

Author name: M. Tolson

Date of submission: Monday, 18 January 2016

Submission: The proposed changes will significantly increase the cost of my travel, even more than the pre-opal paper ticket costs, despite Government promises and assurances that travel would be cheaper for most under the opal regime.

It is a slap in the face for the Government to spend the last year or two pushing everybody onto opal cards, and then once the paper ticket option is gone looking to substantially up travel cost.

Just prior to the implementation of the opal card system (which was not too long ago), i was paying \$52 per week for a weekly paper ticket, about \$42 per week when buying a quarterly ticket. Under the new proposals, i will be paying the full \$65 "maximum" per week, an increase of 25% from the weekly ticket price and 55% from the quarterly ticket price.

I am going to be paying the better part of \$1,000 more per year for my train travel. This is simply too much. Do you not realise that most of the people effected are those with young families and mortgages, and \$1,000 extra per year is an unaffordable and unfair extra burden.

The people proposing these changes must be completely short sighted. Such an increase to regular uses like myself is likely to lead to me avoiding train travel & instead driving to work. MANY people i have spoken have said something similar. This will just lead to many more people & cars on the road instead of on public transport, and may be self defeating.

The bitter taste of the price hike is itself going to lead to many people avoiding public transport and using their car - which i know also from speaking to many people.

The proposed, almost tripling, of the Sunday fare cap, is similarly going to discourage myself and other people i have spoken to, from using public transport to travel around on Sundays, which since the introduction of the opal system we have been doing alot of. It again reeks of short sightedness and will I believe substantially reduce public transport use on a Sunday.

Slugging the regular uses with the major burden of the overall cost increase (by charging for 10 trips per week at maximum price), so they in effect fund the irregular uses, is also short sighted and unfair. Another reason why public transport will be avoided and car use substantially increased.

Substantial fare increases are probably also likely to result in greater fare evasion, and perhaps the majority of effort should be put towards catching, fining & recovering payments from those who evade fares, instead of taking the easy route and increasing the cost burden of those regular paying system users.

Having travelled throughout many parts of the world, particularly nearby countries in Asia, Sydney's public transport system is already significantly overpriced, and of far less quality, than those in places such as Hong Kong, Seoul, and many places even in China. To hike the prices up again seems massively unjustified.