



Ministerial Statement to the House of Assembly

Bus Service Disruption

By

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Minister of Tourism Development and Transport

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Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to advise and update this Honorable House and members of the Public on the recent schedule interruptions with the public bus services.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Public Transport currently has ten (10) bus operators who are out on long term sick leave and the service has been further impacted by operators out sick during this cold and flu season. In addition, the department has implemented a ban on overtime and the combination of these factors is impacting the scheduling of bus runs.

Mr. Speaker, there has been some delays of certain bus runs as well as some cancellations as a result of the current situation at the Department of Public Transportation, however, I must commend the DPT staff and especially the bus operators for performing very well under these circumstances. The department has worked diligently to keep service disruptions to a minimum. For clarity there are 196 scheduled bus runs each week day until noon, and the same in the afternoon for a total of 392 bus runs per week day. Saturdays and Sundays have less bus runs. Yesterday there were 10 operators out sick in addition to the 10 that are out on long term sickness, that resulted in approximately 40 cancelled runs which equates to roughly 10% of the total runs.

Mr. Speaker, admittedly this is not ideal but I am pleased to say that the DPT staff and bus operators are working together to ensure that the core commuter routes and services are provided to minimize the impact of disruptions to the travelling public that rely on the bus service. Additionally, the DPT is advising the public daily of bus cancellations via the media as well as on the Government of Bermuda web-site home page.

Mr. Speaker, representatives from the Ministry of Tourism Development and Transportation and the Bermuda Industrial Union have met with the primary objective of the meeting to collectively address the current shortage of bus-operators, due to illnesses and the impact the shortage is having on the bus service. The attendees included myself, the Permanent Secretary, the BIU President who initiated the meeting along with other senior ministry and BIU officers.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report that the meeting was very productive and some very good practical solutions were presented and discussed and we are confident that this issue will be resolved soonest, as the Ministry and the BIU continue to work through this process together.

Mr. Speaker, the DPT will continue to keep the public updated on

service levels and they sincerely appreciate the public's patience and understanding at this time. I will continue to keep members fully apprised of this situation.

THANK YOU