

Media Release

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Draft fares released for NSW private ferries

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) is calling for public submissions on its draft fares for 7 regular private ferry services in Sydney, the Central Coast and NSW North Coast.

The proposed new maximum fares, which would apply from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2025, include:

- Increases in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for Brooklyn Ferry Service, Central Coast Ferries, Church Point Ferry Service and Clarence River Ferries
- An initial 40 cent increase, and 20 cents each year thereafter for the Palm Beach – Mackerel route
- A fare increase of around 11% each year for the Captain Cook Cruises Lane Cove route, and
- No change to fares for the Cronulla and National Park Ferry Service.

Tribunal member Ms Sandra Gamble said that in making its draft decisions on fares IPART considered the impact on passengers, operators, and taxpayers.

"Private ferries are funded through fares and government subsidies including for carrying school students and passengers paying concession fares. Several operators also receive additional subsidies to remain viable. In total, annual fare revenue is about \$4 million and the subsidy from the government is also around \$4 million.

"Our draft decisions balance the share between passengers and taxpayers, whilst ensuring operators are funded to meet their efficient costs. We have also considered the role private ferries play in their communities and whether there are other public transport services available," said Ms Gamble.

Feedback from passengers, the ferry operators and local communities is being sought until 5 November, with a public forum to be held on 18 October.

All stakeholder comments will be taken into consideration before making the final determination in December 2021.

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

Full details of the proposed fares are provided in the table below.

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Table 1 Draft determination on maximum fares for private ferry services (\$nominal, including GST)

Operator	Current maximum fare	2022	2023	2024	2025	Average annual increase
Brooklyn Ferry Service	9.00	9.20	9.50	9.70	9.90	2.4% ^a
Captain Cook Cruises	7.80	8.70	9.60	10.70	11.90	11.1%
Central Coast Ferries	8.30	8.50	8.70	8.90	9.20	2.6% ^a
Church Point Ferry Service	9.70	9.90	10.20	10.40	10.70	2.5% ^a
Clarence River Ferries	9.50	9.70	10.00	10.20	10.50	2.5% ^a
Cronulla and National Park Ferry Service	7.40	7.40	7.40	7.40	7.40	0.0%
Palm Beach Ferries – Mackerel Beach and the Basin	8.70	9.10	9.30	9.50	9.70	2.8%

a. We recommend increasing fares in line with inflation of 2.5% per annum for Brooklyn Ferry Service, Central Coast Ferries, Church Point Ferry Service and Clarence River Ferries. Fares are rounded to 10c which results in average annual increases of between 2.4% and 2.6%.

Note: All fares are rounded to 10c.