

## APPENDIX B – CONCESSIONS STATEMENT

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### INTRODUCTION

The Government provides concessions in the form of discounts, rebates and subsidies to improve access to and the affordability of a range of services for individuals or families based on eligibility criteria relating to factors such as age, income and special needs or disadvantage.

This statement serves to highlight the cost and nature of concessions covering both concessions which are reflected as outlays in the Budget (for example, direct subsidy payments) and revenue foregone through fees and charges which are set at a rate lower than that applying to the wider community.

Varying methods have been used to estimate the cost of concessions depending on the nature of the concession, including:

- direct Budget outlay cost (for example, direct subsidy or rebate payments)
- revenue foregone (for example, concessional fees and charges)
- cost of goods and services provided.

Table B.1 sets out the cost of concessions by agency. The total value of concessions is estimated at \$1.13 billion in 2009-10.

**Table B.1  
Concessions by agency<sup>1</sup>**

| <b>Agency</b>  | 2008-09<br>Est.Act.<br>\$ million | 2009-10<br>Estimate<br>\$ million |
|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Department of Communities</b>   |                                   |                                   |
| Government-managed housing rental rebate <sup>2</sup>                    | 315.2                             | 354.6                             |
| Electricity Rebate Scheme  | 77.0                              | 92.2                              |
| Electricity Life Support Scheme  | 1.0                               | 1.3                               |
| Pensioner Rate Subsidy Scheme  | 42.2                              | 43.1                              |
| Rail Concession Scheme   | 35.9                              | 36.0                              |
| Reticulated Natural Gas Rebate Scheme                                    | 4.1                               | 2.3                               |
| Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme                                  | 0.3                               | 2.7                               |
| SEQ Pensioner Water Subsidy Scheme                                       | 5.9                               | 11.3                              |
| National Reciprocal Transport Scheme                                     | 2.5                               | 3.8                               |
| Active Recreation Centres - concessional usage rates                     | 0.2                               | 0.2                               |
| <b>Department of Community Safety</b>                                    |                                   |                                   |
| Urban Fire Levy Concession   | 5.6                               | 6.1                               |
| <b>Department of Education and Training</b>                              |                                   |                                   |
| Living Away from Home Allowances Scheme                                  | 6.5                               | 6.5                               |
| School transport assistance for students with disabilities               | 32.2                              | 32.2                              |
| Non-State School Transport Assistance Scheme                             | 4.5                               | 4.6                               |
| TAFE concessions   | 14.1                              | 15.8                              |
| <b>Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation</b>     |                                   |                                   |
| Drought Rate Rebate Scheme <sup>3</sup>                                  | 0.8                               | ..                                |
| <b>Department of Environment and Resource Management</b>                 |                                   |                                   |
| Environmental licence fee waiver <sup>4</sup>                            | 0.1                               | ..                                |
| Entry and tour fee concessions   | 0.2                               | 0.1                               |
| Additional Irrigators Fixed Water Charges Rebate Scheme                  | 0.5                               | 0.6                               |
| <b>Queensland Health</b>   |                                   |                                   |
| Spectacle Supply Scheme  | 6.7                               | 7.7                               |
| Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme  | 27.7                              | 31.7                              |
| Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme  | 37.8                              | 37.7                              |
| Oral Health Scheme   | 103.1                             | 107.3                             |
| <b>Department of Justice and Attorney-General</b>                        |                                   |                                   |
| Public Trustee of Queensland rebates of fees                             | 19.6                              | 21.2                              |
| <b>Department of the Premier and Cabinet</b>                             |                                   |                                   |
| Venue hire and lease discount - Judith Wright Centre of Contemporary Art | 0.4                               | 0.4                               |
| Concessional entry fees - Queensland Museum                              | 0.4                               | 0.4                               |
| Concessional entry fees - Queensland Art Gallery                         | 0.4                               | 0.4                               |
| Venue hire discounts - Queensland Performing Arts Trust                  | 0.3                               | 0.4                               |
| Venue hire discounts - South Bank Corporation                            | 0.2                               | 0.2                               |

