



THE SIGNAL

June 2011

The School Bus Motto: "A B C - Always Be Careful"

In This Issue . . .

Behind The Scene	1
School Bus Orders	2
Reminder - Ordering School Bus Inspection Log Books	2
Winter Tire Testing on MFAV's	2
Do You Have What It Takes?	2
2011 School Bus Maintenance Seminar	3
Wheelchair Securement Update	4
Guidelines To Procedures Following a School Bus Collision	5
Campbell's Rambles	7



Behind The Scene . . .

by Chris Hagen, Senior Field Officer, Pupil Transportation Unit

It's that time of the year where everyone looks forward to summer - either to enjoy some well-deserved "R&R", or because we're marking the end of one school year and starting the process of preparing for another. By all accounts the 2010/11 school year has been a very successful and rewarding one. Once again, school divisions have transported students safely and efficiently. In stating this, I mean that students have done what is expected of them while being transported, technicians have kept fleets operating, drivers have performed their duties well, administrators have ensured all aspects of the operation provided continuous service, and school division policies and procedures have worked well for the people they serve. The common thread here is all of the people who make up the school bus transportation industry. Its greatest resource is always its people.

In no particular order, we know that many people are "behind the scene" when it comes to providing transportation. Regardless of job title, school divisions have professionals working in their transportation departments who make the communication and clerical work happen day in and day out. Many of them perform roles that directly coincide with a transportation supervisor's ability to oversee the operation. Although many of the people outside the school division office may not have occasion to meet or speak with these invaluable people, it is with their commitment and contributions that our systems work and work as well as they do.

Students confidently ride school buses, knowledgeable of safety rules and the expectations placed on them while riding the bus.

Continued on Page 6 . . .

SCHOOL BUS ORDERS

2010 Order - Wrap-Up

As final information regarding the 2010 school bus order, a total of 39 International IC units (32 standard and 7 wheelchair) were ordered by 13 divisions. PTU's inspection of the buses began September 7 and was completed October 28, 2010.

2011 Order

Twenty-four school divisions have agreed to participate in the 2011 school bus tender process.

The tender was awarded to two suppliers: International (Maxim Truck & Trailer) will supply 34, 46, & 52 passenger IC buses, and Thomas (Thomas Bus Manitoba) will supply 64, 70, & 76 passenger Saf-T-Liner C2 buses and all wheelchair units.

PTU is currently processing and forwarding orders to suppliers. Suppliers, in turn, are arranging to have the buses built and delivered quickly to Winnipeg to ensure expedited delivery to school divisions.

REMINDER - ORDERING SCHOOL BUS INSPECTION LOG BOOKS

PTU has received a number of calls from school divisions requesting School Bus Inspection Log Books. As a reminder, PTU no longer handles distribution of the log book. They can be purchased from the Manitoba Text Book Bureau toll free at 1-866-771-6822; by fax at 204-483-5041; or through the MTBB website at <http://www.mtbb.mb.ca/catalogue/en/>

The log books are bundled in packages of 10 and cost \$22.90 plus GST, shipping, and handling. Quote stock number 83901.

WINTER TIRE TESTING ON MULTI-FUNCTION ACTIVITY VEHICLES (MFAV)

Transport Canada has conducted tire testing on MFAV's. The purpose of the tests was to identify the safety configuration of tires on MFAV's for winter highway driving. Transport Canada's findings can be found at:

<http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/roadsafety/safevehicles-busesvans-winter-tire-testing-1034.htm>

DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES?

by Rickey Penner, Field Officer, Pupil Transportation Unit

The school bus industry has undergone major changes in the last decade. We have seen major shifts for emission controls on diesel engines. In 2004 and 2007 we were introduced to a closed crankcase system and DPF into the exhaust system. Jump ahead three years to 2010 and emission standards became more stringent.

With technology changing so rapidly, the school bus tech must be able to stay abreast of it. Training on the latest information is required to ensure the bus tech understands how to perform repairs safely and efficiently. Gone are the days of guesswork. You need to approach each concern on an individual basis and have a good understanding of how school bus systems work. Failing to use a process for diagnostics can lead to unnecessary costs and time.

If your division is providing you with training opportunities, take advantage of them! Both you and the division will benefit from the fact that a successfully repaired bus is a safe bus!

2011 SCHOOL BUS MAINTENANCE SEMINAR

This year's seminar held March 29-30 in Winnipeg and March 31-April 1 in Brandon, attracted 55 and 40 participants respectively (an increase from the 49 and 33 participants in 2010). Presenters included Cummins Engines; International; Manitoba Public Insurance - Vehicle Standards; Thomas Built Buses; Western Turbo; and the Pupil Transportation Unit. Click on the [Brandon](#) and [Winnipeg](#) seminar evaluation results to view participants' feedback.

