



# *Throsby*

## **Community Forum**

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**Acting Chairperson**  
John Hayes

**Secretary**  
Lyn Kilby

20<sup>th</sup> September 2007

**Review of cost indices for Non-Metropolitan Buses  
and Private Ferries  
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal  
PO Box Q290  
NSW 1230**

Dear Sir / Madam,

**Re Fares and Operating Costs Submission**

The Throsby Community Forum represents the five inner city suburbs of Newcastle being Carrington, Wickham, Maryville, Islington & Tighes Hill. Many of our members from these suburbs are dependent on bus travel to meet their work, shopping, health and recreational needs.

We feel that efficiency is the key to operation, patronage and profitability to the operator.

Where the service is inefficient it is the passengers who lose. Higher fares and loss of services is the result of inefficiency.

When making your recommendations the TCF is keen to see that fares are contained, and that the bus routes and services reflect the needs of passengers.

Our members are very concerned that the Buses operated by Newcastle Buses are grossly oversized.

We consider the buses allocated to Newcastle by the STA do not reflect the seating capacities required in Newcastle. This results in significantly greater operating costs and environmental harm.

When determining operating costs, calculations should be based on appropriately sized vehicles, not the ones the operator chooses to use.

Our members are also very concerned that the routes and timetables are not conducive to efficiency and to meeting the needs of passengers.

**Examples are the bus transport to Newcastle's major Hospitals including John Hunter, The Mater and Belmont.**

**No direct bus service exists to John Hunter from any of the inner city suburbs of Carrington, Wickham, Maryville, Islington & Tighes Hill.**

**The journey from Mayfield to the John Hunter is a distance of 8 to 10 kms and can take from about 40 minutes to about an hour and a half at a full fare of \$2.90 ( if under the hour ) to \$5.70 ( if over the hour ).**

**The differences are explained because 2 bus routes are needed, and the services don't always connect – either due to late running, or if a particular scheduled bus does not run at all. Similar times and costings apply to the other 4 Suburbs that our Forum represents.**

**By comparison a luxury coach from Canberra to Sydney is about 270kms, takes 3 hours and costs \$15.**

**Our members are also concerned that timetables do not encourage patronage. Our experience is that running times are unreliable and do not match timetables, despite Newcastle Bus and Ferries claim to 98% efficiency. We believe the parameters measuring on time running are inappropriate, and need to be changed.**

**The problem of not on time buses is compounded when some scheduled buses simply do not turn up at all.**

**Efficiency must be the basis of operational costs and fare structures.**

**When determining the operational cost per passenger carried clearly the vehicles should be matched to the demand and the route matched to the demand.**

**In conclusion we put it to the Tribunal that you would not consider it reasonable to use a massive semi trailer to deliver a single ream of paper to your premises, nor would you use the operational cost of that semi trailer to determine the charge for the delivery of that single ream.**

**We look forward to hearing back from you concerning this submission.**

**We hope there is the opportunity for members of the Community in general, and our Forum in particular, to address your enquiry officers in person – please advise.**

**Regards**

**Noelle Egeressy  
for the Throsby Community Forum Transport Working Group.**