

"Bruce Schultz"

Dear Sir / Madam,

I wish to strongly oppose the recent submission for higher train prices in NSW, on a number of fundamental points, which I will outline in brief.

The rail provider in NSW, directly via the government controlled corporation, made a decision to substantially underinvest in rail over the last 15 years. In the recent timetable changes, the Key Performance Indicator of trains running on time was artificially manipulated to provide false and misleading results. By this I mean that the window of time that was defined as "on time" was substantially increased, making passing performance tests easier, for no real improvement in services to users. I assure you that most peoples view of "on time" is likely to be closer to minutes, and not the far wider standard adopted by NSW rail.

The reason monopoly businesses public or otherwise) require regulation is to prevent these very tempting conflicts of interest fro being allowed to persist. This would not be permitted in other sectors.

Qantas, or indeed any other airline would be unable to charge 2006 prices for travel on a 1970 DC10 aircraft. The request to retain real pricing power for a monopoly business that does not provide 2006 level services is unreasonable. For another example, no one would now go to the dentist using equipment from the 1970's, however NSW rail is seeking to offer just that service, and is now demanding a premium price for it.

The conditions on the trains under which I must travel, particularly in summer, would breach every occupation health and safety regulation if it was a workplace. I find it totally unacceptable in a hot climate such as Sydney's that trains are not required to be air-conditioned. 900 people on a train in peak hour with no ventilation, no air conditioning, and an ambient temperature of 35 degrees and 80% + humidity is unacceptable at any price, even discounted. Every single morning I get a train (from Oatley to the City) at 7:32 that is NOT air-conditioned. If an employer provided such conditions, the very same government that is insisting the trains are acceptable would move quickly to shut them down.

If NSW rail wishes to proved a premium service, with modern and adequately maintained trains, I will be pleased to pay a premium price. Until such time I am extremely opposed to any price rise whatsoever. Having grown up in Melbourne, and recently revisiting that city, I assure that the NSW rail transport compares very poorly indeed. I would note in addition, that basic items like disabled access are very poor in deed in NSW.

Yours sincerely,

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