RURAL SCHOOL BUSES GET SEAT BELTS

The Northern Territory Government has boosted safety for rural students by putting seat belts on their school buses.

Transport Minister Delia Lawrie said 21 new buses will help meet the growing transport demands with the introduction of middle schools. All of the new buses are fitted with seat belts.

“The Territory Government has invested an additional $3.6 million for bus services for the 2008 school year,” she said.

“These school buses are the first in the Territory to be manufactured with seat belts to increase safety for students that use them.

“The new buses with seat belts will benefit up to 1,500 students and operate on higher risk routes located in the Darwin rural area and one route that travels from Pine Creek to Katherine for school.

“Higher risk routes have been determined following a National Risk Assessment model – these are buses that travel at longer distances and at higher speeds.

“Bus services are vital in rural area to ensure students get to school and the overwhelming feedback from parents and the schools is they want seat belts.

“Although we have not recorded any major accidents with our school routes, we can never be complacent about ensuring the safety of our kids and we know seat belts save lives.

“We will look to expand the number of buses with seat belts to include more schools across the Territory,” Ms Lawrie said.

Students from Middle Point Primary, Berry Springs Primary, Humpty Doo Primary, Bees Creek Primary, Taminmin High, St Francis of Assisi and Litchfield Christian School as well as Katherine High School, St Josephs College and Clyde Fenton School will be travelling on the new buses when they return to school later this month.

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