

I refer to the request made by Sydney Ferries Corporation (SFC) for another proposed ferry fare increase.

As a regular commuter from Manly to Circular Quay on the Manly Ferry and/or Jetcat services I am appalled that the SFC has made such an application for the following reasons;

1. The level of service currently offered by the Manly Ferry and Jetcat has deteriorated markedly over the last couple of years. It is rare that a week goes by when I am not personally inconvenienced by a Manly Ferry and/or Jetcat being late or cancelled entirely. When extrapolated across the other professionals and workers adversely impacted the cost to the community and economy is significant. This situation is exacerbated in periods of wet weather like the one we recently experienced. It is unacceptable that fares, which are already too high on this route, could be increased at a time when the level of service has deteriorated to the level that it has.

2. Increasing the fares on the Manly to City route will increase the number of people who choose the car rather than the ferry to get to the city and increase the congestion on already highly congested routes. I am aware of a number of people today who make the economic decision to get together, either 2 or 3 in a car and travel to and from the city every day. Increasing the fares will simply increase the economic reasons to do this which can not be in the best interests of the public or the environment.

3. It would seem more appropriate that regular commuters should not be asked to bare the brunt of any proposed fare increase. Unlike almost all public commuter transport that I am aware of globally which provide concessions for regular commuters (eg monthly, six monthly and yearly passes), we are currently limited to Ferry 10s and Jet 10s. If any tickets are to be increased it should be single tickets aimed at leisure travellers who are probably more price insensitive. However rather than contemplating increasing the prices of Ferry 10s and Jet 10s, SFC should be contemplating discounting these prices for regular users by providing concessional pricing for 6 month or 12 month regular use.

Surely the goal of government is to encourage public transport use, not actively discourage it!!!

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss further.

Regards  
Glen Butler