

# LTFRB to require GPS in all public buses

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MANILA, Philippines - The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) will soon require all public utility buses (PUBs) nationwide to install global positioning system (GPS) devices that would locate and set speed limits while on the road.

In line with this, the board held a consultative meeting with GPS providers and suppliers to discuss the technical parameters and requirements of the device.

The board also briefed them on how to acquire accreditation to supply the GPS to bus operators.

“Ang paglalagay ng GPS sa mga pampublikong bus ay isang paraan para madaling malaman kung ang isang bus ay wala sa tamang ruta ng ayon sa kanilang prangkisa,” LTFRB Chair Winston Ginez said.

“The (GPS) system would also enable the board to strictly impose the speed limits on buses and thereby provide a safe travel for our commuters,” he added.

All GPS devices must comply with the data format and programming language required by the board.

“Bus operators will only be allowed to purchase and install GPS devices from supplier accredited by the Board,” Ginez said.

To get accreditation, GPS providers must update the firmware of their devices in order to send GPRS (General Packet Radio Service) data to the server via transmission control protocol on a pre-defined interval with the correct format.

GPRS is a radio technology for GSM networks that adds packet-switching protocols, provides instant connection and shorter set-up time for ISP connections.

The GPS device must also be set and can be remotely configured via GSM/GPRS. The device must also have technical features to handle GPS/GSM signal loss or erratic readings.

Upon purchase of GPS device from accredited supplier, the bus operator must bring the device together with their Land Transportation Office official receipt/certificate of registration of the vehicle (where the device will be installed) to LTFRB for registration and verification of the system.

The Board will provide a software application to enroll each device with the corresponding details of the bus where it will be installed.

The software application will be part of the GPS in sending and replying SMS queries to inquire on the unique ID assigned using a defined command to verify if the ID inputted on the device is correct. This would also validate if the SIM card number encoded is correct.

To ensure that the GPS installed is functioning properly, the device will be subject to a test run upon installation.

The data sending capability of the device will be checked. During the test run, a reference GPS device approved by LTFRB will be on the bus.

Both devices will send data to the server and these will be plotted and compared to check the accuracy of the device under test.

Accredited provider/suppliers are also required to have their GPS equipped with an LED-based On Screen Display (OSD) to show the actual speed of the bus during the operations and other important details.

“With this display apparatus device, even the passengers will be involved in the monitoring the speed of the bus,” Ginez added.

The Board said the allowable maximum speed limit is 60 kilometer per hour for Metro Manila buses and 90 kph for provincial buses.