



With the aim of preventing road accidents

School transport: objective of the new traffic surveillance campaign

- The use of seat belts in buses reduces fatal injuries by 90%
- Since October 2007 buses without restraint systems installed have not been granted registration
- Until 15 October, 28 school buses have been involved in accidents in which 22 people have been slightly injured

November 14th, 2011. From today and until Friday 18 November, coaches engaged in school transport will be under surveillance by officers of the Traffic Division of the Civil Guard as part of the road safety campaigns conducted annually by the Directorate-General for Traffic with the aim of preventing accidents in this type of transport.

During the four-day campaign, officers will intensify controls, checking that the authorisations and documents that these vehicles must have are correct for providing the service. In addition, officers will verify that the technical conditions and safety elements in the vehicle are those required by the regulations, and also the special requirements that the driver has to fulfil, such as the driving licence or the driving and rest times.

Last year 54 school buses were involved in accidents with casualties, in which 44 people were injured (6 drivers and 38 passengers). Until 15 October this year 28 school buses have been involved in accidents with casualties, in which 22 people were injured (3 drivers and 19 passengers).



Safety is the top priority in this type of transport and the annual accident figures reflect that this is a safe sector, particularly when taking the number of fatalities per passenger-kilometre travelled as standard of comparison.

Inappropriate speed and distractions are the main causes of the accidents in which these types of vehicles are involved.

In addition, 90% of the accidents that take place during school transport occur when boarding or alighting or immediately before. To prevent this type of accident, parents are recommended to respect bus stops, to arrive with enough time, not to wait for their children on the other side of the road.

Many of these accidents are collisions caused by child, school transport driver or parent distractions.

ATTENTION TO SEAT BELT

Particular attention will be paid to the use of seat belts in coaches when fitted. According to the Spanish Passenger Transport Business Federation (Asintra) only two out of five coaches providing school transport (38%) have seat belts installed.

The European Union issued a Community Directive, which Spain has transposed into its legal system, which provides that from October 2007 registration shall be refused to any buses without restraint systems installed.

According to several studies, the use of a safety system in buses would reduce fatal injuries by 90% in the event of a head-on collision or roll-over accident, as it prevents passengers (adults or children) being thrown out and lessens the impacts on chest, abdomen and legs when it is properly fastened.

Of the 22 recorded slight injuries this year in accidents in which a school bus was involved, 7 were not wearing seat belts.

DGT's interest in children seated properly when travelling and using a seat belt or a child-restraint system suitable for their weight, size and age is such that one of the monitoring indicators of the basic guidelines for the Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020, adopted in February this year by the Council of Ministers, is that there may be no child fatalities unrestrained.



WHAT THE REGULATIONS SAY ABOUT SCHOOL TRANSPORT:

The School Bus	Age	No more than 16 years, (ten if not previously engaged in this activity).
	Windows	No more than the upper third shall be opened
	Seats	First row seats with protective partition. Seats for disabled passengers available.
	Floor	Slip-resistant surface. Handholds adjacent to doors and brightly coloured steps.
	Tachograph	Compulsory. And so is the speed limiter.
	Seat belts	All buses constructed as from 2006 must have them fitted.
	School Transport Plate	At the front and rear.
	Doors	Easily opened from inside and from outside. Their mechanism of access shall be protected.
	Also	Two fire extinguishers, hammers and first-aid kit.
The Driver	Driving licences	Holder of driving licence of category D. They shall not have any records in the Register of Traffic Offenders.
The Journey	Time	No more than one hour per journey.
	Route and stopping points	Fixed and authorised in advance.
	Additional insurance	Unlimited liability policy.
	Speed	At 10km/h below the speed set for buses or coaches on each road.
The Passengers	Accompanying person	Compulsory if more than half of the children are under 12 years of age. He/She must ensure their safety during the journey, boarding and alighting.
	Seats	A seat per child. All seated.
	Seat belts	Compulsory use of seat belts if fitted. In seats facing gangway under-16s must always wear a seat belt.

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SCHOOL PATHS

While 60% of the journeys to school by children under 14 years of age on weekdays are covered on foot (according to the Movilia survey by the Ministry of Public Works), 70% primary schoolchildren never go alone to school (Attitudes 2009).

For this reason, and to support sustainable mobility from a very young age, DGT in collaboration with the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces will promote and encourage safe school paths. This involves selecting basic outward and return routes to and from school through the revision of the elements that make up urban mobility in the context of walking, cycling or public transport, with the private car being left to a subsidiary use in this type of journeys.
