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Submission: Boiled down, this review basically recommends an approximately 30% increase in effective Public Transport pricing during 2016. About the only positive is the re-introduction of integrated pricing for multi-mode journeys (which was lost during the initial introduction of the Opal card).

At a time when annual inflation is running at about 2%, there is no justification for increasing public transport prices by about 30%. Increasing costs to consumers, without providing any benefit, will just result in more people abandoning public transport - increasing traffic congestion. Overall, these proposed increases would appear likely to result in a net reduction in productivity and GDP.

Whilst the 8-journey cap was an unusual feature of Opal, it was a reasonable way of approximating the (discontinued) weekly tickets - which were sold at a discount that effectively offered free travel after 8 trips. Since the vast majority of public transport use is commuters making 10 similar trips each week, changing the cap from "first 8 journeys" to "most expensive 10 journeys" amounts to a 25% increase. On top of this, the proposal includes per-journey price increases of 5-10% - an overall increase of about 30% for many (most?) commuters.

I agree that the current pricing structure is open to rorting but the previous transport minister requested that customers rort the system, so it's hardly surprising that some people have. Given the time cost for most of the rorts, I would expect that most people are doing it solely for the fun of it - unless you have nothing better to do, there's rorting the system actually costs you money. This rorting could be immediately stopped by just using the most expensive 8 journeys during a week, rather than the first 8.

The proposal also suggests that single-journey paper tickets cost 40% more than the equivalent Opal journey. Given that Opal single-journey pricing was based on a 5% discount over single-journey paper tickets, this also amounts to a 33% price increase, with absolutely to benefit to consumers.

Overall, it's difficult to see any rationale behind these changes other than an attempt by a cash-strapped NSW government attempting to achieve short-term savings.