

Dear Sir/Madam,

I have made some amendments to my submission which was sent on 23/8/2015. Please disregard the previous version. Thank you.

1. Before Opal was introduced, regular travellers used periodic tickets such as weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annual (including single form of transport and my multi). The prices were fixed and were not affected by peak or non peak hours.
2. The occasional travellers would buy return tickets.
3. Under the Opal fare system, the periodic tickets and return tickets were no longer available.
4. The new pricing under the Opal system charges the equivalent of a weekly's fare in 4 days under normal use (most common commuters).
5. To encourage people to use Opal card and to justify the increase of prices, it introduced free travel after 8 trips. The "free trips" promotion is deceptive because a previous weekly's fare has been charged in 4 days. We have paid for all the trips already!
6. Overall, under normal use, people spend more under Opal system than prior Opal era.
7. To save money, many people are making shorter trips early in the week to accrue 8 trips sooner. This, for someone who travels from Blue Mountains, or Gosford, could save them \$20 a week at least.
8. It is unfair to blame people or accuse people for abusing the system when they simply try to use Opal in ways to save, otherwise they have to pay more.
9. The "biggest losers" in the Opal system are those who are part time workers, shift workers (not working from Monday to Friday), temporary or occasional users/travellers.
10. Opal fare system is complex, overcharging for normal uses, and not user friendly.
11. To overhaul the Opal pricing system, first of all, there should be no increase of fares in any shape or form.
12. The fare system should be simple, easy and affordable.
13. Firstly, remove peak or non peak hours. The majority of people commute everyday to and back to work at times they have little choice to determine (the employers determine that). Previously, the periodic tickets allowed them to travel any time.
14. For someone who is not a regular commuter, for example, a senior who pays a fixed day fee, peak/no peak has little effect.
15. Secondly, remove free trips after 8 trips in a week. If you want to encourage people to use public transport, make them free on all weekends and public holidays.
16. Thirdly, reduce overall fares. Charge by distance (except senior, or pensioner). Make new fares similar to what previously annual fare was under normal commuting.
17. If the above can be done, then people will travel when they have to and at the time mostly convenient for them. There would be no random aimless shorter trips. There would be no crowds at certain peak or non peak time (i.e. 9:01). This would reduce unnecessary congestion for public transport.
18. The irregular users would not have to pay for higher fares.
19. There would be no confusion for visitors (temporary users).
20. Keep transfer available for those who use multiple form of transport. Charge by distance not by form of transport.
21. Keep daily and weekly cap to make it affordable.
22. If, after a year of trial under the new fare system, you find that transport is losing money compared to prior Opal system, then you can adjust fares gradually and annually.
23. This means a simple affordable fare system. No matter what you do, please do not make it more complicated.