

I would like to make a submission regarding the proposed Review of City Rail fares 2009-2012.

I have lived in Sydney now for 2 years now and I find the City Rail services to be a source of contempt. I do not usually make social commentaries public however I feel that due to the nature of this report I wanted to comment.

I believe that the proposed fare increases are absurd. Considering the poor performance and reliability of the City Rail network I can't understand how a fare increase could possibly be justified. I have lost count of the number of time that a train that I was travelling on has been delayed or broken down. I travel on the Eastern Suburbs and Illawarra line and have encountered numerous issues while travelling to the city each day for work. Spending an hour on the train is lengthy enough without having service delays due to 'sick passengers' and 'signal faults'. Not to mention the old silver metal trains that are still in service despite being severely outdated. I can't believe that trains without air-conditioning are still allowed to be in service. There is nothing worse than spending an hour in an over-crowded train on a hot summer's day breathing in a carriage full of strangers sweat and B.O especially because for some strange reason people don't always open the windows!

I also think that train services should be more frequent to try and reduce overcrowding during peak times. Most people have standard working hours between the times of 8am to 6pm therefore most people travel during these times. If there were more frequent train services then perhaps people would not need to squeeze on like sardines and stand for such long distances. There are not enough adequate hand railings to hang on to ensure people don't over-balance. Not to mention the fact that ventilation really does become an issue when you are standing in the centre aisles of either the top or bottom floors. I have found that common courtesy is a thing of the past and people will shove you out of the way to get on the train and get a seat.

Train stations are also an issue in my eyes. Car parking availability at train stations is inadequate I believe. A large number of commuters need to drive to a train station in order to catch the train in the city. Car park security and also various parking restriction in place in the streets surrounding a lot of train stations makes this very difficult.

Due to all of the above issues I have mentioned (and many more that I imagine other commuters have) I believe that an increase in City Rail fares is unjustified. Until services are dramatically improved I think we are actually paying too much as it is. If you want to encourage train travel to reduce traffic on the roads and help our environment then public transport services need to be greatly improved.