

BUS SHELTERS - FUNDING

**201. Mr BAKER to the minister representing the Minister for Transport:**

I refer to the fact that local councils are primarily responsible for the installation of bus shelters and, hence, bear all costs associated with positioning and erecting the same. Will the minister entertain a proposal for his department to jointly share the cost of installing these important shelters, particularly given their utility in protecting bus commuters from the summer heat and winter rains?

**Mr COWAN replied:**

The Minister for Transport thanks the member for Joondalup for raising this issue which does have important implications for our public transport customers. The member for Ballajura has also made the same representation. At present the Department of Transport accepts full responsibility for facilities at train stations, bus stations and ferry jetties. However, the significant assistance given by councils is appreciated in the provision of roadside facilities, such as bus shelters, which greatly assist their residents who choose to use public transport. Obviously the community and its local ratepayers derive considerable benefit from the public transport system. Nevertheless, some councils clearly have a more significant rate-funding base and can therefore provide a greater measure of funding for quality bus shelters in greater quantity. Often inner city councils or councils with significant distributor roads in their municipality are best positioned to receive attractive commercial sponsorship for bus shelters from advertising companies.

State Governments in Western Australia have never adopted a set position on the funding of bus shelters, although periodically state funds have been offered to councils to assist with the provision of shelters. However, it is worth noting that the cost of bus shelters has increased in recent years, as they have moved from rudimentary structures to the more customer-friendly and security-conscious structures of today.

The minister is pleased to advise that Transport is proposing some funding for the provision of bus shelters in its capital works program in the next three financial years. The details of this program are still being firmed. The intention, subject to budget allocations, is to offer set amounts of funding for each council, provided this funding is matched on a dollar for dollar basis by the respective local government. As soon as the budget and processes for this funding program have been confirmed, Transport will contact councils in metropolitan Perth to seek their participation. It is anticipated that this action will occur in the period following the next budget announcements. In addition to the proposed program to assist local governments in funding bus shelters, Transport is also addressing the provision of selective bus shelters on its new high priority series 900 bus routes and the circle route. I should also mention that Transport staff have been working with selective councils and the Western Australian Municipal Association to develop a standardised bus shelter with good levels of amenity and security. This effort should ensure that the general standard of bus shelters continues to improve. I am sure that will be the first story in tonight's news!