

GPS:

Minister wants buses to get GPS, offer personal insurance.

09/02/2002

Bangkok Post

(C) 2002

Amornrat Mahitthirook

Deputy Transport Minister Nikorn Chamnong wants interprovincial buses to be equipped with global positioning systems and offer individual passenger insurance.

GPS would allow police and employers to monitor bus movements.

It would also alert rescue teams immediately to the scene of an accident.

The Transport Co, the interprovincial bus state enterprise, is already installing black boxes on buses and Mr Nikorn suggested the upgrade should include GPS later this year.

The state enterprise should also insure passengers on a seat-by-seat basis, he said.

Current insurance was done on a collective basis, which often meant only small payouts.

Seat-by-seat insurance would offer compensation of up to 120,000 baht a person, along with 80,000 baht third-party insurance, he said.

Transport Co managing director Thawatchai Phaoluangthong said the state enterprise would consider the proposals. A study would determine whether bus operators or passengers should pay for seat-by-seat insurance. If passengers were to foot the bill, the premium would be added to ticket prices.

The Transport Co board met yesterday to discuss Mr Nikorn's ideas. According to a source, the board is not willing to scrap the black box plan because the agency wants to monitor drivers. Black boxes tell operators if drivers are working too long and how well they drove.