

There are 120 private bus routes in the city. Over a period of several years, beginning in 1988, the government forced a move to larger vehicles by renewing licences on a two-for-one basis. A large fleet of ten-passenger Volkswagen Combis was replaced by approximately 40,000 minibuses (10 to 14 passengers). In the early 1990s, the *DDF* implemented a policy of replacing the minibuses with mini-buses (15 to 24 passengers). This policy was motivated by safety, pollution and traffic considerations. By early 1994, most of the minibuses had been replaced, leaving a fleet of approximately 15,000 mini-buses and a few thousand minibuses. Nonetheless, there are reports of much larger numbers of small buses, including some remaining Combis. Some observers suggest that there are a large number of unregistered operators.

The owner-operators of private buses often perform their own maintenance or have it done at small garages. In most cases, drivers collect fares according to a zone system, and will make change. Fares are set by the *Dirección General de Transportes Urbanos*, Management of Urban Transportation. Scheduling is done manually on a line-by-line basis.

There is presently considerable debate in Mexico City concerning the plan to replace the minibuses with even larger vehicles. The government would like to replace the entire fleet with buses with a capacity of 40 seated passengers or more, during the six-year term of the federal government, which began in December 1994. Plans are to begin implementing this policy with a limited licence renewal program beginning in June 1995.

The objective of this policy is to improve safety and reduce pollution and traffic congestion, but it has been strongly opposed by the concessionaires. Most private buses are kept on the road for longer than five years. Two industry associations are spearheading opposition to the government's new policy.

TROLLEY BUSES

In the 1960s, trolley buses replaced the street cars that had been in service since the 1890s. The trolley buses gradually fell into decline because of competition from the motor operators. In 1990, however, the *Servicio de Transporte Eléctrico del Distrito Federal*, Electrical Transportation Authority of Mexico City, a public agency, began to refurbish the system. Between 1990 and 1994, service was expanded and ridership grew from 3,000 passengers daily to 40,000. The agency reconstructed 450 trolley buses. The vehicles are manufactured by Siemens and assembled in Mexico. Maintenance is performed by *Bombardier-Concaril*. Bombardier is reportedly planning to add vehicles of its own manufacture to the growing fleet.