

NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT ON CERTAIN CONCESSIONS FOR PENSIONERS AND SENIORS CARD HOLDERS

Council of
Australian
Governments

An agreement between

- the Commonwealth of Australia and
- the States and Territories, being:
 - ◆ The State of New South Wales;
 - ◆ The State of Victoria;
 - ◆ The State of Queensland;
 - ◆ The State of Western Australia;
 - ◆ The State of South Australia;
 - ◆ The State of Tasmania;
 - ◆ The Australian Capital Territory; and
 - ◆ The Northern Territory of Australia.

An agreement whereby the Commonwealth makes a contribution towards the cost of Certain Concessions for Pensioners and provision of Designated Public Transport Concessions for Out of State Seniors Card holders.

National Partnership Agreement on Certain Concessions for Pensioners and Seniors Card Holders

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT ON
FEDERAL FINANCIAL RELATIONS

PRELIMINARIES

1. This agreement is created subject to the provisions of the *Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations* and should be read in conjunction with that Agreement and subsidiary schedules. In particular, the schedules include direction in respect of performance reporting and payment arrangements.
2. The Parties are committed to addressing the issue of social inclusion, including responding to Indigenous disadvantage. That commitment is embodied in the objectives and outcomes of this agreement. However, the Parties have also agreed other objectives and outcomes - for example, in the National Indigenous Reform Agreement - which the Parties will pursue through the broadest possible spectrum of government action. Consequently, this agreement will be implemented consistently with the objectives and outcomes of all National Agreements and National Partnerships entered into by the Parties.
3. This National Partnership Agreement has been established to provide for on-going funding and provision of Certain Concessions for Pensioners and Seniors Card holders.
4. There are two components to this Agreement.
 - (a) The first component continues the practice of the Commonwealth sharing the costs of funding Certain Concessions for Pensioners. This dates from the 1993 agreement whereby the Commonwealth and the States and Territories agreed that Certain Concessions would be provided by State and Territory governments to all Pensioner Concession Card holders without discrimination between cardholders, in return for on-going, indexed Commonwealth funding.
 - (b) The second component relates to provision by State and Territory governments of Designated Public Transport Concessions for all Australian Seniors Card Holders on public transport services, irrespective of the Seniors Card holder's state of residence.

PART 1 - FORMALITIES

Parties to this Agreement

5. In entering this Agreement, the Commonwealth and the States and Territories recognise that they have a mutual interest in improving outcomes in the area of certain concessions for pensioners and providing reciprocal transport concessions for Seniors Card holders, and need to work together to achieve those outcomes.

Term of the Agreement

6. This Agreement will commence as soon as the Commonwealth and one other Party signs the Agreement and will expire on 30 June 2012, or earlier termination as agreed in writing by the Parties. After this time it is expected that funding would continue to be made available through general revenue assistance, subject to review by the Ministerial Council on Federal Financial Relations.

Delegations

7. The Branch Manager, Social Security Policy Branch, Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs is authorised to certify that payments may be made to the States and Territories.

Interpretation

8. Unless otherwise specified, the following terms and definitions are used throughout this Agreement:
 - (a) **Certain Concessions for Pensioners** in the context of this Agreement means those rebates made available to Pensioners for council/land and water rates, utilities including energy and sewerage, motor vehicle registration and public transport.
 - (b) For the purposes of this Agreement, **Pensioner** is a person who has been issued with a Pensioner Concession Card by either Centrelink or the Department of Veterans' Affairs.
 - (c) **Seniors Cards** are as issued by individual jurisdictions to Seniors, who are generally aged over 60 years and working less than full time, noting that jurisdictions reserve the right to determine eligibility for their State Seniors Card.
 - (d) **Out of State Seniors Card Holder** is a person who has been issued a valid Seniors Card in their State or Territory of residence, who is accessing public transport concessions in another State or Territory.
 - (e) **Designated Public Transport Concessions** to be provided by State and Territory governments to Out of State Seniors Card holders are the same public transport concessions that Seniors Card holders who are resident of that State or Territory receive, subject to any exclusions agreed between the Parties.

PART 2 – OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS

Objectives

9. The objectives of this Agreement are that State and Territory governments provide:
 - (a) Certain Concessions for Pensioners without discrimination between cardholders; and
 - (b) Out of State Seniors Card holders with Designated Public Transport Concessions on public transport services within their own States and Territories.

PART 3 – ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF EACH PARTY

10. To realise the objectives and commitments in this Agreement, each Party has specific roles and responsibilities, as outlined below.

Role of the Commonwealth

11. The Commonwealth will have responsibility for the provision of funding as outlined under Financial Arrangements below.

Role of the States and Territories

12. The States and Territories will have responsibility for:
 - (a) the provision of Certain Concessions for Pensioners, without discrimination between cardholders; and
 - (b) the provision of Designated Public Transport Concessions to Out of State Seniors Card holders.

PART 4 – PERFORMANCE BENCHMARKS AND REPORTING

Performance benchmarks and indicators

13. The States and Territories will ensure delivery of the relevant concessions as outlined in this Agreement.
14. While there are no specific performance benchmarks to be measured for this program, the States and Territories will provide assurance, by no later than 30 June of each year, that in respect of the next financial year:
 - (a) Certain Concessions for Pensioners will be provided without discrimination; and
 - (b) Designated Public Transport Concessions will be provided to Out of State Seniors Card holders in line with this Agreement.

PART 5 – FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

15. Payments will be made by the Commonwealth to the States and Territories as set out below, subject to the States and Territories meeting the performance reporting requirements.

