficiency of public transport include: (1) Population Growth; (2) Ecosystem Decline; (3) Demographic Transition (Ageing); (4) Wealth; (5) Climate Change; (6) Energy & Fuel; (7) Nature of Work; (8) Travel Mode; (9) Spatial Organisation; and (10) Car Ownership versus Car Usage.

Dr Saha added, “These forces do not function in isolation from each other in predictable ways. They act as a complex and unpredictable system, feeding, amplifying or ameliorating the effects of others.”

The research study will address the following:

## **Decision Factors for Transport Choice**

1. How do commuters make their travel decisions and mode choices?
2. What factors influence such decisions and choices? In what ways are these factors interconnected?
3. What is the current perception about public transport? How do the perceptions impact the usage of public transport?
4. Which are the primary areas for improvements? How will these improvements enhance overall public transport experience?

## **Innovative Transport Solutions**

1. What innovative solutions can be designed and adopted to tackle factors inhibiting wider public transport usage?
2. How well do these solutions stack up in terms of commuter receptiveness? Which ones will commuters embrace and which ones will they reject? Why?

## **About National University of Singapore (NUS)**

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NUS has 16 faculties and schools across three campuses. Over 36,000 students from 100 countries enrich the community with their diverse social and cultural perspectives.

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**About NUS-ISS**

The Institute of Systems Science of the National University of Singapore (NUS-ISS) provides graduate education and professional development courses to develop infocomm leaders and drive business and organisation innovation. NUS-ISS is an appointed Continuing Education and Training (CET) Centre for the National Infocomm Competency Framework (NICF). It also conducts research, organises IT management and technology update seminars and provides consulting services to the industry.

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