



9 February 2016

Dear PART,

**Re Public Transport Fares**

I understand the NSW government instructions to IPART were to investigate “whether current concession arrangements support the optimal use of the network” and this has resulted in the following position: “We consider that Gold Opal arrangements should be better targeted so that those for whom the cost of travel is a real barrier benefit the most. We consider that Pensioner Concession Card holders and NSW War Widow/er Card holders should continue to be eligible for Gold Opal cards with a lower daily cap than the standard concession daily cap, while other seniors should be eligible for a Concession Opal Card.”

It seems to me that the network is optimised when more people use the rail network, particularly at off peak times. By IPART “targeting” and discriminating against self funded retirees, they also appear to have exceeded its brief to look at network optimisation. I could not find any instructions to “target” self funded retirees.

Clearly by increasing the cost of public transport for retirees like me, this will mean they will use their cars more and public transport less, particularly during off peak times. I fail to see how raising the barriers to retirees using public transport encourages “the optimal use of the network”, more likely, this will simply eliminate a group of existing customers from public transport and further antagonise self funded retirees.

When I was in business, the aim was always to increase the size of the customer base and optimise the use of scarce resources. If the NSW public transport system has the problem of having too many customers, and this proposal seems an excellent way of solving it.

Yours faithfully,

George Cloughley