

**3 October 2008**

**Subject:** Public Transport Distance Based Fares

Dear IPART,

I note your release of your draft report on Cityrail fare increases that contains a recommendation that fares be distance based. This same issue also arises in relation to bus fares.

Can you please take into consideration that people might prefer to pay a fare that is in relation to the direct distance between their two points of travel rather than via the route that Cityrail or bus operators want or need to take them.

For example, if I wanted to travel from my home in Culloden Rd Marsfield to Chatswood via Cityrail it would cost me more than going to the city because the distance of the train trip bears no relationship to the direct line distance. When the new Epping to Chatswood link opens the cost will come down substantially I imagine. With so much of Cityrail's tracks and fare structures CBD focused, cross suburban transport by Cityrail is second rate travel in terms of convenience of time and distance but there is no consideration of this in a simple "track distance only" approach to fares.

In relation to bus travel, distance travel is also distorted through circuitous bus routes and inability to transfer (except at only 2 points) from one route to another on a single ticket to achieve those most direct or time efficient travel.

To give you an example of distorted distance bus pricing, if I travel from my home in Culloden Rd Marsfield to Macquarie Centre (about 1km as the crow flies) it is 3 sections in the 292 bus, which winds around out to Epping Rd at Vimiera Rd and then back through Macquarie Uni.

I am not sure whether you propose to consider integrated public transport travel on a distance base but there are many current examples of ticketing/single trip fare anomalies between 2 points which depend on the mix of modes taken and the distance traveled on each mode or particular bus.

If you are recommending a closer relationship of distance to fare pricing, please base them as much as possible on direct distance.

Regards

Rod West