**Table B.1 (continued)  
Concessions by agency<sup>1</sup>**

| <b>Agency</b>  | 2008-09<br>Est.Act.<br>\$ million | 2009-10<br>Estimate<br>\$ million |
|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Department of Transport and Main Roads</b>  |                                   |                                   |
| Light and heavy vehicle registration concession  | 82.7                              | 85.4                              |
| Recreational ship registration concession  | 0.9                               | 0.9                               |
| School Transport Assistance Scheme   | 130.0                             | 134.6                             |
| Translink Transit Authority transport concessions (SEQ)  | 56.6                              | 60.0                              |
| Other transport concessions incl. taxi subsidies   | 26.2                              | 27.9                              |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>1,041.8</b>                    | <b>1,129.6</b>                    |
| Notes:   |                                   |                                   |
| 1. Numbers may not add due to rounding.  |                                   |                                   |
| 2. Increases in markets rents have resulted in an increased estimated level of rental rebate for 2009 10.        |                                   |                                   |
| 3. This scheme concluded on 30 June 2008 with final payments made during 2008 09.                                |                                   |                                   |
| 4. Due to the introduction of new environmental protection regulation, this concession ceased on 1 January 2009. |                                   |                                   |

## Department of Communities

The Government-managed housing rental rebate targets low income families and individuals and represents the difference between the rents that would be payable in the private market and rent that is charged based on the household's income. The concession is expected to be higher in 2009-10 than in 2008-09 due to an expected escalation in market rents.

The Electricity Rebate Scheme provides a rebate on the cost of domestic electricity supply to the home of eligible holders of a Pensioner Concession Card, a Queensland Seniors Card or a Repatriation Health Card for All Conditions (Gold Card) who receive a War Widow or Special Rate Totally or Permanently Incapacitated (TPI) pension.

The Electricity Life Support Concession Scheme is aimed at assisting seriously ill people who use home-based life support systems such as oxygen concentrators and kidney dialysis machines.

The Pensioner Rate Subsidy Scheme alleviates the impact of local government rates and charges on pensioners, thereby assisting them to continue to live in their own homes.

The Queensland Rail Concessions Scheme assists pensioners, veterans and seniors to reduce the cost of public transport and to maintain an active and healthy lifestyle.

The Reticulated Natural Gas Rebate Scheme provides a rebate off the cost of reticulated natural gas supplied to the home of eligible holders of a Pensioner Concession Card, Queensland Seniors Card or Repatriation Health Card for All Conditions (Gold Card) who receive a War Widow or Special Rate TPI pension.

The Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme provides one-off emergency assistance to low income households suffering a short term financial crisis and who are unable to pay their current electricity and/or reticulated natural gas account and are at risk of disconnection.

To lessen the impact of increased water prices on pensioners, the Government has established the South East Queensland Pensioner Water Subsidy Scheme. The scheme is being phased in over three years with the increased water prices and provides a subsidy of \$40 in 2008-09, \$70 in 2009-10 and \$100 from 2010-11. The Scheme applies to eligible pensioners in the SEQ Water Grid and is in addition to the Pensioner Rate Subsidy Scheme.

The National Reciprocal Transport Scheme provides visitors from interstate who hold a state or territory Seniors Card with access to public transport concessions in Queensland. The four-year scheme, which commences in 2009, is to be fully funded by the Australian Government (subject to finalisation of specific details).

Concessional rates are offered to school groups for the use of a number of Active Recreation Centres, such as those at Currimundi and Tallebudgera.

## **Department of Community Safety**

Pensioners are eligible for a 20% discount on the Urban Fire Levy payable on prescribed properties of which they are the owner or part-owner.

## **Department of Education and Training**

The Department of Education and Training provides a living away from home allowance to students in Years 1 to 12 in state and non-state schools whose homes are geographically isolated from local schools. The allowances offset the costs associated with boarding away from home to attend school on a daily basis and include tuition and travel costs.

The Department also offers assistance to students with disabilities to access school programs to meet their educational needs. Assistance is in the form of the provision of taxis or specialised contracted minibuses, payment of fares on regular buses or trains, or an allowance for parents who drive their children to school.

The Non-State School Transport Assistance Scheme assists families of students attending non-state schools outside Brisbane whose bus fare is over a weekly threshold amount. The program also assists families of students with disabilities who attend a non-state school.

