

Author name: M. Swayn

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Submission: The fact that customers using multiple transport modes pay separate fares for each is a major disappointment with the Opal Card.

Due to Greater Sydney's legacy of a radially structured heavy rail and bus routes as opposed to a more "networked" metro system, any need to travel across the metropolitan area invariably requires the use of multiple transport modes. This is not only inconvenient in terms of time, but the commuter is then doubly penalised by having to pay more. For example, even a relatively short journey such as Gladesville to Sydney Olympic Park requires the use of two bus trips and one ferry ride (using the fastest trip shown on the Transport for NSW website). Even though the distance from Gladesville to Sydney Olympic Park is relatively short "as the crow flies" (at about 3km), the cumulative fares \$13.40, in contrast, a customer using the M52 Metrobus from Circular Quay to Parramatta (a distance of 25km) only pays a \$4.60 single adult fare by virtue of using one mode of transport. The single, adult fares on the same journey by train and ferry are \$5.20 and \$7.40 respectively.

Similar examples can be found throughout the metropolitan area.

Public transport customers simply want to travel from their origin to their destination in the safest, convenient and most cost-effective way possible. A government run, integrated public transport system should make all modes of transport available to travelling customers and the fares should not be based on the number of modes required to complete these journeys.

Whilst there have been some minor adjustments (including the \$15 daily cap, 60 minute breaks in train journeys and the Weekly Travel Reward), the implementation of the Opal card is largely replicating the currently disparate fare arrangements that exist among Sydney's 4 transport modes of heavy and light rail, bus and ferry. Rather than providing an integrated fare "system", the new arrangements perpetuate the inequities exemplified earlier.

Due to the Opal card largely replicating the current fare structures (albeit in a more convenient form), potential customers are unlikely to be encouraged to switch to public transport, due to the maintenance of these higher fare costs. It will simply continue to be more convenient and cost effective to use their cars.

Other cities that have implemented similar cards have either used distance or time-based zonal arrangements to provide this value to customers. Irrespective of the modes of transport used, you pay set fares for travel within a single zone, or the number of zones crossed during the journey.

I urge that the inter-modal arrangements for the Opal card be changed to recognise the need for many customers to use a wide variety of transport options and to remove the current cost inequities. This would place Sydney in the same league as other major cities regarding access to convenient, cost-effective public transport.