

SENIORS — FREE PUBLIC TRANSPORT

619. Hon ED DERMER to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Has the minister assessed the cost and other implications of extending the free public transport available to seniors to apply at all times of the day?
- (2) If yes, what was the outcome of the minister's consideration?

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) Various other models for free travel have been contemplated.
- (2) The highly successful free travel introduced by the Barnett government also achieves the important benefit of moving demand away from the busy peak periods. This provides substantial benefit by allowing more fare-paying commuters to travel during those peak periods. Allowing free travel at peak times would be counterproductive. It is also worth noting that this free travel initiative is a first in any major Australian city on a substantive public transport network. It resulted in almost seven million free trips in the first year of the scheme, potentially saving those regularly taking advantage of the initiative between \$350 and \$600 a year.