

Media Release

18 January 2024

Opal fares under review

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) is calling for community input into how public transport fares should be set until 2028.

IPART Chair Carmel Donnelly said feedback from public transport users and non-users is equally important as the Tribunal investigates how people use and want to use these services now and into the future.

"We are reviewing maximum fares for rail, bus, ferry, light rail, metro and on-demand services within the Opal network, which includes Greater Sydney, the Blue Mountains, the Central Coast, the Illawarra, and the Hunter," Ms Donnelly said.

"Many people rely on public transport, which also provides broad benefits to the wider community including reducing congestion on our roads, supporting economic activity, education, social connectivity and environmental advantages.

"It is important that public transport fares are affordable for passengers and provide the best value for money, while balancing the cost between passenger fares and Government spending. Fares should also promote the financial sustainability of the network and provide value for money for taxpayers.

"We will determine maximum fares until June 2028, but ticket prices will be decided by the NSW Government and can be set below the maximum. Most current ticket prices are between 8%-11% below the current maximum fares determined by IPART in 2020."

Ms Donnelly said the review will be the first to consider changed travel patterns since the COVID-19 pandemic.

"There have been significant changes in how, and how many, people travel, and this includes public transport which has recovered quickly but has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels," she said.

"We have released an Issues Paper and a shorter information paper for people to review and comment on, which are both available on the IPART website, and we're conducting a short survey to make it easier for people to give us their feedback."

Submissions are open until 1 March 2024. Visit www.ipart.nsw.gov.au for more information.

Proposed maximum Opal fares will be released for public comment in June, before the final determination is delivered to the NSW Government in September 2024.

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