

To the Independent Pricing & Regulatory Tribunal,

We are writing to you to voice our opinions on the RailCorp submission to increase fares. We both strongly disagree with the submission and wish to protest against any increase in rail fares due to the appalling service currently provided by RailCorp.

We are regular users of CityRail, travelling each business day from Leumeah in the south-west on the East Hills/Airport line to Sydney City. I have an extra journey changing trains to North Sydney.

Please find below a list of reasons why we feel RailCorp do not deserve to increase their fares:

Train Journey Times

Since the new timetable was introduced last year train journey times have increased.

* Of course this was meant to ensure reliability of train services. The increase in these times is a farce. We have been subjected to on several occasions missing our train because it has arrived early and left early. I know the time it states in the timetable that it is due to leave, so I know when they leave early. I approached the platform worker only a couple of days ago when this happened again and he didn't care and walked away. My point is, RailCorp has built into the timetable extra time so that they can merely try and meet the timetable times.

* However, this has also been a bit pointless when they are still unable to deliver trains to their destinations on time, with the East Hills/Airport line still having one if not the worst on time running figures.

* The extra journey times has also resulted in fewer train services

Train Services

Since the new timetable was introduced last year the number & thus frequency of train services have been reduced.

* We now wait longer for train services, as they are less frequent.

- This has a knock on effect to when you arrive at work or are trying to get home.

- If we miss a train at Leumeah in the mornings (eg ticket lines, traffic) it can have an absolutely detrimental effect, sometimes there might be a train not far off, but usually you will have to wait 15 mins or more.

- How is it possible that if a train starts at Campbelltown it can be late arriving into Leumeah?

- Also, quite often in the morning when I change at Central for a connecting train to North Sydney, I is forced to wait up to 8/10 mins for a train, where as it used to be 2-3 mins previously.

* Trains are now over crowded.

- Attempting to catch peak hour train services is now a nightmare. Quite often I now have to wait at Central in the morning or North Sydney in the afternoon for another train. This has a knock on affect to either getting to work in the morning or trying to catch a connecting train home in the afternoon (which due to the less frequent services is not a great feeling when you miss one and have to wait for another).

- People have to stand to and/or from their destinations. I find this absolutely disgusting that when you pay for a ticket, that you have to stand. Since the new timetable introduction, due to the less frequency of the East Hill/Airport trains, these trains in peak hour in the mornings and afternoons have commuters standing; with the trains quite often jam packed. This is disgusting considering sometimes in the morning it's as early as from

Leumeah and in the afternoons it's as early as from Wynyard. These are extremely long distances. I have to quite often stand between the City and North Sydney, but that is not the same distance as to the south-west.

* Train journeys will sometimes be altered from the stated timetable.

- Just last week I caught the 6:21pm train from Wynyard. Not only was it late, but they changed it from the already "too many stops" to all stations to the Southern Highlands. This was absolutely ridiculous; especially considering it followed an all stations to the East Hills line just minutes before. This resulted in an extra 20+ mins on my journey and I arrived home very late.

- We have been subjected to many of these types of incompetent decisions, resulting in not arriving at our destination at the intended time

* We still experience train cancellations, although at least not to the pathetic high number before the timetable introductions

Train Quality & Comfort

* The standard of trains provided varies greatly between: a) the new millennium trains; b) trains with air conditioning c) trains with no air conditioning and only windows

* When you have over crowded conditions (as above), it is nauseating to be coupled up in trains where there is no air conditioner or the air conditioner is not working

- Last night was our latest experience of this, with it being a very hot day, no air conditioned train, over crowding and I was very ill and nauseous, almost to the point of faint and sick.

- However, we have had many many experiences like this.

All of the above issues have been since the new timetable was introduced, however we do have more evidence of incompetence pre this timetable change.

Essentially when it comes down to it, RailCorp provide a service for a fee and they state what that fee pays for and what they will deliver. By purchasing a ticket, we are accepting those terms and conditions. Yet, RailCorp continuously breach their promise and contract of what they had agreed to provide.

Until RailCorp can deliver the following, no increase can be justified.

"On time" benchmark running of all trains. RailCorp lowered its own benchmark, let's see them meet it.

Have 90% of trains clean, air-conditioned and free from vandalism. Do NOT run trains with no air-conditioning when temps are greater than 30 deg. Closing carriages with stickers is also VERY frustrating. Station staff must know when a carriage is out of service so inform the public.

Have sufficient trains/cars/services to allow for problems on the network. Also have better plans for dealing with the SAME problems that seem to occur every week. For example, sick passengers and vandalism.

Have independent assessment of rail staff. They all need to be held accountable for their actions or lack of.

We hope that you will take note of our feedback, along with all other feedback, when reviewing the RailCorp submission.

Thank you for your time.