

Hydrogen Fuel Cell Bus Trial To Cost \$10 M



One of the three hydrogen buses being trialled in Perth, at a total cost of about \$10 million, at Kings Park. The buses have covered more than 160,000 km and carried more than 200,000 passengers since the trial began in 2004. Picture courtesy: WA Department of Planning and Infrastructure.

A ground-breaking international hydrogen fuel cell bus trial being held in Perth over the past two years has been extended for a further 12 months to 'help bed down the technology', according to Western Australian Planning and Infrastructure Minister, Alannah MacTiernan.

MacTiernan said the total cost of the project, involving three buses, will be about \$10 million after an additional \$1.75 million was provided to extend the trial into next year. "The trial will help bring about the commercial production of these buses - hopefully by 2010", she said.

The buses have so far covered more than 160,000 km and carried more than 200,000 passengers since the trial began in 2004, and will continue to run on normal Transperth service routes. The project was part of the state government's commitment to reduce the state's oil dependence and deliver a green public transport system fuelled by renewable energy.

"Hydrogen fuel cell buses emit no greenhouse gases or smog-creating emissions at the tail-pipe and are predicted to be cheaper in the long-term to maintain and operate than internal combustion engines", MacTiernan

said. "In only two years, these three buses have prevented 272 t of greenhouse gas emissions." Perth remains the only city in the southern hemisphere to participate in the international trial. Eight other cities - Hamburg, Luxembourg, Stockholm, London, Barcelona, Amsterdam, Reykjavik and Madrid - are also continuing the trial, which Beijing has now joined.

MacTiernan said the federal government, through the Department of Environment and Heritage, had provided \$350,000 towards the trial extension, and negotiations were under way to increase this contribution to \$700,000. ■