

I would like to register my strong disagreement with CityRail's recent fare increase proposal.

The grounds for my objection are as follows:

1. When the new timetable was introduced the definition of "on time" running was changed to allow a much longer period before a train was considered late. Much of the claimed improvement is simply based on making the goalposts wider, not actually doing a better job. Fudging the figures to prove the point assumes the public are simply gullible.
2. The new timetable reduced many services and made trains more crowded – again the public is worse, not better off.
3. Many trains in summer are not air conditioned and we are expected to endure 40+ heat inside the carriages
4. When delays occur there is very poor communication by staff about why – we are just treated like mushrooms
5. The most predictable thing about CityRail is the zeal with which "security guards" check tickets, even when the service is substandard and running late. This smacks more of revenue raising and seems to have little to do with dealing with loutish and offensive behaviour which I often witness on trains. The security people seem strangely absent when these incidents occur
6. Finally, it has only been 6 months since the new timetable was introduced and I do not believe this is enough time to claim improvements are truly sustainable. Show me true improvements in service for 12 months or more and then maybe a fare increase might be justifiable

I, like many of my fellow commuters, will be watching very closely and the next State election offers a good opportunity to register what we really think about what is being delivered to us under the banner of public transport in Sydney.

Yours sincerely,

Warwick May