

David Coster
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Submission against a CityRail fare increase

To whom it may concern,

I wish to submit against a fare increase on the basis of several reasons, listed below. Not the least the validity of the data supporting CityRails submission, which I believe bears scrutiny.

Firstly since I have arrived in Sydney 3 years ago, the level of service has fallen overall by a third, with no corresponding decrease in fares, this represents a large real fare increase CityRail have already given themselves.

This effective fare increase is compounded by the savings CityRail must surely be achieving by transporting so many people in each train. ie, maximum revenue per service, for only slightly increased running costs, over a much smaller number of services.

Secondly I wish to provide the following feedback rebutting CityRails claim that more trains are on time. By increasing the "allowed lateness" of a train before it being recorded late, statistical manipulation has occurred, with no effective real difference to service levels. I would like the committee to consider how the lateness figures pre-changes would have looked under the same criteria.

Anecdotally I believe that the service levels will have worsened. Currently, I have to catch 12 trains a week. In my average week, 1 will be cancelled, 2 will be late and 1 will break down every other week. This does not take into account the increasing number of weekends I am unable to receive a service.

Thirdly the inability to trust the timetable an extra hour a day is added to my traveling time. This represents another fare increase of approximately \$100 a week paid in addition to the fare I pay CityRail.

Regarding the data supporting CityRails application.

In the last year I have lodged several complaints, at Stations, and through the 131500 service. Despite providing contact information and requesting feedback, on none of the occasions has this happened.

My last call to the 131500 number I was told by a call centre rep who would not provide the legally required amount of identification, that they rarely recorded the complaints and only passed on those complaints submitted in writing. All others were ignored. Dispute asking several times I was unable to identify the call center or operator.

As a result I believe there is a large under reporting of the number of complaints by CityRail.

I am also concerned that the surveys on customer satisfaction do not target CityRail customers, by surveying them at stations at particular times, giving a fuller picture of level of satisfaction. Working in the call centre industry I am aware that the contact rate for full time

working people at home is very low. As a result CityRail has added bias away from the people most likely to be affected by the changes.

Rather than fare increases, I would recommend not paying bonuses to CityRail management, until

- there is a return to previous numbers of services provided
- trains are reliable and run to schedule
- reporting of complaints is handled by an independent body
- customer satisfaction levels are measured without bias
- KPI's currently set out "on paper" are achieved

My understanding is that there will be no fare increases until CityRail has proved to have improved many areas of operation. I do not believe this has been done.

Yours Sincerely

David Coster