

## **IPART - Submission from a Rail Commuter - opposing fare increase**

1. Until the introduction of the new timetable Rail Corp Management were largely unresponsive to either system failures, or suggestions from commuters on measures to improve the service

2. the organisation lacks adequate disaster management procedures

3. the discrimination of information is often inaccurate or untimely

4. The organisation does not control costs and its wasteful practices are evident to casual observers :

> carriage lights left on in the suburbs during bright daylight

> carriages left in sidings without timely maintenance whilst the working  
> fleet lacks carriages

> no one questions that whereas prior to the 2000 Games there was massive track work to get the system in peak condition why is there weekend after weekend of track work on the main line between Lidcombe and Redfern.

> the cost of running the 131500 complaints section blows out due to repeat calls as issues are not addressed. They go from Call Centre Customer Service Operators who log the call and pass it onto Rail Corp Customer Service staff who make up excuses without dealing with issues or holding management accountable. From my experience apart from logging statistics very little is achieved by this service which should activate investigations and improvements to service.

5. The discounting of peak tickets encourages of peak patronage and therefore increases the capacity of the fleet and increases seat occupancy.

6. Most of the General managers are out of touch, unavailable to deal with issues of significance.

7. Inefficiencies - refusal to address issues:

> There is a morning meeting at about 7.00am of top management - however it meets too late to deal with morning peak hour issues as most peak hour trains would have commenced or be well into their journeys and too early for planning for the afternoon peak hour. It meets to plan the day for the managers not the operation of commuter trains.

> during one crisis where a strike of maintenance inspectors overnight threatened the next mornings peak hour services I was appalled that the info line closed at 10.00pm without providing an adequate briefing with an information void overnight.

I tried in vein to suggest that the planning meeting ought to be twice daily one at midnight to review the afternoon services and plan for the morning peak and one at midday to review the morning services and plan for the evening peak these meetings, if they lasted one hour would leave three hours to call in extra staff and respond to situations - especially the unexpected.

Trains are delayed because Rail Corp has a PA recorded message "stand behind the yellow line"

so exiting passengers are faced with and slowed down by a wall of passengers standing the length of the platform behind the yellow line.

Management neither monitors nor reviews issues such as these

I have suggested:

> marked sections beside where doors open to be kept clear for exiting passengers - ignored

> signs asking passengers to exit to the left of the doors and passengers boarding the train to line up on their left - leaving a clear passage for exiting passengers

I was told by a Customer Service Manager it was taken to the committee looking at ideas and it was considered a good idea but nothing was trialled or implemented.

Longer delays at major stations cost money and is a poor use of the drivers and guards time.

Stations are not making announcements asking passengers to keep the doors clear  
Guards are not asking passengers to move into the carriage so doors and stairs are blocked boarding passengers are faced with a sea of people in the foyer whilst there is standing room for 30 passengers in the carriages so rather than rapid boarding its slow - passenger by passenger edging their way squeezing a space in the foyer.  
Management does nothing about this high cost issue

There are too many and too many Group General Managers who are not proactive enough.

Issues such as inaccurate plasma screens at Lidcombe Station during the 2005 RAS Show were not noticed by Senior Managers "assisting" at the station.

I personally took more than one visiting manager through the contradiction between the upstairs screen, the platform 4 screen and managers were then invited to check with the station staff's system - they found that there were three times on three systems for the next train to Auburn  
These Managers were either unwilling or unable to activate a resolution.

Group General Managers and Managers are underperforming.

Rather than increasing fares it is time Rail Corp increased the efficiency and effectiveness of their Executives and Managers in the eyes of the travelling public and the front line staff - neither of whom are listened to.

Line Managers ought to be visiting the stations in their sector at least once a week and daily visiting the signal boxes in their sector and being more accessible to the commuters with suggestions.

Requests for new bridges, or raising a bridge such as the Vaughn St Bridge at Lidcombe (where trucks regularly collide into this low bridge) are met with delays, indecision, excuses etc

Some infrastructure is needed and one day will be built but the longer RailCorp or the Rail Infrastructure delays the greater the cost to build it and the greater the cost of managers time wasted in delays and frustrations rather than efficiently responding in a timely manner and developing planned upgrades etc.

Lack of co-ordination the building of the Auburn western overpass(built in 2005) and Lidcombe Station upgrade for the Olympics (pre 2000) and a few other projects

could be greatly reduced if they had have been done during the one line closure.

for example there needs to be exploratory work to see if there is a void behind a wall beside the ticket office at Auburn which should have been done during a planned line closure such as we had before the 2000 Games or in 2005 when the western bridge was built but due to Management being unresponsive to the need to upgrade auburn Station (which has concrete cancer, drainage problems and a lack of space for much needed lifts) the work was not done when the line was closed so now we are told it can't be done because of the cost of closing the line - instead of programming it during the next line closure.

Auburn Station for over 5 years needed a microphone in the ticket booth to make announcements on the platform when there is no staff on the platform. Prior to 2000 the estimated cost was about \$180 The cost of Management's time in not responding to the need far exceeded the cost of the microphone.

This typifies a major waste in the organisation - millions are wasted paying staff and Managers who don't deal with issues but waste their time making excuses and avoiding making or implementing decisions.

I oppose he request for fare increases and suggest Rail Corp focus on being more responsive to the needs of and suggestions from commuters and more efficient at the Group General Manager level.

Furthermore Rail Corp ought to focus on maintaining and increasing patronage as there is much scope for this with tremendous benefit to the community with the resultant decrease of cars on congested roads.

Yours Sincerely

G N L Guy