

To whom it may concern,

I vehemently oppose the proposed train fare increase. The government's justification being that the tax payers are funding an increasingly larger amount of the running cost relative to the commuters simply ignores other facts. To justify fare increases, consider the following -

1. Quality of service. State rail offers 3rd rated servicing. They are never reliable, delays are frequent, there are a lack of customer service, particularly if you seek assistance from staff at the station, but in general, very few cityrail staff actually care about the needs and concerns of the commuters.
2. This is not the first time fares have been increased recently. Every year, there are constant bids to increase fares resulting in already high cost to travel. The justification being that the reliability of trains are improving simply is not a good reason. How can you continually increase fares to 'maintain' the level of service, it doesn't work in a competitive environment. The simple fact is, the service isn't even maintained to an acceptable standard to warrant any increase. In fact, the fares should continually go down in line with the substandard servicing and align closely with performance. And everyone knows the performance is at rock bottom!
3. Train servicing is not there. Simple servicing to assist patrons with their travel are lacking. For example, all drivers on trains should announce the following stop before the train has commenced. There should also be announcements on board the train as well. However, as City rail isn't customer focused, they don't care and thus, simple service isn't provided.
4. Skipped stations occurs at peak times, I just don't understand the logic. Cityrail simply can't cope with problems, delays, hiccups etc. The fact they skip stations and thus claim they are running on time is the most outrageous tactic ever employed by a Government Corporation. And then, to further infuriate patrons, they use this statistic to justify further fare increases.
5. Compare Cityrail's service with that of interstate services, and you have to acknowledge that for the hefty fare, it is simply a rip off service. And to compare that with overseas train services, City rail's performance, customer service, train service is the worst of all of them.
6. If you continually increase fares, at a point in time, commuters already fed up with substandard services will lose complete faith and find alternative transport. Imagine the tax payers subsidising an ever increasing costs because the pricing is so unattractive relative to the level of servicing we are purchasing and the economic rationale simply doesn't add up.

The Government, tribunal and City rail, if you continually increase fares every few months, the simple answer is this. We will not accept 3rd world servicing standards and being sluggish with 1st world pricing regime. We are Sydney commuters, we have brains and it doesn't take long for us to find alternative means of transport. If the government wishes the commuters to catch public transport, you need to lift your game -

1. Focus on reliability, customer service, they are first priority. Do not fudge these statistics like you do for reliability
2. Identify your cost structure and reduce costs. e.g. There are too many staff at stations talking to each other and of no value.

3. Increase the frequency of trains
4. Reduce fares, this will encourage greater patronage and revenue
5. Be innovative, focus on customers, be atuned to present day corporate world management and implement best practice
6. Implement benchmarking, and have independent bodies to assess performance

Regards,

Bernard