



Concessions and Benefits

Great Southern Railway Special Veterans Travel Concession

Overview

This Factsheet provides information about the Great Southern Railway (GSR) Special Veterans Travel Concession.

Who is eligible for the Special Veterans Travel Concession

The Special Veterans Travel Concession is available to the following persons:

- Special Rate pensioners (formerly known as Totally and Permanently Incapacitated [T&PI] pensioners) assessed under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA)
- Special Rate disability pensioners assessed under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA)
- Extreme Disablement Adjustment (EDA) pensioners
- Intermediate Rate pensioners
- Disability Pensioners on the Blind rate
- Service Pensioners on the Blind rate
- Disability Pensioners receiving an increased rate of pension under Items 1-15 of Section 27 of the VEA, i.e. suffering the loss of a limb or blindness in an eye
- Veterans receiving a benefit under the MRCA that are comparable to benefits received under Items 1-15 of Section 27 of the VEA
- Widows of WWI Australian veterans (do not have to be in receipt of DVA pension)
- Disability Pensioners who receive the Disability Pension at 100% of the General Rate under the VEA, or veterans assessed at 60 or more impairment points under the MRCA, who are residents in South Australia and in possession of the Incapacitated Ex Service Personnel Card issued by the South Australian Government.

Benefits provided by the Special Veterans Travel Concession

The Special Veterans Travel Concession provides either:

- Free rail travel in a Gold Service Sleeper Cabin (formerly known as First Class) over the Commonwealth owned track only. The 'free' component includes a sleeping berth only and does not include any Gold Service meal charges or Fuel Price Surcharges; *or*
- Free rail travel in a Red Service Sleeper Cabin (formerly known as holiday Class) which includes a sleeping berth (if applicable) over the Commonwealth owned track only. Meals can be purchased in Red Service. Fuel Price Surcharges also apply.

Great Southern Railway Special Veterans Travel Concession, *continued*

What is 'Commonwealth owned' track?

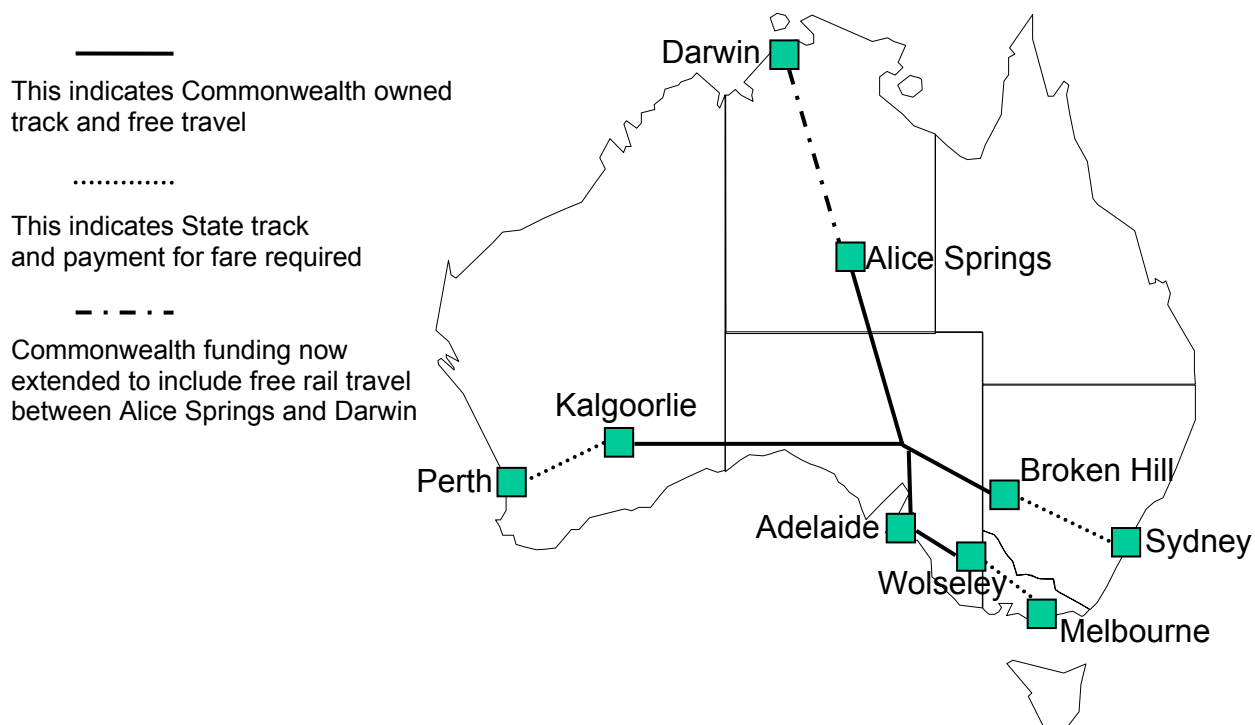
The following sections of track are Commonwealth owned and are covered by the Special Veterans Travel Concession for travel on GSR services:

- the 'Indian Pacific' between Broken Hill and Adelaide;
- the 'Indian Pacific' between Adelaide and Kalgoorlie;
- the 'Overland' between Wolseley (SA/VIC border) and Adelaide; *and*
- the 'Ghan' to Adelaide to Alice Springs.

Although the section of track between Alice Springs and Darwin is not Commonwealth owned, from 1 October 2007 the Commonwealth Government has extended the funding arrangements for Special Veterans to allow concession fares for travel on:

- the 'Ghan' to Alice Springs to Darwin.

The map below illustrates which part of the track are owned by the State or Australian Government.



