

Planning Institute of Australia Submission on Public Transport Fares

The Transport Planning Chapter and other members of PIA NSW have discussed concerns regarding the public transport fares and resolved to make this submission to IPART.

The PIA is generally supportive of the IPART process methodology and reporting available on the IPART website. We request that the review considers the following issues:

The Fact Sheet of 8 September 2015 sets out the objectives, and the proposal to identify socially optimal fares. The objectives are reasonable but do not specifically address the key objective of transport: to maximise opportunities for the exchange of people, goods, and services. Perhaps the third doth point objective covers this: to encourage the greater use of public transport.

Public transport shapes our urban development. Fares should not only maximise use, but support the desired location, spread and density of land use, employment and housing. Cheaper long distance fares may encourage undesirable social, health, and land use outcomes such as urban sprawl if those areas served are not appropriately planned.

The objective of increasing farebox revenue may be assisted by cheaper fares in the contra-peak commuter direction. Employment and education in outer areas could take advantage of cheap "back loading" in trains and buses currently returning near-empty from urban centres. This decentralisation of jobs and schools is evident in the strong contra-peak transport flows in cities such as London and the Home Counties.

In summary, the fare review should be tested against the broad planning objectives of the NSW Government.

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