

**Alex Stewart**

city\_rail\_submission.txt 29/03/2006

Dear Tribunal Members,

### CityRail Fare Review

I have been a daily user of CityRail's services for 9 years now on the Eastern Suburbs line. While it is true that recent performance over the last 12 months or so has been much better than the 12 months prior, it is a much poorer service than 2003 - 2004, and appears to have been in steady decline through the period I have been travelling.

CityRail make a number of claims in their submission to the tribunal. I do not doubt that CityRail need extra revenue to further improve their service, however I do not believe that there is any justification that the revenue should come from passengers.

CityRail have cited their improved performance as one justification for fare increases, however their own figures suggest that they are not consistently able to meet their own (now relaxed) targets for on-time running, as well as other benchmark figures. CityRail's fare increases should not be approved until such times as they can indicate that they are able to consistently meet these targets AND demonstrate a management plan capable of further improving their service levels.

I also wish to draw attention to CityRail's very poor performance in passenger communication. The 'TV' screens used to indicate when the next train is due appear to only operate when staff are present at the stations. They are not operating early in the morning, when trains arrive with no indication of destination or which stations the train will stop. The PA operators do not appear to be trained in how to make legible announcements when there are service difficulties, with the result that their messages are often meaningless. When announcements are made, they are often wrong, however it appears more common for no announcements to be made. The overall impression is that when the rail network has problems, there is no adequate management plan to ensure accurate and timely communication, either to staff or the public.

I would urge you to reject CityRail's submission.