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Boxall, Peter - GA

CITY OF BOTANY BAY | BEN KENEALLY MAYOR

5 August 2015

Dr Peter Boxall
Chairman
IPART

RE: Review of public transport fares from 1 July 2016
ipart@ipart.nsw.gov.au

Dear Dr Boxall

I refer to the discussion paper *Finding the best fare structure for Opal* and the ongoing Review of Public Transport Fares conducted by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART). I note that this review follows the changes to bus services in greater Sydney announced by the State Government as part of their initiative "A new CBD bus network". I also note that subsequent to the announcement of this review the State Government announced it would abolish most remaining paper tickets effective from 1 January 2016.

In relation to the timing of the review, I note that IPART is obligated to follow the timeline established by the State Government. However, I would like to ensure that you are aware of the potential inequality arising from the timing of this review. The changes introduced by the State Government will mean that local residents in the City of Botany Bay and throughout Sydney will be required to change transport modes. This will cost local commuters up to \$500 per annum in addition to their existing transport fares. Presently commuters travelling from the suburbs of Botany, Hillsdale and Pagewood can travel the entire journey to the Sydney CBD on a bus (the 309, 310, X09 and X10). After the Government changes come into effect on 4 October 2015 these commuters will be obligated to change to another bus or train where they will potentially have to spend more to change modes. As such, the State Government will be seen to financially benefit from a change that they have introduced.

In relation to the State Government announcement of the abolition of paper tickets from 1 January 2016, I am advised that at this time the majority of paper tickets will be abolished including the popular MyBus TravelTen and MyMulti Weekly Tickets. This will mean commuters attempting to avoid the price inequality inherent in the Opal System will, from January next year be forced to use the Opal system. I put to you that the State Government and IPART have a responsibility to encourage public transport usage. I suggest that if faced with a price hike, along with the inconvenience being denied a direct route to the City, local commuters will choose to drive.



In relation to the questions raised in the discussion paper *Finding the Best Fare Structure for Opal*, I strongly support proposed fare reductions for off-peak travel on buses. Of the nine suburbs which comprise the City of Botany Bay, only Mascot has a train station. Furthermore, despite repeated requests from local residents, the City of Botany Bay and local state representatives, the State Government refuses to connect local bus services to Mascot train station. Providing buses to Mascot Station would make it easier for residents all over our City to access the station. I support the proposal to reduce off-peak fare reductions on buses in order to encourage bus use, where practicable, outside of peak hours. I do not accept, however, the caveat that if off-peak discounts are introduced on buses **all** fares would have to rise to compensate for the loss of revenue. On the contrary I suggest that lost revenue would be compensated by the **increase** in usage arising from such changes! Furthermore, I believe it is inequitable that train commuters should be entitled to off-peak discounts when bus commuters are not.

In relation to the proposal to introduce a "peak surcharge" for commuters travelling into the Sydney CBD, I am strongly opposed to this proposal. It is illogical to establish a price disincentive for commuters to use public transport to access the Sydney CBD. Such a proposal will not prevent these commuters from accessing the CBD, it will simply encourage them not to use public transport to access the CBD! I put to you that Sydney CBD's congestion problems would be exacerbated rather than solved if buses travelling into the CBD were replaced by the number of cars necessary to carry as many passengers.

In relation to the proposal to introduce "Fully Integrated Fares", while this proposal has merit there is one key concern. I am advised that Ferry Services have greater operational costs than bus and train services and that these operational costs are reflected in ferry fares. It is inequitable to increase bus and train fares in order to reduce ferry fares, as proposed under the "Fully Integrated" model. Ferry services disproportionately service affluent areas including Double Bay, Rose Bay, South Mosman, Kirribilli and Milsons Point. I do not accept that the residents of Daceyville should pay more to travel by bus so that the residents of Double Bay can pay less to travel by ferry.

I ask that you kindly consider these matters and look forward to your reply.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ben Keneally', written in a cursive style.

BEN KENEALLY
MAYOR