

To Whom It May Concern:

I wish to object to the proposed 3% increase in train fares. I currently pay over (\$2,500.00) Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars a year in fares to travel on the trains. I travel for over three hours a day (one and half hours each way). And the trains I travel on are atrocious.

Positives:

- Due to the new timetable the only plus is that the trains are frequently on time.

Negatives:

- I have to change trains going to and from work. There are only direct trains for off peak passengers.
- The number of trains to the Southern Highlands is extremely limited.
- The trains are over crowded, especially in the afternoons.
- There is very limited number of suburban trains I am able to catch to make it to Campbelltown for my connecting train home.
- All other country lines (South Coast, Blue Mountains and North Coast) have direct services all day for the passengers but people who live in the Southern Highlands have to change trains.
- The train carriages we use on the Campbelltown line appear to be the oldest in the rail fleet, except for the trains on Southern Highlands line which are probably older than the Red Rattler carriages that were retired over 15 years ago.

Here are a couple of examples of the trains' trips I am forced to accept in my travels to and from work.

1. The afternoon train from Central station timetabled for 4.26pm. This is the second train after 4.00pm (the first one is at 4.02pm) This train constantly is overcrowded with very limited seating available, once everyone has boarded the train there is people standing in the isles or sitting on the steps. The air-conditioning on this train is either not working (especially on hot days) or freezing cold. It is amazing that no one has become seriously ill.
2. To catch the 5.34pm Southern Highlands which will get you in to Picton at 6.00pm. You need to leave work at approximately 4.00pm, and you are only able to catch 2 suburban trains, but if you lived on the Central Coast at Gosford and you leave work at 4.00pm you have 3 trains you can catch and you don't have to change trains and you get home in a quicker time.
3. The trains on the Southern Highlands line are dirty and in some instance you are able to smell the odour from the toilets throughout the whole train.
4. The 5.34pm Southern Highlands train is only a two-carriage train. All the country trains on the other lines are a great deal newer than the trains we are forced to use, also there are more carriages to these trains.

The Southern Highlands population is growing faster than the Blue Mountains but we are still treated like the unwanted relative. I am sure that Rail Corporation NSW wished the Southern Highlands line did not exist for passenger and its only purpose was as a freight line.

The travelling public who live in the Southern Highlands wish to be treated the same way as the rest of the public who travel on other country lines. People who travel from Picton pay just as much as people who travel from Kembla Grange (South Coast Line), Lawson (Blue Mountains Line) and Warnervale (North Coast Line).

If we received the same service and condition as the rest of the travelling public, I would not object to the proposed increases in fares. But while we are greatly behind in service and condition I feel that to increase our fares when there is a marked difference in what we pay for and what we receive compared to the rest of the rail network, that we are being discriminated against.

Attached is three other letters I have written about the appalling service I have received in the last 12 months. They were sent to City Rail via their complaints e-mail address.

I say **NO** to the proposed fare increase. I am not satisfied with the services and conditions provided.

Mrs Elizabeth Beckhaus

ATTACHMENT A

To Whom It May Concern:

The train travel yesterday the 17th May 2005 was beyond a joke.

In the mornings I catch the train from Tahmoor Station at 5.56am and arrive at Central at approx 7.29am. In the afternoon leave Central Station at 4.20pm and arrive at Tahmoor Station at approx 6.14pm, but last night I didn't get to Tahmoor until approx 6.50pm.

I have a long enough day without City Rail adding to it because it can't or won't run an on time service for its customers.

What train, on any other line, has to wait 30 minutes for connecting trains. The 5.39pm Southern Highlands train from Campbelltown is not supposed to be a connecting train, according to the signage at Campbelltown station, but we are continually forced to wait for late running trains. This is especially frustrating when there is another 4 carriage train, (the 5.39pm train is only 2 carriages) leaving Campbelltown at 6.22pm.

We waited so long last night that the 6.22pm train left Campbelltown 10 minutes after the 5.39pm train. And there is also a 7.03pm train.

Last night was a total failure by City Rail to its customers. The 5.39pm train is patronised by a lot of customers who are on early trains (eg: trains arriving at Campbelltown before 6.30am). Having an extra 30 minutes added to our travel times is absolutely unfair to the travelling public. It is no wonder that the people who have the ability to travel by car are doing so.

Why are we forced to wait and put up with inferior service??

I would like a written reply to this complaint.

ATTACHMENT B

Yesterday afternoon (29/11/04) I left work in time to catch the 4.20pm train from Central to Campbelltown & Macarthur via East Hills. On arrival at Central at approx. 4.15pm the next train listed for Campbelltown was in 25mins, which did not arrive until approx 4.50pm.

When the station staff where asked, they had no idea what was causing the delays.

The most frustrating part of the whole experience was the fact that trains kept coming in and departing for Bankstown, Lidcombe, Liverpool or terminating at intervals of 5 mins or less. There were NO announcements about the delays. There were NO announcements about the connecting trains for the Moss Vale services which leaves from Campbelltown.

In the **40 to 45 minutes** I stood on Central Station waiting for a train to get to Campbelltown (which is only half way home), trains on Platforms 22 & 23 went everywhere else including trains being terminated and still not one word about any trains to Campbelltown.

The service to Campbelltown/Macarthur line and then onto the Southern Highlands line is appalling. With the amount of trains that can be sent out to Bankstown and Lidcombe (mostly empty) and none out along the Campbelltown line it could almost be seen as discrimination against the people who live out on this line.

My travel time, door to door, yesterday Tuesday 29th November 2004 was **2 hours and 30 minutes** approximately. It should only take approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes.

With the heat that is expected today goodness knows how long it will take to get home tonight.