



Minister for Health

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Mr Richard Willis
Secretary
Legal and Social Affairs Committee of the Legislative Council
Parliament House, Spring Street
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Dear Mr Willis

I write regarding the Legal and Social Issues References Committee's Inquiry into Options and Mechanisms to Increase Organ Donation in Victoria.

In preparing for my appearance before this committee I note evidence given regarding funding arrangements relating to transport of organ and tissue by V/Line services.

I would like to take the opportunity to clarify for the committee the arrangements relating to that service.

Until 31 July 2010 Southern Cross Station Authority operated a blood and medical products parcel service under the business name of *GreenStar* which was carried on V/Line train and coach services across Victoria. With the dissolution of the Southern Cross Station Authority V/Line was issued a direction to acquire and operate the business.

In December 2007 discussion began between the then Minister for Public Transport and *Greenstar* Parcel Service's with the aim of ceasing all but the Australian Red Cross services by the end of February 2008.

Upon the cessation of Southern Cross Station Authority, V/Line raised several concerns regarding the business including that process meant that blood and medical products were carried in passenger carriages where they could be easily access by passengers. At this time the Department of Health advised V/Line that the carriage of such products was in breach of regulation 71 of the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Regulations 2006 which requires all reasonable steps to be taken to restrict access to such products.

Following this information V/Line ceased operating this business on 14 March 2010. All users of this service were informed via two letters – the first sent in December 2009 and a follow-up letter in March. Following these letters assistance was offered to all users of the Business to find alternative arrangements and all users advised that they had done so.

The main medical operations of the *GreenStar* business were the transportation of blood and pathology tests to and from rural areas.

I understand that Red Cross and Dorevitch Pathology continue to have private agreements with V/Line that allows the continuation of parcel carriage on selected services where lock-up luggage areas are available.

I would like to make it clear that all operations of *GreenStar* Parcel Service were ceased in 2010 and that no form of subsidy for this service has existed since prior to March 2010.

Yours sincerely



Hon David Davis MP
Minister for Health

27/3/2010