Great Southern Railway Special Veterans Travel Concession, *continued*

What is 'Commonwealth owned' track? *continued*

Payment of a fare applies when travelling over State owned track. Special Veterans in receipt of a Pensioner Concession Card (PCC) and PCC vouchers (if you travel within your State) may use them to obtain discounts on State owned track. Please note that State Rail issued cards *cannot* be used for concessions on these parts.

Note: Special Veterans living in Western Australia are entitled to free rail travel on the Indian Pacific service between Kalgoorlie and Perth where this travel is part of an interstate journey. This additional entitlement on WA state owned track applies only to Special Veterans living in WA.

What is not provided by the concession?

It is important to note that there may be additional charges that will need to be paid by the traveller. The following items will incur additional charges:

- Travel over the state owned track, for example travel from Sydney to Broken Hill, Wolseley to Melbourne, Kalgoorlie to Perth (refer to map on the previous page)
- Meals, beverages and alcohol costs (unless stated) on board
- Amendment and cancellation fees
- Fuel Price Surcharge
- Travel insurance and excess luggage fees
- Whistle Stop Tours and sightseeing side trips
- Transportation of motor vehicles by GSR's Motorail service.

To find out the additional costs you will need to pay, please contact GSR.

Are meals included on GSR Services?

For passengers travelling in Gold Service, meals are an additional mandatory cost. The Gold Service meals generally consist of breakfast, two course lunches and three course dinners taken in the restaurant car. These meal costs are reflected in the fare at the time of booking.

For passengers travelling in Red Service meals are not included. Café style meals and snack type foods are available for purchase during the journey.

Please note that foodstuffs cannot be accepted as personal luggage due to the quarantine restrictions.

Great Southern Railway Special Veterans Travel Concession, *continued*

What if I require a carer?

A carer may accompany eligible pensioners and receive the same concession on the Commonwealth owned section of the track, subject to the presentation of a medical certificate signed by a medical practitioner. The carer may also use a PCC to obtain a discount over State owned track.

The medical certificate is to state the carer's name and that they are required to provide care for the journey. The carer does not have to be in receipt of a carer's pension or be related to the person travelling. The certificate is to be sent to GSR with payment.

How many trips can I take?

You may use the concession as many times as you wish and there are no restrictions on the amount of trips you can take each year.

Special passenger services provided by GSR

A number of passenger services are offered by GSR to assist those passengers who are mobility impaired:

- Motorised scooters and wheelchairs can be transported and stowed free of charge
- Slimline pushchairs are available for passengers free of charge. These pushchairs need to be organised at the time of booking (conventional wheelchairs are too wide to be used on the train)
- The Pullman Cabin (formerly known as the 'Access' cabin) is available in Gold Service on The Ghan and the Indian Pacific. This larger than usual twin share cabin (one only per train service) is located at the end of the train carriage and contains a larger cabin door which may be more convenient for guests using a pushchair. It has support rails located in the bathroom and there is a table and chair in the main cabin. There is no extra charge for the booking of the Pullman cabin.

GSR requires that guests consider its Fitness For Travel Policy and inform GSR booking staff of any special assistance that may be required to board, disembark, and manoeuvre throughout GSR Trains during the course of the journey. Prior to making a reservation with GSR, you must also inform GSR if you have an illness, disease, injury or other medical condition which may make it unsafe for you, other guests or employees travelling on board GSR trains.

Other concessions

A discount rate of up to 55% is available to all PCC and Commonwealth Seniors Health Card (CSHC) holders for GSR travel. For more information regarding these discounts, contact GSR on 132 147 or refer to their website - <http://www.gsr.com.au/>

Great Southern Railway Special Veterans Travel Concession, *continued*

How to book your travel

To obtain the Special Veteran Travel Concession you must book your trip through GSR on 132 147. Trips booked through a travel agent, other third party, or online through the GSR website, will not receive the Special Veterans Travel Concession.

PCC and CSHC cardholders can obtain the discounted rate through a travel agent or online.

You should book your trip about six weeks prior to your scheduled departure date if possible.

It is important that you contact GSR if you have any questions about fares, routes, timetables, or any details about the train. DVA does not have this information.

When contacting GSR you will need to advise them of your name, address and DVA Pension number. You may request that GSR send your tickets to your home address or alternatively you may be able to collect them at the joining station.

When quoting your DVA number, quote the full number including all zeros, e.g. NX238 should be quoted as NX000238. This assists GSR in confirming your eligibility with DVA for the Special Veterans Travel Concession.

Disclaimer

The information contained in this Factsheet is general in nature and does not take into account individual circumstances. You should not make important decisions, such as those that affect your financial or lifestyle position, e.g. retirement, on the basis of information contained in this Factsheet. Where you are required to lodge a written claim for a benefit, you must take full responsibility for your decisions prior to the written claim being determined. You should seek confirmation in writing of any oral advice you receive from DVA relating to complex or important matters.

Other Factsheets

Other Factsheets related to this topic include:

- *IS125 Pensioner Concession Card*
- *IS126 Commonwealth Seniors Health Card*
- *CON01 Concessions in New South Wales*
- *CON02 Concessions in Victoria*
- *CON03 Concessions in Queensland*
- *CON04 Concessions in South Australia*
- *CON05 Concessions in Western Australia*
- *CON06 Concessions in Tasmania*
- *CON07 Concessions in the Northern Territory*
- *CON08 Concessions in the Australian Capital Territory.*

Great Southern Railway Special Veterans Travel Concession, *continued*

More information

All DVA Factsheets are available from DVA offices, and on the DVA website at www.dva.gov.au.

You can phone DVA for the cost* of a local call on 133 254 or free call 1800 555 254 if you are outside a major city.

Use a normal landline phone if you can. Mobile phone calls may cost you more.

You can send an email to DVA at: GeneralEnquiries@dva.gov.au

You can get more help from any DVA office.