

SENIORS CARDS, NATIONALLY RECOGNISED

175. Mr P.D. Omodei to the Minister for Seniors

- (1) Are Seniors Cards issued in Western Australia recognised in other States and Territories of Australia? If not, why not?
- (2) If not, what action has the Minister taken to facilitate the establishment of a standardised and nationally recognised Seniors Card?

Mr R.C. KUCERA replied:

- (1) Yes, for private business discounts, but not for accessing State Government concessions.

The private business discounts available to interstate seniors are listed in the Discount Directories published by each jurisdiction.

State and Territory Government concessions are funded by each individual jurisdiction for the benefit of its residents. The range of concessions and their value also varies from State to State and allows a government to establish concessions to address state needs and issues.

- (2) The West Australian Government was the first state to establish a Seniors Card program and has worked collaboratively over many years to develop a card nationally recognised by many private businesses and tourism providers.

In addition, the West Australian Government acted in good faith in July 2001 to allow seniors who held a West Australian Seniors Card and a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card, to access the core concessions available to Pensioner Concession Card holders. This was done in response to the Commonwealth Government's offer in May 2001 to open discussions with the States and Territories regarding state-based concessions.

Since fulfilling Western Australia's part of the Commonwealth offer, the Western Australian Government attempted to finalise negotiations to introduce a standardised system. However, without notice, the Commonwealth Government announced in the 2005-06 Commonwealth Budget papers that negotiations would be discontinued.