

Dear Sir,

As you may have detected from the subject line I am opposed to the rail fare increase. Here are 10 reasons why IPART should have the courage to block any proposed increase in entirety:

- 1/ Manifestly unfair. Services have not improved enough to warrant any increase. Agreeing to any increase is approving of and rewarding failure.
- 2/ A broken promise by current Government. Fares were not to be lifted until services significantly improved. We're still waiting.
- 3/ Insufficient time elapsed. A new timetable was introduced in September. We are now in February. At least 12 months trial would be reasonable to judge performance.
- 4/ Any alleged improvement is off an unacceptably low base and should be compared to pre Olympics performance as a fair (fare?) comparison.
- 5/ The crap service is a self fulfilling prophecy- Government starves service of infrastructure renewal/maintenance funding in order to garner surpluses 1996-2003 and service naturally declines. Consumers should not be expected to pay for Government failings. If this means short term borrowing and political oblivion for existing Government, too bad.
- 6/ On overseas comparisons we get a third world standard service. Rail services in Washington, London, Paris, even New York are superior. You can't even compare the service to Singapore, its on a completely different level.
- 7/ In addition to continued unreliability, a population increase in Greater Sydney means the trains have become increasingly overcrowded making the absence of air conditioning for many trains intolerable. Standards of hygiene on trains remain appalling- who was the idiot in City Rail who decided on a great way to save money is have the workers clean carriages while operating when they are half occupied? Half occupied means half cleaned. Probably the same idiot whose now a senior bureaucrat running our public hospitals... but I digress.
- 8/ Statistics collected by Cityrail are highly suspect- and offensive. Anecdotal evidence contradicts strongly the claims of marked improvements. Any survey should be done by a truly independent third party without Cityrail doctoring of questions etc.
- 9/ The Government doesn't apply Total Cost of Ownership rules correctly to determine benefits of subsidising public transport. For example when comparing public transport versus road usage they cost the extra cost on roads systems but not the extra times of travel. The Productivity Commission should be asked to look into this. Were a truly accurate model to be arrived at showing how much extra GDP is generated and a holistic rather than narrow minded view taken (ie what's good for Australia rather than the State Government); then you could I suspect (theoretically) mount an argument that we should be paid to use public transport. This is an unpalatable fact that Treasury with its User Pays mantra doesn't want to see the light of day...
- 10/ As a monopoly trains are protected from consumer action by unfair laws preventing consumers claiming for bad service. Any protected industry must be subject to increased regulation- not less- to ensure fairness. For IPART to fail in its duty now would be a breach of your obligations and duty of care to the citizens of NSW, even if it means bucking the habits of a lifetime and biting the hand of Government.

In summary Cityrail continues to provide a service that is dirty, dangerous and delayed.

A final message for the Government for IPART to include- if you dare- in your summary of submissions

"You can run but you can't hide. You will have to call an election someday."

Regards

Peter Cundall