

Submission (Name Withheld)

IPART Final Draft 4th February 2016

Could IPART please consider the following 10 points to make the Opal fare structure fairer and easier to use for all passengers using public transport.

3 types of paper tickets exist

- Current magnetic stripe tickets (MST) single and return
 - These tickets are part of the old ticketing system that is currently costing the government money maintaining the ageing equipment and needs to be quickly phased out.
 - These tickets are distance based per kilometre travelled along route or track

- Current Opal cash paper tickets on buses
 - These paper tickets issued from the Opal bus units and will continue to be used
 - Does not cost the government extra as it is part of the new Opal system.
 - These are currently 'as the crow flies' in kilometres.

- Future Opal single use tickets
 - These tickets have not been introduced, but will be in the near future to replace MST's.
 - These will be issued from station & ferry ticket offices and vending machines.
 - These could be 'as the crow flies' or per kilometre travelled along rail track

Could IPART please consider the following:

The IPART draft proposal will remove the incentive for people to run between Star City Casio and Pymont trams stations sometimes using multiple cards to get 8 cheap journeys every Monday.

But the proposal may create an incentive for people to purchase cash single tickets and get off train or bus half way along a paid trip.

1. Reduce incentive to purchase single and return MST's after July 2016 on trains

If old cash MST tickets are to be used after July - keep per km along track distance

2. Reduce incentive to purchase new Opal single use tickets to save money on the train.

Keep new Opal single use tickets as per km track distance travelled.

This will eliminate the incentive to purchase a cash fare for a shorter as the crow flies distance and be able to get off the train half way along the journey when the fare will cost more using an Opal card.

Example:

You want to go from Eastwood to Strathfield ~15km, get a cash Opal fare from Eastwood to Carlingford ~3km as the crow flies but get off train at Strathfield station thus paying the lowest fare.

This is currently happening on buses with Opal cash fares.

3. Opal cash bus fares don't get cheaper the further you travel

Currently exists the incentive to buy a cash fare to the end or a certain point along a bus route to get a cheaper fare than using an Opal card.

Example: Using Opal Card

North Sydney to Mosman Junction costs	\$3.50
North Sydney to end of trip (terminus) costs	\$2.10

If you buy a cash fare to the end of the trip \$2.40 and get off half way along at Mosman Junction, it will be \$1.10 cheaper than using an Opal card.

Cash Opal bus fare would still be as the crow flies but would not reduce the further you travel. This will encourage people to use Opal cards and not purchase cash tickets on certain routes.

4. Default fare on buses reduces along trip

Unlike other modes of transport, buses have Opal readers on board the vehicle meaning as a passenger taps on the bus they can only travel as far as the end of the bus trip. Bus fares are proposed to increase for long distances to \$4.91 and this means that the maximum default fare will also rise to \$4.91.

Reduce default fare on buses as trip gets closer to terminus. As a passenger taps on, the bus Opal system would load a default fare onto the card equal to the distance left to the terminus.

Tap on

Distance from end of trip	Default bus fare loaded
0km to less than 3km	\$1.98
3km to less than 8km	\$3.34
8km to less than 15km	\$4.11
15km to less than 25km	\$4.69
25km and over	\$4.91

If you make a mistake tapping on 30km from terminus and tap off 9km from terminus \$4.11

If you correctly tap on but forget to tap off you will only pay for the remaining distance to terminus

If you make a mistake tapping on and then tap off at the terminus you will be charged \$1.98

This would not encourage people to fare evade, because if a transport officer got on and scanned the Opal card the passenger would be fined for not tapping on.

People make mistakes and should not be penalised with the maximum default fare if they have only travelled a few kilometres. Due to the confusing message on the Opal LCD screens passengers are tapping on the screen instead of the Opal symbol and may not tap on / off correctly

On buses ~3% more trips are default fares than other modes and this maybe due once the passengers realises they have forgotten to tap off, the bus doors are closed and the bus has left the stop.

5. Include weekday public holidays in the weekend discount cap

Consider including weekday public holidays as part of the weekend discount

Example : 2016 Australia Day Tuesday would be programmed as a weekend \$7.20 cap (adult)

This will encourage people to use public transport on major weekday public holidays to reduce road congestion to major events.

6. Include default fares in weekly travel rewards

If you accidentally forget to tap off this should not penalise you for using an Opal card. People make mistakes because they are in a hurry to get off bus, miss the stop, suddenly jump up or are distracted as they walk past the train station Opal readers. They will pay the maximum default fare as a penalty and should not also be penalised again by this maximum fare not counting against weekly travel rewards.

7. Capping at the maximum weekly travel cap

The weekly cap would not go over \$65 per week

The proposed draft would be very difficult to explain to the public. The maximum a passenger should need to load each week is \$65 and at the end of the week only the 10 most expensive journeys would be charged. If a passenger travelled 20 x \$1.98, 7 x \$3.34 & 1 x \$4.91 journeys the cap would stop any deductions over \$65.00 but Opal system would continue to count all journeys until the end of the week. On Sunday the most expensive trips would be calculated and the difference between these and \$65 would be refunded. This would need to be done the next time the passenger taps on after the week has ended and may also be difficult to explain.

Example 1:

20 x \$1.98	= \$ 39.60
7 x \$3.34	= \$ 23.38
1 x \$4.91	= \$ 4.91
Total	= \$ 67.89
Weekly Cap	= \$ 65.00
Refunded	= \$ 34.73 (\$65 - \$34.73) (next time passenger taps on after end of week)
Total Paid	= \$30.27

OR

The Opal card would only keep the ten most expensive trips and if a more expensive trip is taken later in the week, Opal would add the difference between the least expensive and any further journeys that are more expensive than the least expensive.

example 2:

	Opal Card Total
10 first journeys of the week 5 x \$1.98, 4 x \$3.34 and 1 x \$4.91 =	\$28.17
If passenger then makes a \$4.91 journey - \$1.98 = \$2.93 added to \$28.17 =	\$31.10
If passenger then makes a \$3.34 journey - \$1.98 = \$1.36 added to \$31.10 =	\$32.46
If passenger then makes a \$9.03 journey - \$1.98 = \$7.05 added to \$32.46 =	\$39.51

If the passenger made further journeys more expensive than the remaining \$1.98 journeys on the weekend then this journey minus the \$1.98 would be added to the total.

This means that passengers do not need to have more than the maximum weekly cap on their Opal card at the beginning of each week.

This is very important for people on low incomes and find it difficult to make ends meet to have to load more money (maybe \$100) on their card to travel to and from work.

8. Consider a fare free zone within Sydney's CBD's with a valid Opal card

Allow public transport within Sydney's CBD as long as an Opal card is used.

This would be similar to Melbourne but the only difference would be that it would only be for passengers using a valid Opal ticket. This would encourage more people to use public transport and better plan future transport as all trip data would be collected.

Now that the 10 most expensive trips are counted for free travel, most of the CBD trips will be free if passengers goes over 10 journeys per week. This would encourage people who live in the CBD and tourist not to own a car or hire a car and be a great boost to city shopping and nightlife.

9. Remove current Family Fare Deal for cash sales

Currently if a family buys a cash ticket from a train station, Sydney ferry attendant or STA bus driver or use a MST on these services, all adults pay and only 1 child pays and all other children travel free. This will encourage families that travel infrequently to continue to buy cash tickets instead of purchasing Opal cards for each child.

Remove all Family Fare Deals for cash sales

Allow families travelling with Opal to only pay for 2 children & all other children travel free.

This will make public transport for large families more affordable especially ones on low incomes.

10. Consider only 8 of the most expensive journeys counting to weekly free travel

Consider instead of 10 most expensive journeys only 8 most expensive journeys

I understand that working people will travel anyway but we should be encouraging people to use public transport to get to and from work by giving a reward to those people who travel Monday-Friday.

It is already a big change instead of the first 8 journeys of week to make it the 10 most expensive journeys.