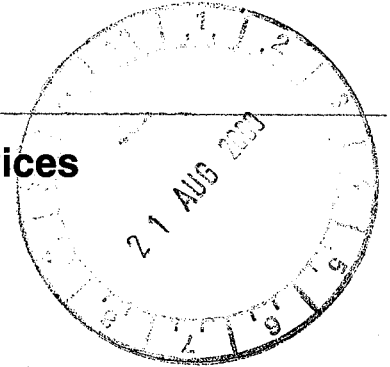




**Minister for Transport; Disability Services**

**Hon. Simon O'Brien MLC**



Our ref: 29-05748; 29-05878

20 AUG 2009

Hon Brian Ellis MLC  
Chair  
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs  
Parliament House  
PERTH WA 6005

**PUBLIC**

Dear Mr Ellis

**PETITION NO.24 - PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE BETWEEN PERTH AND GERALDTON**

I thank the Committee for the letter of 6 May 2009 regarding the above. I note the Committee also wrote to the Hon John Day MLA on the same matter, who has forwarded the correspondence to me for response.

The proposal for a Perth–Geraldton passenger railway has been examined in the past but was not adopted because the concept could not be justified.

Travelling by road between Perth and Geraldton is considerably shorter than by rail. Transwa road coaches are able to complete the journey between Perth and Geraldton in approximately 5 hours 45 minutes. The modern Transwa road coach fleet provides access for people with disabilities and offers faster and more frequent schedules to Geraldton, and intermediate points, than could be achieved with passenger rail services.

The cost to purchase new rolling stock, and upgrade the railway to operate passenger rail services, would also be far in excess of any return from passenger revenue, considering the relatively small population base that would utilise the service.

I hope this information is of assistance to you in your preliminary inquiries into the petition.

Yours sincerely

**SIMON O'BRIEN MLC  
MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT**