
Sent: Wednesday, 5 November 2008 7:57 PM

Subject: Submission regarding the 17% Rail fare increase

Hello,

Whilst I am unaware of a specific format for submissions to IPART, as a regular commuter I would like to express my dissatisfaction with the proposed 17% Rail fare increase. I don't feel that this service performs in a manner that justifies this increase. Specifically, I pay for a service that I believe is currently performing well below par. Example of this, from my personal experience are as follows;

- Over-crowding - in the morning, at around 7:30am (on the North Shore Line, from Chatswood) trains are so full, I cannot recall the last time I actually got a seat. This is not so bad, I can manage. What I disagree with is that the entrance vestibules, and upper and lower walkways inside the carriage are also occupied with standing patrons. This to me is way over crowded.
- Air-Conditioning - Understandably on cooler mornings this is not switched on, however when you have a full carriage as illustrated above, the humidity and heat can become sickly stifling. I can count at least 4-5 times in the past 3 months where I thought I was going to be ill due only to the overbearing heat inside the train.
- Staff - Whilst I agree most do their job, and do it well, I often see staff particularly at larger stations, Wynyard, Town Hall, and Central, seemingly doing nothing. I understand everyone is entitled to breaks etc, but I believe there are too many staff. One example from when I was on the Western line recently at Seven Hills in the early hours of the morning (6am), there was a staff member on duty there only to read times, or monitor arrival times. I am actually not entirely sure what they were doing, but it didn't seem like much, and at that time of morning, I'm sure could have been covered by one of the many other staff on duty. What I'm trying to say is, Yes we probably need more drivers, but fewer ancillary/platform staff.
- Cleanliness of carriages - Generally alright. Not brilliant. Carriages seem to only be cleaned every 3 days or so. I constantly find rubbish or food scraps or other refuse in carriages and on seats. Just today I sat in a vestibule seat only to find the seat back (and a few spots on the floor near the door) had been "tagged" in orange spray paint. I knew this had been freshly done today as my shirt stuck to the seat, and now retains some orange paint marks. No particularly happy.
- Cost - given the above statements of discontent, I believe the price we currently pay for rail travel is excessive. And I feel a further increase is only to fatten CEO's and heads already bulging pockets. There has been little to no increase in the quality of the service provided by City Rail. Furthermore the axing of proposed infrastructure improvements only goes to re-iterate that this service clearly has difficulty managing its funds.

These are just a few points I currently feel are worthy items worth of inclusion in the discussion regarding the proposed fare increase. I do hope you receive this email in good faith, and allow this to be submitted as part of the IPART discussion. I have no axe to grind against City Rail, and if they performed as any other business did, based on performance, then the fare increase would probably be justified. However as above, I feel this is currently not the case.