

13th February 2007

Inquiry on School Bus Operators' Charter Bus Operations
Economic Regulation Authority
PO Box 8469
Perth Business Centre
PERTH WA 6849

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Dear Sir

I wish to comment on the School Bus Charter Operations, as it exists in the area in which I reside – Waroona WA.

My partner and I operate both a school bus and charter coach in Waroona. The charter coach is used for charter and tour work and the school bus as a back up on the odd occasion when the coach is not available.

Most people hiring a vehicle would prefer a coach with its luxuries to a basic school bus. There are another five school bus operators in town – most who are not interested and do not do charter work with their school buses. If and when any of these contractors do charter work it is on a very small scale and does not interfere in any noticeable way with the charter work we do. In fact, in our area, there is a shortage of vehicles available for charter work.

During the past month we have had enquiries from as far a field as Esperance and Bunbury. Bunbury Senior High School recently looking to hire three coaches for Country Week sport in June. As our coaches are already booked we suggested they try Mandurah Bus Charters who operate a fleet of charter vehicles. They had already contacted this company to be told that all their vehicles were contracted to mining companies and were unavailable.

In most country towns, school buses are the only buses available to the community and if used by groups within the community it is to assist them and is not part of a profit making venture by school bus operators.

Most school bus operators I know are not interested in charter work and if a problem exists within the industry, address that problem locally rather than create problems for the majority of towns and operators who work happily together.

Yours Faithfully

Ken Nottle