A variety of information has been assembled in follow-up to issues raised at the open forum sessions. A brief description and links to additional information is presented below.

[Open Forum Discussions](#)

Lists concerns presented by school bus technicians. PTU will continue to work with school bus manufacturers on these items.

[C7 Ground Stud](#)

Information on the importance of good ground on Caterpillar engines.

[C7S Nozzle Cleaner](#)

Information on 2007 emission Caterpillar engines.

[Coolant Management Tool](#)

A must-have tool to ensure the cooling system is free of air pockets that can ruin the EGR cooler.

[K-1280](#)

Information on a rear axle removal tool.

[MICO 691 Lock System](#)

Information on the brake interlock on Blue Bird Vision school buses.

[Wire-By-Wire Troubleshooting](#)

Diagnostic procedure for the MICO brake system on Blue Bird Vision school buses.

[TSI IC Bus Pin Connector 31](#)

A service bulletin regarding corrosion at connector 31.

WHEELCHAIR SECUREMENT UPDATE

Q'Straint Training

In November 2010, Rick Penner from PTU attended Q'Straint training in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The opportunity allowed him to meet individuals from across Canada and the U.S. involved in the school bus transportation industry, and to attend a plant tour to observe how Q'Straint products are made and tested. The course entailed an intense lecture and hands-on format focusing on the safe transport of special needs students on wheelchair buses. Participants worked with different types of wheelchairs and gained an understanding of the importance of securing the wheelchair in its proper securement points, as well as the proper angles retractor belts must be at to attain full protection in the event of a school bus crash.

There are many combinations a school division must consider when securing a wheelchair student safely on the bus. As a result of the training, PTU now has a certified instructor trainer who can advise on wheelchair securement. If a situation arises in which you are unsure how to secure a student safely, do not hesitate to contact Rick at 204-945-4676. It is vital that transportation supervisors and school bus drivers receive the proper training and information necessary to transport special needs students by the safest means possible.

Merger

On November 9, 2010 Q'Straint and Sure-Lok wheelchair securement companies announced a merger creating a combined company better equipped to provide wheelchair securement systems. At this time, the products of both companies are still available. For additional information, go to their respective websites: www.qstraint.com and www.sure-lok.com

Wheelchair Securement Information

The University of Michigan and collaborating wheelchair securement suppliers undertake crash testing to ensure that wheelchair securement products meet specifications. To view the *Ride Safe* document they have produced, [click here](#). It contains a variety of information pertaining to the safe transport of wheelchair-bound passengers, including:

1. Starting with the right equipment;
2. Securing the wheelchair;
3. Protecting the wheelchair rider;
4. Organizations and manufacturers associated with wheelchair transport; and
5. A glossary of terms



Guidelines to Procedures Following a School Bus Collision

(At the February 2011 MASBO Conference, RCMP Constable Bob Dowd gave a presentation on Accident Investigation Methods and Evidence Preservation. Outlined below is a portion of his presentation outlining steps to follow in the event of a school bus accident.)

Before the Trip Begins

- Is the bus mechanically sound?
- Is the driver trained in first aid and defensive driving?
- Does the bus driver know what he/she needs to know about the students? Are there any special needs kids aboard?

On the Road

- Check for blind spots by leaning forward and backward. If two vehicles are approaching an intersection and one or both are in a blind spot, the situation will not change if the speeds do not change. Only by leaning back and forth can one be sure the blind spot is clear.
- Keep a small notebook in the bus. This can be very handy when one is shook up and having trouble concentrating.

After the Collision

- Drivers should check themselves and make sure they can function properly. Are they bleeding? If so, it will need to be brought under control. If shock is starting, know how to combat it.
- Check the students and know which ones to deal with first.
- Can they stay on the bus? Be aware of fire. If they are taken off the bus, know how many are there and do not lose sight of any of them.
- Watch for other traffic. Do not get run over by an incoming vehicle. Use other people to watch for this, perhaps even some of the older kids.
- Do not move the seriously injured unless necessary.
- Always guard the students. A predator may pretend to help and then take one of the children when no one is watching.
- If possible, check on the occupants of the other vehicle, but not if it puts the students at risk.
- If a camera is available, use it.
- Note weather and road conditions. They can change before the reconstructionist arrives (e.g. the sun may go down or the road may dry up.)
- Note who was driving the other vehicle.
- Do not move any evidence unless necessary, such as, to assist the emergency workers.
- Note any witnesses and obtain names and phone numbers if possible.
- Mark the beginning of skid marks or the location of the "area of impact" if possible.
- After most collisions, leave the bus where it is. Only move it after the police have given permission to do so.
- Check with a supervisor on whether or not the bus can continue. Just because the police have said it can continue down the road does not mean it is safe to do so.
- Check policy on how to deal with parents at the scene. Trying to physically stop a parent from going to their child could get someone hurt or killed.
- Always know policy.

