

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the recent IPaRT review of CityRail fares, 2009-2012.

I accept that there is a clear justification for increasing CityRail fares. However, it would be more convenient if increases could be evenly spread over a number of years rather than have a sharp increase followed by more moderate increases. Travellers could budget ahead if a more measured approach is taken.

Increases are acceptable provided they are seen as equitable. At the moment fare evasion appears to be on the increase. Until 2007, transit officers patrolling the trains used to check tickets on their way through the carriages. This year, on the odd occasions that I have seen transit officers on the trains I have been travelling on, they have not been checking tickets.

At a number of stations on the Western Line (Mount Druitt and St. Marys in particular) people without tickets simply exit the station through the gates adjacent to the automatic barriers. They either open the gates themselves or in many cases the gates are just left open. Alternatively, they walk through the automatic barriers and push apart the "gates". CityRail staff do not challenge these fare evaders.

More should be done to reduce the current level of fare evasion as with the planned increases, it is the travellers doing the right thing who are paying a higher price while fare evaders, face little chance of being caught. This is not equitable.