



23 April 2026

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

On 19 February 2026, the NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi transferred the below part of your request to the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry), to respond to:

- *Please provide the human rights assessment that was done regarding:*
 - a) *Providing free public transport to any Gold card holder/s*

I have considered the above part of your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

I have identified one draft Cabinet Paper from 2007, titled *SuperGold Card: Possible Enhanced Public Transport Concession* which contains a section on 'Human Rights Implications.'

In accordance with section 16(1)(e) of the Act, I have provided you with the relevant excerpt from this draft paper in the attached **Appendix**.

As stated above, please note, this section was contained in a draft Cabinet Paper, and the Ministry cannot confirm whether it was tabled at Cabinet.

I will be publishing this decision letter, with your personal details deleted, on the Ministry's website in due course.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with my decision on your request, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui

pp. 

Anna Graham
General Manager
Ministerial and Executive Services

Appendix

Human rights implications

53. The proposal outlined in this paper for an enhanced transport concession for SuperGold Card holders appears to raise an issue of inconsistency with section 19 of the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990, the right to be free from discrimination (on the grounds of age). The concessions would only be available to cardholders, the great majority of whom are over 65 years old.
54. The proposal appears to be justifiable in terms of section 5 of the Bill of Rights Act, as the objectives of the concession would be to aid the access and mobility of older people, particularly those who do not have access to other forms of transportation, and to provide recognition of the contributions older people have made to New Zealand society over their lifetimes.
55. There already exists a range of different public transport concessionary fares that are largely based on age, including a number targeted at those aged 65 and over. The proposal in this paper for free off-peak fares would extend the value of these current age-based concessions, but would not constitute a significant change from current policies.