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Submission: We are aiming to set fares that help deliver a financially sustainable public transport network, encourage people to use public transport, maximise the benefits of public transport use to the community, remain affordable for public transport users, and that are predictable and stable over time.

1 Are these objectives the right ones to focus on? 2 Are any of the objectives more important than others?

Which fare changes should we focus on 3 Should light rail and metro services have their own mode-specific fares? Or should light rail continue to be set in line with bus fares, and metro fares set in line with rail fares? 4 Should the \$2 discount for transferring between different modes of transport be higher or lower? 5 Do we currently have a good balance between fares for short distance and long distance travel? Should fares increase more gradually and smoothly as the distance travelled increases? 6 Should we make changes to when and where peak fares apply? Should all modes have peak and off peak fares? 7 Are the current suite of discounts available on Opal services appropriate? Do you support IPART reviewing these discounts? 8 Should contactless payment cards and devices attract the same discounts as the Opal card? 9 What other methods of payment are likely to become available over the next five years? 10 Are there any issues regarding fare discounts or concessions that we should consider?

Pricing for on-demand services 11 Do you agree with our proposed approach to establishing appropriate fares for on-demand services? 12 Which groups of people are most likely to use on-demand services, and how could this change over time? 13 How much would you be willing to pay for on-demand services?

We are aiming to set fares that help deliver a financially sustainable public transport network, encourage people to use public transport, maximise the benefits of public transport use to the community, remain affordable for public transport users, and that are predictable and stable over time.

1 Are these objectives the right ones to focus on?

Generally, yes.

2 Are any of the objectives more important than others?

It is important to avoid perverse disincentives to public transport use.

Which fare changes should we focus on

3 Should light rail and metro services have their own mode-specific fares? Or should light rail continue to be set in line with bus fares, and metro fares set in line with rail fares?

If it is not broke, don't fix it. How would different fares for train and metro work? Large proportions of users have to transfer from trains to metro and metro to trains. This will continue to be the case when the metro is completed in 2026. Fares for rail transport have always been based on the total distance of the journey regardless of the requirement to change at some stations (in contrast to changing buses, historically). Do you want to charge two fares for a single journey using a train and a metro? With a transfer discount? How tricky and complicated would that be? I have been making submissions to IPART for more than 20 years now. A consistent theme of IPART's shambolic reasoning, is that IPART consider that it is entirely appropriate for customers to be stabbed in the neck with extortionate fares where mode changes or vehicle changes are required. Only recently, in the past few years, has this perverse attitude changed. Don't go back to the past now.

There seems to be little reason to charge different fares between buses and light rail. The light rail will be slower and more crowded than a bus, there seems to be no reason why it should have a different fare.

KEY POINT--→ Customers have no say in whether services to particular locations are provided by rail or bus. They also have little say over whether interchanges are required. Consider the "B Line", and the coming introduction of the Randwick trams. Both of these innovations have resulted in the loss of direct services from many suburbs to the CBD. These customers will now have to change, with uncertain and possibly long delay times for the second part of their trip. This can be stressful and time-wasting, and reduces the predictability of the journey time, something which IPART has apparently failed to notice. These factors are not advantageous to customers, and outweigh the alleged health benefit of customers having to climb an extra flight of stairs.

4 Should the \$2 discount for transferring between different modes of transport be higher or lower?

It's about right. Over the course of time, it should increase in line with overall prices. You could devise fairer systems but this one is simple enough.

5 Do we currently have a good balance between fares for short distance and long distance travel? Should fares increase more gradually and smoothly as the distance travelled increases?

The current system is reasonable. It is currently too cheap for longer trips, as the comparison with other cities demonstrates. It is also too expensive for short trips, particularly at peak times. \$4.60 to travel two stops on the train is too expensive, particularly if you are nowhere near the CBD. These high fares "force" many people to drive a couple of kilometres in areas with congested roads and parking, instead of using public transport. It may also contribute to drink-driving.

With modern technology, there is no reason why there should not be a few more fare bands, particularly at the low and high end of the scale.

The value of transport is fundamentally proportional to distance.

For buses, there should be more than 3 distance bands. On the northern beaches routes, there is no band 1 (Wynyard to neutral bay is already more than band 1). Neutral Bay and Cremorne are band 2. Mosman and Palm Beach are both band 3, the same fare. Frankly, that's ridiculous !

KEY POINT -> Do not reintroduce "zone fares". Zone fares are a joke! Sydney's attempt at zone fares around 2010-2016 did not work. The weekly zone fares were \$40 for zone 1, \$50 for zone 1+2 and \$60 for zone 1+2+3. This is reasonable enough if you have an "everybody goes to the CBD" mentality. But that is not the case, and increasing will become less the case. What about people travelling in zone 2 only, or zone 3 only ? Why should someone who has to travel by bus from Mt Pritchard to Liverpool and then by train to Campbelltown for work pay \$60 while someone who travels by bus from Bexley to Arncliffe and train to Central in zone 1, pay \$40 ? That was a fail right there. When Melbourne actually had three zones, you could travel within zone 2 for a zone 2 price. You didn't have to pay for zone 1 if you were not going there.

6 Should we make changes to when and where peak fares apply? Should all modes have peak and off peak fares?

Peak fares should be in the morning only, in my opinion. The afternoon is already more spread out.

7 Are the current suite of discounts available on Opal services appropriate? Do you support IPART reviewing these discounts?

This question is obscure. Discounts, for what ? Do you mean concession fares for children and seniors ? Daily and weekly caps ?

People should be encouraged to make family day trips at the weekend, without causing congestion and emitting carbon dioxide, as well as congestion and parking nightmares at congested destinations such as Manly.