Concessions on TAFE tuition fees for Government-funded training are offered to a range of concession card holders, students of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent and students who can demonstrate extreme financial hardship.

## **Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation**

To assist primary producers who have been detrimentally affected by drought leading to financial difficulty, assistance was previously provided in the form of a rebate of local government rates. This scheme concluded on 30 June 2008 with final payments made during 2008-09.

## **Department of Environment and Resource Management**

Previously, a fee waiver was granted on environmental licences on the grounds of financial hardship or if there was a small or insignificant environmental risk. Due to the introduction of new environmental protection regulation, this concession concluded on 1 January 2009.

Concessional entry fees are available for specified protected areas including St Helena Island, David Fleay Wildlife Park and Mon Repos Conservation Park.

The Additional Irrigators Fixed Water Charges Rebate Scheme makes a rebate of up to \$10,000 available for irrigators in eligible water supply schemes with an announced water allocation of 20% or less on 1 July 2008. Relevant invoices must be issued for the 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009 financial year. Irrigators have until 30 September 2009 to lodge applications.

## **Queensland Health**

The Spectacle Supply Scheme assists eligible Queensland residents by providing a comprehensive range of free basic spectacles. Queensland Health administers the scheme through its network of public hospitals and community services.

The Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme provides eligible Queensland residents with permanent and stabilised conditions or disabilities access to subsidies. Aids and equipment are provided primarily to assist people to live at home thus avoiding premature or inappropriate residential care or hospitalisation.

Queensland Health's Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme provides financial assistance to patients who need to access specialist medical services which are not available within their local area. The Scheme provides a subsidy towards the cost of travel and accommodation for patients and, in some cases, an escort.

The Oral Health Scheme provides free dental care to eligible clients and their dependents who possess a current Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Queensland Seniors Card or Commonwealth Seniors Card. In rural and remote areas where no private dental practitioner exists, access to dental care for the general public is provided at a concessional rate.

## **Department of Justice and Attorney-General**

The Public Trustee offers fee rebates (full or partial) for clients who, because of financial circumstances, cannot pay the full amount of fees that have been levied.

## **Department of the Premier and Cabinet**

Discounts apply to venue rental fees charged to arts and community organisation hirers and rent reductions apply to lease amounts for resident cultural organisation tenants at the Judith Wright Centre of Contemporary Art.

Concessional ticket entry fees apply to a variety of concession card holders, students, children and families for special exhibitions at the Queensland Art Gallery and the Queensland Museum.

Queensland Performing Arts Trust offers discounts on venue rental fees charged to Government funded organisations, primarily Opera Queensland, Queensland Ballet, Queensland Orchestra and Queensland Theatre Company.

Community groups and charities are given discounts on venue rental fees at South Bank, such as the Suncorp Piazza and Cultural Forecourt.

## **Department of Transport and Main Roads**

Motor vehicle and boat registration concessions are provided to holders of the Pensioner Concession Card, Queensland Seniors Card and to those receiving a TPI Ex-servicemember Pension. The concession is aimed at improving the access to travel of pensioners and seniors.

Other motor vehicle and boat registration concessions are provided to:

- primary producers to ensure the costs of basic necessities are kept to a minimum
- local governments to ensure lower costs of essential services
- charitable and community service organisations who provide assistance in the form of food, clothing and shelter to persons in distress
- people living in remote areas without access to the wider road network
- car club members with vehicles over 30 years of age who are preserving Queensland's motoring history
- specific purpose vehicles that are used off road but need access to the road network to move between sites and to certain overseas consular positions.

The School Transport Assistance Scheme is a program for students whose access to school is disadvantaged by distance or who are from defined low income groups. Assistance is provided towards the cost of travel on bus, rail and/or ferry with allowances for private vehicle transport.

Transport concessions are provided by the Government in a variety of forms and across a range of activities to ensure access and mobility for Queenslanders who are transport disadvantaged. The Translink Transit Authority administers transport concessions in South-East Queensland, with concessions in the remainder of the State, and the Taxi Subsidy Scheme, provided by the Department of Transport and Main Roads. Eligible categories to receive a concession include Pensioner Concession Card holders, Seniors Card holders, children and secondary and tertiary students. The provision of these concessions is in the form of a subsidy payment to transport operators.