

SUBMISSION TO IPART RE FARES FOR CITYRAIL SERVICES.

Save Our Rail NSW Inc is a community organisation taking an interest in the continued provision of public transport.

The members of Save Our Rail understand the need for some fare increases to occur.

In all deliberations regarding fares the following points need to be considered:

- Fares need to assist in the payment of the service. If they are set too low the service will be cut back as it is considered to be running at too much of a loss. However, public utilities such as rail should be subsidised fairly heavily, so that poorer members of the community can have access to transport. Provision of such services cannot be entirely on a “user pays” basis.
Therefore there is a delicate balance which needs to be achieved. Any increase in fares needs to be fair and justifiable in terms of value for money and revenue for the provider.
- Fares designed to reflect operating costs need to be evaluated in terms of the efficiency of the organisation. If trains are not clean, safe and punctual it should not be expected that fares would be increased. Ipart needs to evaluate these aspects of Cityrail services in determining any fare increase.
- There is considerable loss of revenue through non collection of fares. The increases should not be designed to cover this gap. Instead as part of its evaluation Ipart should be considering this as part of the efficiency of the organisation, on which it should judge the need for fare adjustment.
- There should be an upper limit to any increases in train fares, otherwise commuters will not consider it worthwhile to travel by train and an increase in car use would result. That does not mean there should be no increase as it is recognised running costs have risen along with car running costs. Increases should therefore be in line with cost increases.

I hope these points will be considered in your deliberations.

Joan Dawson for Save Our Rail NSW Incorporated.