

# DENNING'S DOUBLE DECKER DESIGN



All aboard, says Bob Roberts

Bus builder Dennings has released its double decker coach which it believes may play a role in addressing Brisbane's transport and traffic issues.

THE Queensland-designed, engineered and built coach is the first vehicle of its type to hit the coach market in more than 10 years.

While the company will not reveal the build cost, it is being touted as a replacement for two standard city route buses, helping to alleviate congestion and lower emissions while providing more carrying capacity for less cost.

Denning Coaches chairman Bob Roberts, says the vehicle is testimony that innovation and manufacturing in Brisbane is still alive.

"We see this vehicle as a real contender in helping solve transport issues. It takes one

low-floor bus off the road, or frees it up for other uses and, with the same length and maneuverability as a standard bus, it utilises standard bus stops," he says.

"Moreover, it has a much lower purchase cost than an articulated vehicle of the equivalent two standard buses it replaces and much lower maintenance costs."

Two of the new double deck coaches have already been delivered to Pine Rivers operator Thompsons Bus Line, with five more on Denning's order book.

Thompson's, in partnership with Translink, will have four new double deckers in its school fleet by mid next year.

The Denning brand was given a new lease of life in 2005 when new owners took on an empty factory book, empty order book and 15 employees.

The new company Denning Manufacturing, invested heavily in research and development and set about manufacturing coaches in their entirety, not just the body, but also the chassis on which the buses run.

There are now 70 people employed at Denning's Archerfield factory in Brisbane's south-west, producing about 50 buses a year.

The new Denning double deck takes its place at the top of their model range, which includes a low-floor route bus, two axle coach and a three-axle touring coach.

Equipped as a touring coach, high end comforts in the double deck can include DVD systems upstairs and down, individual overhead passenger speakers, on-board washrooms, leather seats and a drinking fountain.

Transport Minister Anastacia Palaszczuk, says double decker bus services are important for delivering a strong public transport network for our region.

"This launch represents a great achievement for the successful partnership between Denning, Thompsons and TransLink," she says.