

**Parliament: School Bus Owners Given Until 2013 To Replace 30-year Old Buses**  
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KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 8 (Bernama) -- The grace period for school bus operators to replace their buses that are more than 30 years old has been extended to 2013, the Dewan Negara was told Thursday.

Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Ahmad Maslan said the Land Public Transport Commission (SPAD) would approve the licences of operators whose buses are 30 years old, until 2012, while an extension of another would be given to uncompleted cases.

"The additional time will give bus operators more time to replace their buses. They must make the replacement within the grace period," he said when answering a question from Senator Abdul Aziz Tunku Ibrahim who wanted to know the initiative taken by SPAD to ease the burden of school bus operators following the government's decision to not issue permits for buses that are more than 30 years old.

According to Ahmad, SPAD has always given top most priority to safety aspects when deciding on policies involving public transport, especially school buses.

As such, all commercial vehicles are required to undergo compulsory PUSPAKOM inspection to ensure the roadworthiness of such vehicles so as to ensure the safety of the public and school children.

"The decision to restrict the use of commercial vehicles for only a period of 30 years was made after taking into account factors involving the economic status of school bus operators who do not make huge profits," he said.

Ahmad said as of Nov 30, 18,156 school bus licences were registered and from the total, 1,916 were buses that were more than 30 years old.

"So, the statement claiming that 60 percent of the 25,000 school bus operators will be affected by the decision was not true," he said.

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