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Traffic police urges MTC to revise running time of buses

CHENNAI: Seeking cooperation from the Metropolitan Transport Corporation (MTC) to minimise accidents involving buses, traffic police officials in the city have urged the corporation to revise the running time of buses to ensure that drivers do not [resort](#) to overspeeding or rash driving to complete trips in time.

While 75 persons lost their lives in accidents involving MTC buses till July this year (145 died in 2008), many traffic police officials say it is high time that the MTC management checks to see whether the running time allotted to its services is adequate and revise it, if necessary.

"Several times, when we inquire with MTC drivers who cause accidents, they say they had to rush because as they could not complete [trips](#) in time due to various reasons: increasing vehicle population, traffic congestion, large number of signals, a number of passengers getting in and out at every bus stop. It is for the MTC to ensure that drivers are given sufficient time to complete the stipulated number of trips," says a senior traffic police official in north Chennai.

Additional commissioner of police (traffic) Md Shakeel Akhter says he will write to MTC, asking it to be practical in fixing the running time for buses. "We cannot tell MTC what to do. It is

only our suggestion, to ensure that the running time of services on all routes is sufficient," Akhter told The Times of India.

Many MTC drivers say they drive an average distance of 120 km to 150 km per shift. "The running time for most of the services has not been revised for more than a decade. When more than 800 new vehicles are added to the city roads everyday, with road space remaining the same, more traffic signals are coming up. Reaching the [destination](#) in time is not an easy task for us," says a driver in Broadway.

MTC officials say they have been revising the running time wherever necessary and that drivers are exaggerating the issue. "What the drivers say is not true. They blame the management only to shield their faults. In fact, most of the services arrive at the depot 10 to 15 minutes prior to the scheduled time. About 3,000 of our 8,000 drivers have an accident-free record. We have introduced over 2,000 new buses in the past two years; it has reduced driving difficulty in many ways. Reducing running time in many cases will bring down the number of trips, which will in turn affect passengers," says an MTC official.