

## REBATE ABOLISHED

# Big rise in seniors' car licence costs

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Motor vehicle licensing costs for WA seniors have soared between 64 and 212 per cent in little over a year after the abolition of the private motor vehicle rebate, according to an Opposition analysis.

The \$72 private vehicle rebate, introduced in 1990, was halved by the Barnett Government in its 2013-14 Budget and abolished from July 1.

The Government argued the rebate, which applied to all cars driven for non-business purposes, regardless of income or kilometres travelled, was poorly targeted.

Because WA seniors and pensioners are eligible for up to 50 per cent discounts on motor vehicle registration, the Opposition argues abolishing the rebate has hit seniors and pensioners even more in percentage terms.

Licensing a small vehicle such as a Suzuki Swift cost \$35.35 with concessions and the rebate before July last year but \$110.45 from July 1, a 212 per cent increase.

A Holden Commodore cost \$82.65 before July last year and now costs

\$159.15, a 92 per cent increase. Balga self-funded retiree Robert Fitzgerald yesterday produced 2013 and 2014 Department of Transport invoices for his 1980 Toyota Land-Cruiser that showed his licensing fee had jumped from \$120.50 to \$198.10, a 64 per cent increase.

"It is a little difficult, of course, because you set yourself a budget and you try to stick to it," Mr Fitzgerald said. "But when you keep getting these increases all the time, it's pretty hard to manage."

Shadow treasurer Ben Wyatt said in many cases the increase in licensing costs would "wipe out" the value of the Government's seniors cost of living rebate.

"Mr Barnett may think seniors are unreasonably grumpy, but the problem is the Government, in its ad hoc financial management, has made individual ad hoc decisions without considering the overall impact that has on the household budget of... a senior, on a fixed income," he said.

Transport Minister Dean Nalder said the rebate had applied to everyone in the community, not just seniors.