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Submission: I am a resident of Bowral in the Southern Highlands. My relevant taxi provider is Southern Highlands Taxis in Mittagong.

One of the key roles of Southern Highlands Taxis is to support the Southern Highlands as a wedding destination.

The Southern Highlands hosted 1,100 weddings across 50 venues in 2015/16, with an average \$30,000 spend per wedding. Destination Southern Highlands estimates that, of \$261 million in visitor expenditure each year, \$33 million is from weddings. Even before we broadened the definition of marriage.

Without Southern Highlands Taxis, there is no wedding business in the Southern Highlands.

But the doctrinaire approach of IPART makes no mention of such subtleties, such differences between regions of NSW.

Instead, the dogma is handed down from Sydney, by an organisation that lacks any breadth in its thinking.

The report says of IPART: “We have stated previously that we do not consider there is any economic justification for the NSW Government to restrict the supply of taxi licences.” Given this dogma, why would IPART be asked for an objective recommendation on lifting or removing numbers of taxi licences?

IPART displays the shallowness of its science in its recommendation on taxi licence numbers “We are recommending that a moderately small number of new licences be released in 2018 a reasonable compromise between releasing a small number and releasing a very large number.”

Finally, IPART was not open with this report. It was on exhibition throughout the NSW school holidays, essentially from Christmas Eve to Australia Day.

This reluctance to engage leads the community to ask: What are they hiding?

The IPART report Review of taxi fares in NSW and taxi licences outside Sydney from 1 July 2018 lacks credibility.