THE STUDENTS ARE ALWAYS PRIORITY.

Behind The Scene (cont'd) ...

Many of them will develop a positive relationship with the school bus driver. Students may receive ridership training in the classroom, but that knowledge is further enhanced by the leadership and guidance of the school bus driver. The education experience really does begin on the school bus.

Parents willingly place their students on school buses, secure in the knowledge that the system is a responsible and safe one. Every day they can count on the buses being on time at the designated pick-up location to get “their kids safely to school” and safely to and from the occasional excursion.

A person doesn't just wake up one morning with a craving to drive a school bus, and then go out and immediately do it. It takes considerable time to hire and train a school bus driver. And, few newly hired drivers start out driving a regular route in an area they are familiar with, transporting hand-picked passengers, in ideal weather, and driving the bus of their choice. The job doesn't have an attractive description that lures wan-a-bees clambering to become “scholar haulers”. With that said, school divisions find ways of attracting people interested in being school bus drivers and they ultimately stay in the industry for long periods of time. In meeting so many school bus drivers around the province, we hear time after time how drivers find the role rewarding and that they have come to consider the passengers as their own children or family. Many school bus drivers relate positive experiences and memories when we have opportunity to meet.

Technicians manning the garages and answering road calls have kept the buses rolling for another year of uninterrupted student service. Despite ever-changing technology, failed parts, breakdowns, and varieties of makes and models, you do not hear that routes have been cancelled because school buses were unavailable. These people work with what they have, in the conditions with which they are presented, and make every effort to ensure the vehicles are safe and as problem-free as possible.

Transportation supervisors, regardless of their official title, have worked year round to ensure the entire process of transporting students safely happens each and every day. These roles don't come with dictated time schedules, and almost always include “other duties as assigned” in the job descriptions. Throughout the year these people oversee all aspects of operating a fleet of school buses on a large number of routes, in lots of different conditions. They must constantly adapt to address problems encountered from any and all situations that arise.

All the people involved in school bus transportation have done their part to ensure the system operates smoothly, regularly, safely, and efficiently. All the roles have been fulfilled despite adverse weather and road conditions, this year's exceptional flooding, major breakdowns, staff shortages, illnesses, and the few individuals discontented with aspects of service. We have had the usual number of incidents and accidents reported, but school bus transportation still remains the safest way for students to get to school.

On behalf of the Department, I would like to thank each and every one of you for the effort and commitment you bring to the efficient student transportation process in Manitoba. Because of you, the entire system operates exceptionally well, putting Manitoba in the forefront of student transportation.

With the summer break to busing just around the corner, we hope you have an opportunity to enjoy the off-season and look forward to working together with you in the 2011/12 school year.

Campbell's Rambles

by Sandy Campbell, Field Officer, Pupil Transportation Unit

PTU has been performing transportation system reviews in Manitoba school divisions for a number of years. A recurring concern is the lack of adequate supervision of students while they are boarding or getting off the school bus at the school.

THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS ACT (C.C.S.M. c. P250) Regulation 465/88R School Buses Regulation

Loading and unloading

14(1) Subject to the approval of the school board, the principal of the school shall

- (a) prepare a plan for loading and unloading the school bus;
- (b) designate a loading and unloading zone on or adjacent to the school grounds; and
- (c) supervise or assign a responsible person to supervise the loading and unloading of the school bus.

While most school divisions have some schools that provide “active” supervision in these areas, **all** school divisions reviewed to date have some schools that do not.

Here is a multiple-choice question (and yes, we see these situations regularly at the divisions we visit):

What is considered adequate supervision of students while they are getting onto or off of the school bus?

- (a) Supervisor reading a book and paying no attention to students who are running in and out from behind the parked school buses
- (b) Supervisor facing away from the bus loading area, entertaining students who have already arrived at the school
- (c) Supervisor standing 30 feet (or more) away from the loading area, peering out at the students from behind the corner of the school they are using for shelter from the wind
- (d) Supervisor standing inside the school where it's warm, behind a set of double doors, holding a travel mug and greeting students as they enter the school
- (e) None of the above

Why is it critical for the supervising adult (designated teacher or someone else) to be in the vicinity of the school bus loading area? Simply put: It takes but a second or two for a student to fall (or be pushed) under a bus while it is pulling away from the school. If the supervisor is not alert, or is inside the school, or is 30 feet away, how can they alert the driver? By shouting or hitting the side of the bus? **NOT IF THEY ARE NOT IN POSITION!**

Also, several schools when reviewed, have no supervisor in attendance whatsoever. In these cases, PTU officers will generally pay a visit to the school's office and ask if someone is assigned to supervise the procedure. While some will admit that there is no supervision schedule, many more will respond, “Yes, they should be out there.” But, where are they? The potential for injury or fatality should be enough to ensure that this responsibility is taken seriously.