

I would like to voice my disagreement with the proposed fare increases on the following grounds:

1. The number and frequency of services servicing the Blue Mountains line have been cut
2. The number of carriages on some services has not been increased
3. Extra stops at busy stations such as Penrith and Emu Plains on formerly express services have slowed journey times and caused overcrowding, particularly on peak hour services
4. An additional \$3.50 per week (and \$7 if you include my partner) is a hefty increase on my \$47 weekly fare, which will encourage me to use trains less and my car more - the parking station only charges \$7 per day and fuel is cheaper than what it costs for me and my partner to buy train tickets.
5. Not being able to get a seat on the afternoon services has removed the added bonus of being able to sleep or study on the train, therefore catching the train for me has no added advantage over driving my car.

I do not believe that CityRail has improved its services sufficiently enough to justify a fare increase - they have made savings recently by 'rationalising' (reducing) their services and I believe that the services that remain must either be enhanced (e.g. more carriages added to busy services such as the 4.49pm train from Parramatta to Lithgow) or supplemented with additional services. Overcrowding is my biggest concern as it is incredibly uncomfortable and unsafe. The government should reaffirm its commitment to reducing the onset of the greenhouse effect by subsidising and improving public transport so that reliance on private transport is minimised. This is a sensible investment in the future of Sydney.

My details are:

Sam Hewett