

**Jonathan Nolan**  
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Fare increase protest. We only want to get there on time

To whom it may concern in City Rail,

I have been buying a weekly ticket from Wollongong to North Sydney the past 4 years and remember the days when this was an even \$50. It has since gone up to \$52 a week and I would say within a week of the price rise the rail system got gradually worse. There were a number of reasons for the price rise two years ago, one being that it was to improve the infrastructure of the network. Wouldn't this mean that the trains would run smoother and on time?

Now that you want to increase your fares again, judging by your track record (excuse the pun) I am scared as to how deep the hole will be the network will go into. I wont go into the lateness of trains, the countless cancellations of the 4.48pm Port Kembla service from Town Hall (in February 2006 in one week there were three out of five days cancelled).

I will however say that the excuses that City Rail comes up with can not be for real.

I have noticed that the weather has a lot to do with trains running late.

Extreme weather.

40 degree heat: Trains are late due to overheating of either the tracks, train engines, or some fuse box blown somewhere.

Wet weather, Trains are late due to wet weather, wet leaves on the tracks etc.

Question: Excuse my ignorance but I have lived in Germany for four years and travelled extensively by train. In the four years I have lived there I had one, Yes ONE late train. It was five minutes late due to a passenger being ill. I remember this because it was the only time I saw people looking frustrated at their watches. A Sydney train being five minutes late is not considered late. And speaking of weather conditions, it can get up to 35 degrees C and down to minus 20 with snow, sleet and leaves on the tracks and they're still on time over there. And don't give me the excuse of an extensive complicated rail network. You just have to go into smaller towns such as Karlsruhe which is about the size of Central never mind going into any of the major cities like Berlin, Frankfurt or Munich to see a busier and yet more efficient rail network.

And if you're giving the excuse of safety as a reason why the trains are slower due to slippery leaves on the tracks, maybe you should review safety procedures altogether.

Just yesterday on the train from Town Hall to North Sydney leaving Town Hall at approx 8.25am we were all squashed in like sardines as usual with no space to even turn never mind swing a cat. I was standing two people from the door when only one of the doors closed and the other was still wide open. There were two women less than an inch away from the open door. The guard on the platform with his flag shouts at the guard in the train that the door is still open. This is before the train moves. The train then starts to move with the door still open. The guard walks down the platform with the train pointing at the door still talking to the guard on the train saying "The door is still open, hang on a second". He then stops walking, puts his thumb in the air and says "No worries then". Yes, no worries mate, just

two women holding on for dear life on a packed train hanging out the door in a tunnel from Town Hall to Wynyard. No worries that someone may have fallen out and killed themselves. Maybe the driver was trying to kill more passengers before they write yet another complaint to City Rail.

I have a solution... If we increase fares then we can fix all of the above problems. What a joke.

Jonathan  
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