

IPART RELEASES DETERMINATION ON BUS FARES FOR RURAL AND REGIONAL SERVICES FROM 3 JANUARY 2010

Embargoed until Friday, 18 December 2009 1.00 pm

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

On 3 January 2010, maximum fares will rise on average by 1.2%.

Some fares will not change but others will rise between 10 cents and 40 cents on a single ticket.

The fare rise covers areas outside the Sydney metropolitan and outer metropolitan regions (Blue Mountains, Hunter, Newcastle and Wollongong).

Under IPART's determination, maximum bus fares will increase by less than the rate of inflation.

These fare increases are designed to cover increases in the cost of providing bus services, including a small cost increase resulting from obligations imposed by new contracting arrangements with the NSW Government.

Acting Chairman and CEO, Mr James Cox said: "IPART considers that these small increases in fares, which are less than the rate of inflation, should not have an adverse impact on bus passengers, bus operators or the environment."

Mr Cox said IPART, however, is mindful that low income individuals and families do not have access to motor vehicles, and the bus is a vital transport option within the community.

"The NSW Government's bus reform program, which has restructured concession fares for rural and regional bus passengers, may mitigate the impact of any fare increases," he said.

The determination and report, *Review of fares for rural and regional buses from January 2010* are available on IPART's website <<http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au>>.

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