

ESTIMATES OF PRODUCTIVITY OF PRIVATE AND GOVERNMENT BUSES

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In surveying private buses, owners are, as expected reticent about giving informative responses. To obtain a picture of bus performance, or average vehicle utilisation, therefore, private bus crews in Kandy & Matara were asked 2 questions at different points in a questionnaire. One related to trip distance and number of trips per day and another to crews estimates of kilometers per day. The responses were remarkably consistent for both cities, with short distance trips aggregating only 62 km per bus per day, rising as trip distance increased to 280 km per bus per day, with an average of 164 km for Kandy and 180 km for Matara. The crew estimates were 150 km for Kandy and 167 km for Matara. These results are consistent with generally observed phenomena that private buses tarry for long periods at bus terminals and therefore cannot expect to attain the high level of Transport Board bus utilisation. As with private buses, the average Board bus performance masks a range depending on trip distance among other factors. Board bus productivity has declined from 253 km per bus per day in 1969 to 235 km in 1982 and 217 km in 1986 but has slightly improved to 220 km in the first 4 months of 1987.