

4 October 2008

Subject: Review of CityRail fares, 2009-2012 submission

Dear tribunal members,

I catch CityRail trains almost every day and use the Red TravelPass. The following is my submission to your review of City Rail fares:

Recommendation 1: Make any fare increases contingent upon RailCorp substantially improving its services.

It is unconscionable that commuters would have to pay more for the privilege of catching infrequent, filthy, overcrowded trains that are often delayed and sometimes have no air conditioning. Stations like Town Hall and Wynyard cannot cope with the influx of commuters in peak hour. As large crowds jostle for space on the platforms, people could fall onto the tracks. Moreover, if an emergency happened, I doubt RailCorp could evacuate these stations in time.

Until RailCorp builds new tracks, buys additional trains and expands the stations, its fares should not increase.

Recommendation 2: RailCorp should install more ticket machines.

Stations do not have enough ticket machines. People have to stand in long queues to buy a ticket. If RailCorp wants people to buy tickets, it should install more machines. The new machines should be easier to use and accept Eftpos.

Recommendation 3: RailCorp should eliminate turnstiles.

Every morning I wait in a queue to get through the turnstiles. Often, the machines fail to accept valid tickets. Sometimes, they swallow weekly tickets that are still valid.

Berlin's transport network works fine without turnstiles.

RailCorp would save money if it did not have to maintain the turnstiles. It could invest these savings in improving its services.

Recommendation 4: There should be no fare increases until RailCorp successfully eliminates corruption.

Recent Independent Commission Against Corruption inquiries identified numerous cases of corruption within RailCorp. The commission heard that there is a culture of corruption within the organisation. Why should a commuter pay say 20% more if this money goes into kickbacks?

RailCorp should recover as much money as possible by cracking down on corruption before it slaps the commuters with fare increases.

Recommendation 5: Off-peak services should come more frequently.

It's all well and good to encourage people to travel off-peak by making off-peak fares cheaper. However, the reality is that off-peak services are too infrequent to be useful. Travelling off-peak means waiting for trains that come once every 30 minutes. If RailCorp wants more people to travel off-peak, it should put on more trains and roster more drivers.

I thank you for the opportunity to make this submission and hope you listen to the views of those who actually travel on CityRail trains.

Yours sincerely,

Kirill Reztsov