

28 October 2008

**Subject:** Submission for train fare hike proposal.

Submission for Draft Report- Review of CityRail fares 2009-2012.

Dear Sir,

I am having objection to proposed City rail Fare increase in the draft report. While I have not entirely read and understood the entire report full of polished words, I am writing as a long time user of Cityrail services.

I could derive that fare hike is very substantial in current conditions.

1. I travel in western line since several years. Over last couple of years, there is no improvement in peak hour services to match with increased patronage. I still travel in old (pre Tangara) carriages standing in crowded and dirty compartments. Evening pick hours train (one off) is still six carriage old train, and many times doors do not open, forcing passengers to one place.
2. Increased patronage means higher than budgeted income and higher utilisation of hardware. The increased ticket sale should be sufficient to increase no of trains and improve maintenance.
3. There is no increase in service frequency of no of compartments in peak hour trains on western line.
4. If the proposed fare hike is to reduce subsidising by other tax payers (how many are non user tax payer?), would state government reduce tax somewhere?
5. The proposed 17% increase is way too above official CPI increases. How that can be justified? The average wage increase this year is at about CPI (~4% ) for most public sector and private sector employees who are rail commuters. (excluding rail executives who may gain higher wage raise)
6. If government tried to tie wage increase to productivity increase, does city rail has achieved up to 17% improvement in services to match fare rise?
7. In current economic condition with extensive slow down in business revenues, increase in fuel costs, the proposed increase in rail fare will be like driving a nail in coffin.
8. Is the fare raise to force commuters fork out all the savings resulted from income tax cuts and recent relief of interest rates?
9. If I am a service provider to Cityrail, will city rail agree to increase my contract rates by similar percentage?
10. Have the IPART considered follow on effect of train fare rise to CPI rise?

H. Shah