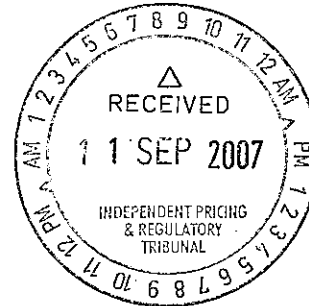


Dr. Michael Keating. A.C.
Chair
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal NSW
Level 2/ 44 Market Street
Sydney NSW 2000



8th September 2007

Dear Dr. Keating,

Submission against increased fares on NSW Public Transport.

As a commuter and frequent user of State Government Buses, Ferries and Trains I am dismayed to learn that all three transport authorities have put forward submissions to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for fare increases.

I ask IPART to consider my objection to making any increase whatsoever in public transport fares and I submit to you that current fare levels are at excessive levels for the services provided. In my objection to the applications for increase public transport fares I would submit the following;

Bus

- Current fares are excessive on a kilometre travel basis
- Journey times are excessive on a distance travelled basis especially through city and major thoroughfares
- Interchange between routes is poor and very costly
- Poor modal interchange or seamless transfer especially at outlying bus terminal and ferry wharves

Ferry

- Current fares are excessive on a kilometre travel basis
- Late running and cancelled services are a norm
- Poor evening and Sunday service timetables
- Dirty and poorly maintained and inadequate fleet
- Use of unsuitable charter vessels

Train

- Services have been reduced by around 1/3 over the past 3 years
- Fewer services on the City Circle do not permit seamless modal transfer
- Increased journey times due to slower speeds
- Poor connection timings
- Filthy and graffitied carriage seats, floors, windows and side panels
- Poorly signed stations
- Poor outside visibility at night especially from Tangara carriages
- Poor service speeds and area coverage by modern world standards

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GST levied on Public Transport Fares

In 1992 at the Conference on Sustainable World Development in Rio de Janeiro both the Federal and State Governments signed *Agenda 21* that among other sustainable objectives, promoted the development of public transport options. That public transport should be free of any user tax was an integral part of *Agenda 21's* Sustainable Transport objective so the question must be asked – why are users subjected to GST on Sustainable Transport?

You will appreciate that the application of GST to public transport fares inflates the cost to commuters and is not conducive to attracting people to use sustainable transport options. I ask the Tribunal to examine the current position for the application of GST on Public Transport fares and come to, what I believe to be a rightful conclusion - that the application of GST is not in the spirit nor indeed the letter of *Agenda 21* and that validity of applying such a tax is legally questionable.

Sir, all three public transport providers have increased fares in the last year and Sydney Buses and Sydney Ferries have had successive increases over the past five years. Whilst I appreciate that an a level of cost recovery is legitimate there can be no State case at this time for increasing fares on what is an already an overpriced and a extremely poor public transport service in the State of New South Wales. As such I would ask the Tribunal to deny any further increase to Bus, Ferry and Train fares.

Yours sincerely,