I support extending this to Saturdays, to spread the burden and for people who have more spare time on Saturday than they do on Sunday.

I would support a modest increase in Sunday fares with a matching reduction in Saturday fares.

I don't support increasing fares to the point where people with 2 kids just won't pay it and will use their car instead.

KEY POINT-> IPART should consider whether a 2-tier cap is technically feasible. For example, a \$4 weekend cap for any train and bus travel, excluding ferries (up from \$2.70), and a \$8 weekend day cap for travel including ferries (or half the normal daily cap).

KEY POINT-> Cheap weekend family travel has social benefits over and above reducing congestion and getting fresh air. It gets Opal cards into the hands of children and gets them used to the idea of public transport. A large proportion of the population NEVER use public transport, and tend to have a very low opinion of it. This may be, because they live in areas poorly served, or other reasons, or just snobbery. Older people find it ridiculous that kids in their late teens get chauffeured around like 4 year olds. This wastes time, money and resources and causes congestion. Teenagers should be accustomed to independent mobility using public transport. Cheap family weekend travel is one way of getting children from communities which are non-public-transport users, accustomed to that.

8 Should contactless payment cards and devices attract the same discounts as the Opal card?

No.

9 What other methods of payment are likely to become available over the next five years?

10 Are there any issues regarding fare discounts or concessions that we should consider?

Pricing for on-demand services :

11 Do you agree with our proposed approach to establishing appropriate fares for ondemand services?

12 Which groups of people are most likely to use on-demand services, and how could this change over time?

I don't know who would use it. Probably people without a car.

13 How much would you be willing to pay for on-demand services?

If the service was actually "on demand", I'd pay quite well for it. My experience so far, has been poor. There was a service from the mid-north-shore to the north ryde/Macquarie area. I tried to use it. It was clunky and almost unusable – for example, only available before 9 AM. And despite having a map with a service area, they would not take me anywhere near where I wanted to go within that service area.

OTHER POINTS:

14: Inflation.

IPART's issues paper mentions in several places, relationships between fares and inflation. This tends to reflect a DISCREDITED SHONK-NOMICS notion dating back to the 1970's and 1980's, basically that everything (incomes and prices) should all increase in lockstep "in line with inflation". Firstly, the prices of goods and services no longer all increase in a comparable fashion, as they used to. Some go up, some go down. And that includes the transport operator's input costs such as fuel or bus-driver wages, too. Secondly, customer personal incomes do not increase uniformly either. The days of arbitration, and of a large proportion of the community being on award wages, are long gone. Many people live on fixed or declining incomes. The notion that everybody's income moves in line with average weekly earnings was never true, and it is less true now than it has ever been.

15. Congestion and PARKING.

IPART's issues paper correctly mentions that congestion as an important factor. This has at least two angles to it. The Government has an interest in dealing with congestion, to improve business efficiency and to avoid the large cost of providing additional road capacity. Some (not all) commuters actually have a plausible choice of driving to work, or using public transport, and the presence of congestion is one of the factors (along with travel time, cost, comfort and flexibility) that they factor into making that choice.

Sydney has almost become two cities: the CBD area with 79% public transport market share, and everywhere except the CBD with about 5% public transport market share, and most of that concentrated in a few hotspots like Chatswood and Parramatta.

Three quarters of working people (that is, people who work, including employed, self-employed, contractors, etc) don't work in the CBD and 95% of them drive to work.

The hidden elephant in the room is the cost and availability of PARKING. It's not road congestion that deter would-be car drivers from driving to the CBD, it is the cost and availability of parking there.

IPART needs to factor parking into its convoluted, illogical and circular pseudo-reasoning. It can only be an improvement !

16. Parking in suburban areas and at railway stations.

The government has pursued schizophrenic policies in relation to parking and high density housing. As a result, many suburbs have become parking nightmares, for all the residents new and old, as well as anyone who wants to visit there. The provision of good public transport is an important factor in encouraging some proportion of the population forgo car ownership. More realistically, in Australian society, it is an important factor in encouraging two-adult households that they can live with one private vehicle instead of two.

Road congestion is a function of both the number of trips, and the length of those trips. Currently, parking is available near many train stations. It gets full so early, that parking and using the train ceases to be an option for anyone who needs to travel for work or any other purpose later in the day.

There should be more parking, and the government should CHARGE FOR IT. An existing carpark near me was recently rebuilt, at vast expense, with a token increase in car spaces compared to what was there before the rebuild. The government should be CHARGING for this, \$4-6 a day.

17. Credibility of IPART's analysis.

On page iv of the issues paper, it is claimed that the average Opal fare is about \$2.40, and the average trip has a cost of 4-10 depending on mode.

This graph looks un-credible, indeed, false. \$2.40 is equal to the smallest bus fare, and is lower than the smallest, off-peak, train fare. How can the average fare be smaller than the lowest actual fares ? This graph just makes IPART look shonky and unprofessional.

There needs to be better information about what fares are actually being collected, and that information needs to be focused on adult, full fare, passengers.

It is adult, full fare passengers who are paying the other state taxes (and federal tax transfers), that fund the \$3 billion a year operating cost (loss) subsidy to the transport operators.

It is also adult, full fare passengers who are mostly using the peak hour services where there are capacity constraints.

How much are adult, full fare, passengers paying per trip ? It's not \$2.40.....

How does the cost recovery of a person travelling on peak fares from Waitara to Wynyard at 19c/km compare to the cost recovery of a person travelling from Warnervale to Wynyard, about 4c/km ?

And how does the cost recovery of a person travelling on the cattle-car from Rouse Hill to Wynyard compare to users of the shiny new intercity trains with tray tables, wifi, and scenic views ?