

BUS FARES FOR RURAL AND REGIONAL SERVICES FROM 1 JANUARY 2012

Embargoed until 11am 9 December 2011

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) today released its determination on bus fares in rural and regional areas.

On 1 January 2012, maximum fares for country town services will rise on average by 2.4%. Some fares will not change, but others will rise by between 10 cents and 60 cents for a single ticket. Country town services typically operate within the boundaries of towns with more than 7,500 people.

Maximum fares for rural services will fall on average by 8%. Fares for journeys up to 16 kilometres will fall by between 20 cents and 70 cents. Fares for longer distance journeys will fall by up to \$2.00 for a single ticket. Rural services operate outside country towns, in villages and between villages and towns.

These fare changes will apply in all areas of NSW other than the Sydney metropolitan and outer metropolitan regions (Blue Mountains, Hunter, Newcastle and Wollongong).

The fare increase for country town services reflects increases in the cost of providing bus services during the past 12 months. The fare decrease for rural services will ensure that maximum fares for these services are at the same level as fares for country town services.

Chief Executive Officer, Mr Jim Cox said: "IPART considers that rural fares should be no higher than country town fares. From 1 January 2012 rural fares will be the same level as country town fares."

"IPART is concerned that many low income individuals and families do not have access to motor vehicles. Buses are a vital transport option for these people, so it is important that bus services are affordable."

"IPART is concerned to ensure that the NSW Government and passengers do not pay more than is required to operate rural and regional bus services. While concession fares limit the impact of high rural fares for many passengers, other passengers currently face higher fares than necessary to support the operation of these services," he said. "Our determination addresses this."

The determination and report, Review of fares for rural and regional buses from January 2012 are available on IPART's website <http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au>

For further information, contact: James Cox PSM, Chief Executive Officer and Full Time Member.

T (02) 9290 8420