



Dr Chris Burns

MINISTER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORT

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GOVT BOOSTS SAFETY ON PUBLIC BUS NETWORK

The Government has unveiled a \$330,000 package to improve safety and security on Darwin's public bus network.

Infrastructure and Transport Minister Dr Chris Burns said the focus of the package – which includes \$80,000 already allocated to security - is to provide a physical security presence at bus interchanges and on the bus network.

“As part of the package, there will now be four dedicated security officers looking after security on the network and at the interchanges,” Dr Burns said.

“These staff will be appointed as inspectors under the *Commercial Passenger (Road) Transport Act*, and will have statutory powers to demand the removal of troublesome passengers from buses, or prohibit them from boarding, as well as to issue infringement notices.”

Dr Burns said the inspectors will target known “hot spots” on the bus network, and will be able to provide a rapid response should an incident occur. Other elements of the package include:

- Uniformed police from the Crime Reduction Units in Darwin, Casuarina and Palmerston to travel on the bus network on a targeted basis;
- Enhanced communication and ongoing liaison between Darwinbus Network and Police;
- Drivers to be provided with training in conflict resolution;
- Drivers to be included with emergency workers and “good Samaritans” in legislation which aims to protect people from assault while they are trying to provide assistance to the public.

Dr Burns said the safety package resulted from the Bus Security Working Group formed in September last year as part of the Martin Government's election commitment to examine safety and security on the Darwinbus Network following a number of assaults on bus drivers.

The working group included representatives from bus drivers, the Transport Workers Union, bus contractors Buslink and DBS, NT Police, NT Worksafe, and the Department of Planning and Infrastructure.

Dr Burns thanked members of the working group for their input, and said he looked forward to continuing to work closely with all parties to enhance security on the bus network.

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