

## Submission Regarding Fare Rises on Sydney Trains

I would like to point out to the people who are making this decision and the government who are proposing to yet again increase fares that:

There are hundreds of thousands of people in this city who are only doing part-time/low paid jobs. I, for instance, only get 25 hours of work each week and earn less than \$30,000 a year. I travel for 2 hours each day in order to do 5 hours work. Several other people where I work travel 4 hours a day from the Western Suburbs in order to work for five hours.

You might say that perhaps we should get another job but at age 55, and after being made redundant and applying for literally hundreds of jobs I have discovered by bitter experience that nobody wants to hire someone of my age despite my extensive educational qualifications and experience.

I have already given up even social drinking, smoking, going to restaurants, cinemas and do not drive or own a car due to the cost of living (which does not just include train fares but also the fact that I am now paying more than half my income in rent). The rest of course is spent on essentials such as food.

I work, for instance, on Bourke Road in Alexandria. This is, as you may know, is very heavily industrialised with many thousands of people working in this area. Bourke Road is serviced by Green Square train station at one end and Mascot (suburban) at the other. The bus service that used to run down Bourke Road has been removed - presumably in order to force people to use the so called 'public- private' train line. Nobody where I work uses this private train service because it charges an additional premium (on top of the exorbitant price we already pay for a train ticket). Most workers either drive a car, bicycle to work or get a bus to Botany Road and then we have to walk 20 minutes from the bus-stop to Bourke Road. This is, of course, on top of the various gruelling train trips we all have to make to get to the bus stop.

Does the government in NSW actually realise how many people are now living on the edge of poverty? They continually take a piecemeal approach to problems such as public transport. I still find it hard to imagine that it makes sense (for instance) to state that they will put an extra 200 extra buses on the road instead of a new rail link. Aren't the roads bugged up enough already? Where are you going to find the bus drivers? Are you all nuts? I find it amazing that they pay consultants millions of dollars to tell them what is wrong with the transport system when any poor bastard who uses the transport system could tell them what is wrong for free. Then the government spend millions of dollars to cost the project and finally decide not to do it. I have to tell you (for free of course) that the government will, by necessity, have to build this railway one of these days and it's not going to be cheaper to do it in 5 or 10 years time. In fact it's going to cost 3-4 times as much again.

I strongly oppose any further rise in train fares. I am really beginning to wonder if it's worth going to work at all. I barely make any money anyway, and after you put up the fares (and your salaries yet again) I may have to go and live in a tent on the beach.

Wednesday, 5 November 2008