

Re: ERA Submission – Contract No. 6488 Geraldton – P& JM Sotiroff

Not sure if there was a particular format for submission so have outlined as follows:-

- 1) Very few private bus operators/companies in our area (Geraldton). In many cases they pass charter work onto school bus contractors because they either can't or won't do the jobs.
- 2) School bus contractors help schools by charging the prices that they do. If private contractors do the work, then yes, they would charge more which wouldn't help the Education Department with budgets to meet.
- 3) Not enough buses to meet demand. Sometimes 5 or more buses are required at one time.
- 4) The work would not be consistent enough to sustain a viable business, e.g. 1st term – swimming lessons, carnivals etc, 2nd term swimming lessons, 3rd term no swimming lessons and few excursions, 4th term swimming lessons and excursions. Private companies also have to sustain their buses and drivers in the quiet times.
- 5) Orange buses provide very valid and worthwhile service. If this was withdrawn then chaos would definitely prevail.
- 6) Many school bus contractors would consider some other form of employment during idle time to compensate their income. Then when the need for school buses becomes apparent they will not be in a position to assist.
- 7) With private companies costs will definitely rise, I would say quite significantly.
- 8) Tax paying public would have to be informed of rising costs and that would mean that parents would ultimately have to pay (yet again) for their children to go on excursions, which I am sure many would not be in a position to do so.
- 9) Some of the buses which belong to private companies are definitely not as well maintained as orange buses which would be carrying school children and do not match the standard to which the Education Department expects the orange buses to maintain. This would be a case of double standards, also would they have the necessary police clearances, working with children, First Aid certificates etc.