

PRIVATE FERRY FARES ACROSS NEW SOUTH WALES UNDER REVIEW

3 November 2015

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) is calling for public submissions on its annual review of fares for private ferries providing regular passenger services under contract to Transport for NSW (TfNSW).¹

Each year, IPART recommends the maximum fares that can be charged for regular private ferry services. Fares for Sydney Ferries and Stockton ferry service in Newcastle are determined through a separate process.

This year IPART received its terms of reference on 26 October 2015. This means the usual review process will be expedited in order for fare changes to take effect on 1 January 2016. The Issues Paper released today includes IPART's indicative recommendations on maximum fares in 2016 which are:

- ▼ Central Coast Ferries increase by between 20 to 30 cents (to \$8.00-\$8.10)
- ▼ Clarence River Ferries increase by between 20 to 30 cents (to \$7.90-\$8.00)
- ▼ Brooklyn Ferries increase by between 20 to 30 cents (to \$6.90-\$7.00)
- ▼ Church Point Ferry Service increase by between 20 to 30 cents (to \$7.90-\$8.00),
- ▼ Palm Beach Ferry Service increase by up to 30 cents (up to \$11.50 for the Ettalong service and up to \$8.00 for the Basin service)
- ▼ Cronulla and National Park Ferry Service do not change from 2015 levels (\$6.40), and
- ▼ Matilda Cruises do not change from 2015 levels (\$7.40 for both the Circular Quay to Darling Harbour and Circular Quay to Lane Cove services).

Operators may charge less than the recommended maximum fare if they wish.

IPART Chairman Dr Peter Boxall said that with the exception of Matilda Cruises, the indicative fare recommendations are based on estimates of each ferry operator's efficient costs in 2016, on updated cost information provided by operators, and judgements to balance the impacts on ferry operators and customers. For Matilda Cruises our indicative recommendation is for maximum fares to remain unchanged as these are still higher than actual fares in the market.

The Issues Paper invites public comment on the indicative fare recommendations for 2016, and on other matters including the proposed approach for incorporating external benefits like lower road congestion into fare decisions.

¹ Private ferry services under review are Central Coast Ferries (Woy Woy to Empire Bay), Church Point Ferry Service (Scotland Island and western foreshore of Pittwater), Clarence River Ferries (Iluka to Yamba), Cronulla and National Park Ferry Service (Cronulla to Bundeena), Brooklyn Ferry Services (Brooklyn to Dangar Island), Matilda Cruises (Circular Quay to Darling Harbour, and Circular Quay to Lane Cove) and Palm Beach Ferries (Palm Beach to Mackerel Beach and the Basin and Palm Beach to Ettalong and Wagstaffe).

Submissions to the Issues Paper and indicative fare recommendations close on 1 December 2015. IPART will consider the feedback provided by stakeholders and expert advice on the reasonableness of ferry operators updated information before providing a Final Report and recommendations to TfNSW in December 2015.

The Issues Paper is available on IPART's website <<http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au>>.

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