Funding for Certain Concessions for Pensioners

16. Funding available to the States and Territories for provision of Certain Concessions for Pensioners will be \$219.737 million in 2008-09 (note that two quarterly payments have already been made under current Specific Purpose Payment arrangements), with the amount to be paid for the six months from January 2009 being:
- (i) New South Wales — \$38,210,500;
 - (ii) Victoria — \$27,315,500;
 - (iii) Queensland — \$19,073,500;
 - (iv) Western Australia — \$9,604,500;
 - (v) South Australia — \$10,867,000;
 - (vi) Tasmania — \$3,490,000;
 - (vii) Australian Capital Territory — \$776,000; and
 - (viii) Northern Territory — \$531,500).
17. The funding for provision of Certain Concessions to Pensioners will continue to be subject to indexation by Wage-Cost Index 1 adjusted for net movements in number of persons eligible for the pension concession card.
18. The distribution of this funding between the States and Territories will continue to be each State's historical share of funding.

Funding for Designated Public Transport Concessions for Seniors Card Holders

19. The amount of funding available to the States and Territories for provision of Designated Public Transport Concessions for Seniors Card Holders in total over the course of the program (2008-09 to 2011-12) will be \$45.5 million. This amount is not indexed.
20. In addition a sign up bonus is also available to States and Territories who agreed to implement the measure by 1 January 2009.
21. Distribution of this funding will be in accordance with the payment schedule below.

Payment schedule for Designated Public Transport Concessions for Seniors Card Holders State (\$)	Sign-on payment	Jan-June 2009	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Four year total
New South Wales	1,078,532	2,799,264	5,895,376	6,255,375	6,620,630	22,649,177
Victoria	298,709	775,036	1,632,469	1,732,418	1,834,253	6,272,885
Queensland	690,063	1,789,259	3,768,552	4,001,090	4,242,356	14,491,320
Western Australia	73,934	191,623	403,825	428,836	454,395	1,552,613
South Australia	66,736	173,110	364,663	387,043	409,896	1,401,448
Tasmania	20,571	53,338	112,380	119,309	126,397	431,995
Australian Capital Territory	30,898	80,132	168,815	179,199	189,822	648,866
Northern Territory	13,233	34,306	72,286	76,749	81,314	277,888

PART 6 – GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Dispute resolution

22. Any Party may give notice to other Parties of a dispute under this Agreement.
23. The Parties or relevant delegates will attempt to resolve any dispute in the first instance.
24. If a dispute cannot be resolved between the relevant delegates, it may be escalated to relevant Ministerial Council or COAG Working Group for consideration.
25. If a dispute cannot be resolved by the relevant Ministerial Council or COAG Working group, it may be referred by a Party to COAG for consideration.

Review of the Agreement

26. The Agreement will be reviewed in 2011-12 by the Ministerial Council on Federal Financial Relations with regard to future funding arrangements.

Variation of the Agreement

27. The agreement may be amended at any time by agreement in writing by all the Parties and under terms and conditions as agreed by all the Parties.
28. A Party to the Agreement may terminate their participation in the Agreement at any time by notifying all the other Parties in writing.

The Parties have confirmed their commitment to this agreement as follows:

Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by

The Honourable Kevin Rudd MP

Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia

March 2009

Signed for and on behalf of the State of New South Wales by

The Honourable Nathan Rees MP

Premier of the State of New South Wales

December 2008

Signed for and on behalf of the State of Queensland by

The Honourable Anna Bligh MP

Premier of the State of Queensland

December 2008

Signed for and on behalf of the State of South Australia by

The Honourable Mike Rann MP

Premier of the State of South Australia

December 2008

Signed for and on behalf of the Australian Capital Territory by

Jon Stanhope MLA

Chief Minister of the Australian Capital Territory

December 2008

Signed for and on behalf of the State of Victoria by

The Honourable John Brumby MP

Premier of the State of Victoria

December 2008

Signed for and on behalf of the State of Western Australia by

The Honourable Colin Barnett MP

Premier of the State of Western Australia

December 2008

Signed for and on behalf of the State of Tasmania by

The Honourable David Bartlett MP

Premier of the State of Tasmania

December 2008

Signed for and on behalf of the Northern Territory by


The Honourable Paul Henderson MLA

Chief Minister of the Northern Territory of Australia

December 2008

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Jon Stanhope MLA
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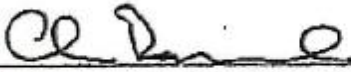
Signed for and on behalf of the State of Victoria by

The Honourable John Brumby MP
Premier of the State of Victoria
December 2008

Signed for and on behalf of the State of Queensland by

The Honourable Anna Bligh MP
Premier of the State of Queensland
December 2008

Signed for and on behalf of the State of Western Australia by



The Honourable Colin Barnett MLA
Premier of the State of Western Australia
02 June 2009

Signed for and on behalf of the State of South Australia by

The Honourable Mike Rann MP
Premier of the State of South Australia
December 2008

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The Honourable David Bartlett MP
Premier of the State of Tasmania
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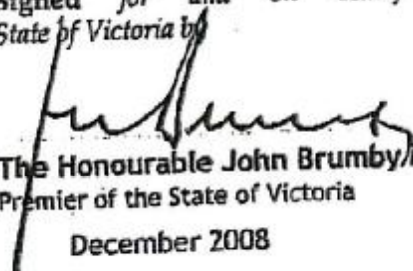
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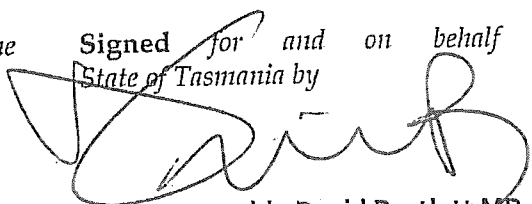
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19 December 2008