

Lynn Wilson

**Submission to The Independent Pricing And Regulatory Tribunal
Re: Rail Fare Increases in NSW**

I wish to lodge my objection to any increase in rail fares. The service is atrocious. I have been commuting to work by train for more than 20 years and I see no improvement to the service at all. In fact, the service has deteriorated. In the past 12 years, every time fares were increased, we were told it was to pay for improvements in the service. Whilst some work in upgrading a very few stations has taken place, the service itself has not improved. The new timetable is useless. In the past 2 weeks I have been late for work on four occasions because of trains being either cancelled, running late or breaking down. At other times, trains have failed to stop at my station, even though they were supposed to, according to the new timetable.

More people than ever are now travelling to work by train than in the past because of the increase in petrol prices so therefore RailCorp is receiving more revenue from commuters than ever before. Instead of hitting the commuter with increased fares, why does RailCorp not clean up its act and get people employed in the system to actually do their work. There is overemployment within RailCorp. The trains are filthy, even though a token gesture is made by having 2 or 3 or 4 cleaners at times going through trains, picking up pieces of paper and other articles and placing them in bags. What the trains really need is a good scrubbing down. There is ingrained dirt that has accumulated over many years. RailCorp should get its maintenance people to do their work properly. They should be accountable. Too many are employed who stand around watching as a few actually do the work. The supervision is hopeless.

We have so-called transit officers (not the police) patrolling stations and trains. Originally we were told that these people were there to ensure safety on our trains and stations, whether the risk to our safety be from hoodlums or terrorists, however, in reality that is not what they do. They focus fully on checking tickets. These people must be costing the State a fortune. While I do agree that there should be security on our trains, that is what it should be and nothing else – strictly the security of commuters. It seems overkill to have hoards of these transit officers placed at exits at main stations like Town Hall or Wynyard, when railstaff are already present. Why does RailCorp not reinstate the more friendly and humane practice of allowing people to pay for their tickets at the end of their journey if they find themselves without valid tickets. Not all people without tickets are trying to evade fares. Some tickets are genuinely lost in transit or some mistake has been made as to when their weekly should be renewed, e.g. getting days mixed up.

If Mr Watkins thinks that the service in NSW has improved or that it can compare with the services in London or other major cities around the world, he is either dreaming or wearing blinkers. Our rail service is a disgrace.

Lyn Wilson
Sydney
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