

## Draft fares released for Central Coast Ferry Fares

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) is calling for public submissions on its draft fare determination for private ferries servicing Woy Woy, Empire Bay, Ettalong and Wagstaffe.

Central Coast Ferries provides ferry services between Woy Woy and Empire Bay, and Palm Beach Ferries provides ferry services between Ettalong and Wagstaffe. The current maximum fare for Central Coast Ferries is \$7.80. The current maximum fare for the Palm Beach Ferries service is \$11.60.

Under the draft decision, which would apply from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2021, maximum fares for

- ▼ the Central Coast Ferries service would increase in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI), and
- ▼ the Palm Beach Ferries service between Ettalong and Wagstaffe would not change.

IPART Chair Dr Peter Boxall said that the draft decision on fares varies due to different levels of competition and different costs involved in providing the services on each of the ferry routes.

“We have accepted Central Coast Ferries’ fare proposal as we considered it to be market-driven, considering that it is operating in a relatively competitive market.”

“However, for Palm Beach Ferries, having reviewed their costs of providing ferry services our draft decision is for fares to remain unchanged for the next 4 years.”

“Our view is that passengers should pay the prices that reflect the efficient cost of providing the services while enabling private ferry operators to sustain their business over the long term,” Dr Boxall said.

The review of ferry fares on the Central Coast is part of a broader review of fares for regular private ferry services across NSW.<sup>1</sup> IPART

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<sup>1</sup> Private ferry services under review are Central Coast Ferries (Woy Woy to Empire Bay), Church Point Ferry Service (Scotland Island and western foreshore of Pittwater), Clarence River Ferries (Iluka to Yamba), Cronulla and National Park Ferry Service (Cronulla to Bundeena), Brooklyn Ferry Services (Brooklyn to Dangar Island), Matilda Cruises (Circular Quay to Darling Harbour, and Circular Quay to Lane Cove) and

determines fares for Sydney and Stockton Ferry services as part of Opal fares review.

Submissions to the Draft Report close on 27 October, with an opportunity for further comments at a public hearing to be held on 23 October. All stakeholder comments will be taken into consideration before making the final determination in December.

The Draft Report is available on IPART's website <<http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au>>