

Submission to IPART re Opal Card and public transport costs
Feb 5th 2016

Recently the Opal Card was extended for people on concession, but only to those on full Newstart allowance. There are many **people entitled to concession travel** who get less than full Newstart. I get \$20/week less and to date have been refused the Opal concession. This means I have to buy paper concession tickets which cost more and are possibly going to disappear. Where will this leave people entitled to concession rates but denied the Opal concession card?

Each trip costs a bit more, there's no off peak rate, and no daily or weekly cap.

I have brought this matter to the attention of the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure but on each occasion have had sarcastic replies which do not answer my questions:

1. Why can't all people who are entitled to concession get the Opal concession?
2. If they continue this policy, will they guarantee to continue paper tickets for this group?

In addition I believe we should be doing everything to **encourage people to use public transport** and drive less.

I am also upset by the following:

1. **Seniors rate** should be available to all over 60 not working full time. We have to stay in the work-force but have increasing difficulty getting full-time work. The one compensation is that we will be able to get around more cheaply. I turn 60 in 4 months and am relying on this for affordability.
2. The price hikes planned are indecent. Our wages and pensions have not risen by 8%. Regular users used to have the cap of 8 journeys with weekly/quarterly tickets. Removing that cap plus the planned rate increases means the increase is actually much greater than 8%
3. We were expecting **journeys that involve transfer bus-train** etc to be counted as a single journey, not each charged as though it was the only travel. The previous travel cards covered people needing multiple forms of transport. They are already financially far worse off than before Opal card
4. Why can't **bus travel have offpeak concession**? Surely the same principle applies, of getting people away from peak hour.

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