

Sent: Friday, 17 October 2008 12:33 PM

Subject: Online Submission - Review of CityRail Fares 2009-2012

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I am writing to express my concern and disapproval of the proposed 17% Fare increases by CityRail from January 1 2009. The cost of Living in Sydney has been rising significantly over the last few years and especially over the last few months and to raise fares by such a large amount in one hit is unfair and unexpected. A CPI increase of 3-4% would be fair and probably necessary but a 17% increase (close to 5 times the CPI) is unacceptable and unbelievable.

I am an office worker that currently travels by train from the South West to the City. My Weekly train ticket will go up by \$7 (which is \$30 a month). That is what we already pay for our Monthly Telephone Line Rental so in effect this is like having to pay another monthly Bill on top of the many we already pay. And with the current high interest rates/rent and increases in food, petrol and childcare prices, this will add to the financial pressure households are already facing.

I am aware that the State Government does in fact have the power to order RailCorp not to raise fares by the maximum amount proposed and I am suggesting that this is what should happen.

And don't forget the many people, like myself, who have recently bought a home and have fixed their Home Loans & are now on a comparatively higher Interest Rate because the recent drop in Interest Rates has not provided much relief and won't do so until their Fixed Interest Rate period is over – for me that's a 2 year wait.

Furthermore, in the currently volatile economic climate this also means that households are suffering extra losses in Superannuation and investments. And with a glooming recession on the horizon this is not the time to be increasing fares by such a high amount. It is the time to be inflicting minimal pressure on people where possible and that decision should also apply to travel services.

It is a shame that this proposal has not been voiced more to the public and I am afraid that many train travellers simply do not know about it. And those that do will verbally complain to their family and friends but may not take the time to lodge an official complaint and are probably not aware of the process involved in doing so or do not have time to do so. I can only imagine the uproar in January when travellers realise then how much extra they will have to pay. I am sure you will receive many more complaints then.

I urge that this maximum increase does not happen. I can accept a CPI increase of 3-4% as necessary but will not be happy about a 17% increase given the current financial pressures and economic volatility.