

Author name: D. Boyd

Date of submission: Thursday, 27 August 2015

Submission: Dear Sir

Re: IPART inquiry into Opal ticketing

Overall Opal ticketing has the potential to be an improvement for commuters.

However some matters are currently of concern. Opal purports to be an intermodal ticketing system yet it actually is an accumulative system in that it adds the costs of travel by bus, ferry, tram and train together while each of those modes of travel have different fare charging systems. An intermodal ticket would have uniform fares across all modes of travel.

In Newcastle the take up of Opal is slow principally because of patronage losses on both buses and trains due to a lack of dependence on an inadequate public transport network and poor service frequencies. Further there are few retail outlets selling Opal and no railway stations with top-up machines. As a large proportion of public transport usage is by concession and pension ticket holders it is probable that an expectation that these commuters will register and top-up on line to be at variance with current practice.

These matters need addressing before Opal can be utilised to its full potential.

Yours faithfully

Dr Graham Boyd  
Secretary  
Hunter Commuter Council