



MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

The Hon. Zane DeSilva, JP MP
Minister of Tourism and Transport

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

SUBJECT

Public Bus Service

10 May 2019

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Public Transportation (DPT) implemented a new fifty-bus schedule on 18 March 2019 to provide a reduced public bus service that could be reliably met with the available buses and no cancellations. However, the frequency and capacity of the new schedule was insufficient to meet the demands of our commuters, visitors and students. Additionally, there were challenges with the rest times between some trips, presenting health and safety concerns for bus operators and the traveling public. As a result, it was decided to reinstate the previous schedule effective 29 April 2019.

The 2019 bus schedule was closely monitored over a period of six weeks, consolidating feedback from bus operators and the public. The decision to revert to the former schedule was not taken lightly, but was the only recourse to address the concerns of our operators and passengers.

Mr. Speaker, implementing the 2019 bus schedule was a learning curve, and is an advancement to build on as we move forward. The Ministry, Unions, and DPT have fostered stronger working relations, demonstrated in part by our ability to agree the definition of night work and collectively develop and implement work rosters. Once implemented, we consulted on the performance of the new schedule

and decisions were made in the best interest of the public and our employees.

Mr. Speaker, this Government is committed to delivering a quality public bus service. As such, replenishing the bus fleet remains a priority for DPT.

Over the past year the average in service bus count has increased from 50 buses, up to 65 buses. This was accomplished through a combination of new bus purchases, mid-life refits and out of service repairs. We have taken delivery of six new buses in the past year, with a further six buses arriving between June and September 2019.

In addition, DPT has recently concluded a Request for Information (RFI) for new buses, and is in the process of preparing a Request for Proposal (RFP). We are taking this opportunity to review the bus market and available vehicle types that meet Bermuda's needs, as well as international public transportation standards. This includes consideration for sustainability and the environment, appropriately sized buses, accessibility, onboard features, and total cost of ownership. The information gathered during the RFI process is encouraging and we are confident that there are solutions that can replenish the bus fleet in a timely manner, and improve the bus service.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to new buses, this Government is also committed to investing in the people and systems needed to enhance Bermuda's public transportation system. We are in the process of recruiting for a variety of posts including vehicle technicians, operators and support staff.

Thank you, **Mr. Speaker**.