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Submission: Please refer attachment.

I would like to provide feedback to the draft submission on Opal fares made on 21 December 2015.

## 1. Increase in cost

The submission states that 60% of commuters will be paying less which is false. Scrapping the free trips after 8 journeys and paying for 10 journeys will be a 20% increase in the cost for commuters.

My wife and I work full time 5 days a week and travel from Gordon to North Sydney. Currently we pay \$4.20 a trip which equates to \$33.60 for the week, given the journey on Friday is free. With the new proposal, I will be paying \$4.16 a trip which equates to \$41.60 per week given that Friday is no longer free. This is an \$8 increase a week or \$416 increase a year.

So given this simple logic, how can you state that 60% of all commuters will save money given that the majority of commuters will be effected the same way?

Any savings made with the reduced fare prices will be eliminated given we have to pay for 10 journeys not 8. It doesn't make sense!

## 2. Opal System not cheaper than previous paper ticket system.

When Opal was launched back in July they said it would be cheaper than paper tickets. When the paper ticket system was operating, the cost of a weekly was equivalent to the cost of 8 daily returns which makes sense given the free trip on Friday.

When the paper ticket system was operating I purchased yearly tickets which worked out to be \$22 a week, then the Opal system came in, abolished paper tickets and my weekly went up to \$33.60.

With this new change, we will be paying for 10 journeys, so the Friday journey will no longer be free, instantly adding 20% more to the weekly cost, my new weekly will cost \$41.60 due to paying for 10 journeys not 8.

I understand the loophole needs to be addressed (paying for the first 8 journeys) so I recommend commuters pay for the longest 8 journeys a week, not the longest 10 journeys. This will stop the loophole and also not penalise the majority of commuters who work 5 days a week.

The other recommendation if you choose to charge for the longest 10 journeys is to lower the peak / off peak fares by an additional 20% to offset commuters paying an additional 20% for the 2 extra journeys a week.

### 3. Discourage public transport in favour of driving.

I believe this proposal of charging for the 10 longest journeys will discourage people to take public transport and encourage more drivers on the road. It does not provide any incentive for commuters at all and create more congestion and pollution on our roads.

My wife and I live only 15KM from work and it will be cheaper for us to drive into work than pay \$83.20 ( $\$41.60 \times 2$ ) a week for 2 weekly train tickets.

In summary I recommend:

Commuters are charged for the longest 8 journeys a week, not the first 8 journeys. This will stop the loophole of phantom opal card tappers.

Being charged 10 journeys provides no incentive and will penalise majority of workers who commute 5 days a week.