

To whom it may concern,

I refer my comments to the above report and the recommendation by IPART to increase the fares on Cityrail by 12% over a 4 year period.

As a commuter using Cityrail services daily, my work day is regularly disrupted with late running or cancelled services - particularly when it comes to the Illawara line going from Bondi Junction to Cronulla. It seems that either when it is really hot, or really cold and raining, there is some sort of signal malfunction which causes issue. Given that there is no other form of transport linking to Cronulla and the Sutherland Shire, as commuters we are at the mercy of Cityrail and their capabilities at rectifying the fault, which invariably takes much longer than it should. If it is not a delay, it is the shortening of train carriages due to graffiti or rubbish, which places extra burden on the service to take more people in less space, and given that not all carriages have airconditioning that works satisfactorily, this makes for a very uncomfortable trip home.

You report states that your recommendations for price increases can be attributed to

"The need for passengers and taxpayers to each fund an appropriate portion of the costs of providing Cityrail services that reflects the level of benefits individual users and the wider community derive from these services."

I have yet to see such a great level of benefit that justifies this level of increase. If Cityrail were a commercial business, it would have to show value to the Consumers in order to charge premium prices. In fact in this current economic environment, most businesses are looking at dropping prices and re-engineering processes in order to maintain consumer interest and profits. Cityrail basically has a monopoly on middle distance travel and without competition, does not need to do any of this to maintain it's business model and attractiveness to it's customer base. In fact, I truly believe that Cityrail has reengineering saves that can be applied to their business to make it leaner and increase profits, without increasing price to the consumer - have you ever heard of 'Six Sigma' Quality processing?

Six Sigma is a business management strategy, originally developed by Motorola, that today enjoys wide-spread application in many sectors of industry. Six Sigma seeks to identify and remove the causes of defects and errors in manufacturing and business processes.

Most businesses in Australia run a Quality programme using this methodology (or similar) designed to eliminate errors and increase productivity, giving a better product to consumers and increasing profits to their business without affecting their pricing. If Cityrail adopted any of these principles, I am sure you would find a more profitable business with a happier consumer base without such a severe price increase.

Alternatively, any increases in pricing in 2009 could have come from the 3.9% increase that the NSW politicians have just given themselves - money that also should have gone to essential services like Fries and Ambo's (who have had to reduce their numbers to gain their increases. Excuse me but I am sure a politician does not know how to save someone from a burning house let alone put out the fire, so I would rather reduce politician headcount than these vital services!). I am sure that in moving the increase to Cityrail and reducing the

number of politicians (who do not even use the services we have to pay for) would have put Cityrail in much better shape financially to upgrade services. Let those in parliament, or even those who sat on the committee of your report - Michael Keating, James Cos & Sibylle Krieger - spend a month travelling to their work on the Cityrail services and then let's see who would agree to the increase to the public to pay for services - that should already be far superior than they are today, based on the income of the business since inception.

One last point to make - with the cost of petrol that has only just begun decreasing in the past few days, there has been a substantial increase in commuters wishing to use public transport to save money. This in turn creates a financial boom as there are more people using the standard services without any increase to infrastructure. Surely this too should go towards calculations of how much money Cityrail actually needs in order to upgrade and maintain their services!!

On behalf of all those who travel, I say review your recommendations to bring them further into line with the reality that the users of your system face on a daily basis.

Yours faithfully,
Samantha Ranken