

Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal
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2008 Review of Bus and Ferry Fares

Submission by Rick Banyard Newcastle

Dear Sir,

The process for the setting of fares for Hunter Bus and ferry fares has again commenced.

Last year Throsby Community Forum, as an organisation representing five major inner city suburbs of Newcastle, requested that IPART reduce STA Newcastle fares by 25% until such time as the level of service becomes acceptable.

IPART has stated that the objectives of its 2008-9 Review is, in relation to the Hunter Valley, to:-

1. Set the maximum fares for Newcastle bus services.
2. Set the maximum fares for bus services in the Hunter Region. (Outer Sydney Metropolitan buses)
3. Set the maximum fares for the Newcastle ferry service.

When considering the issue IPART must consider that what is commonly known as Newcastle includes the City of Newcastle, The City of Lake Macquarie, and parts of the Maitland, Port Stephens and Cessnock and Wyong LGA,s.

The typical commuter range is bounded by locations such as Williamtown (Newcastle Airport), Raymond Terrace, Rutherford, Cessnock, Morriset and Doyalston. This is a radius of about 20kms to the North, 40kms to the West and South from Newcastle CBD. This is only a fraction of the Sydney region.

This region is served by several operators including Newcastle Bus and Ferry Services, Blue Ribbon, Toronto Bus Services, Sugar Valley, Rover Coaches, Port Stephens Buses, Busways and others. It should also be noted that buses from several

operators travel side by side eg Maitland Rd and to major destination eg Newcastle University and Glendale Shopping centre.

It is ludicrous for bus passengers to have a differing fare structures and fare calculation methods just because the colour of the bus changes.

The key points I wish to make are:-

- 1. A separate review process be undertaken for “Newcastle”**
- 2. The validity of STA Newcastle information provided to IPART and the community.**
- 3. A reduction in the maximum fares of the State Transit Buses and Ferry of 25%.**
- 4. A standardisation of the fare basis charged to passengers for all fares for the Hunter Region.**
- 5. The implementation of a bus transport system that is seamless for Hunter Valley commuters.**
- 6. A plan and timetable for implementation for the integration of all modes of people transport in the Hunter Region.**
- 7. STA Newcastle route review unsound.**
- 8. The implication of other important issues including the environment, bus size and contractual payments.**
- 9. Factors IPART must consider.**

In Support of my request we put forward the following detailed information.

Section 1

A separate review process be undertaken for “Newcastle”

Newcastle is not just STA Newcastle bus operation just as Sydney Buses is not just the City of Sydney service.

The geographical layout of the Newcastle region (Lower Hunter Region) is quite different to Sydney.

To provide just three examples.

Firstly the Airport is located out of the City.

Secondly the area has two major water ways and considerable swamp land.

Thirdly the suburban rail provision is almost non existent.

I note that the fare review for Newcastle is just one small sector of an overall State wide review.

I believe this is totally inappropriate and that IPART should decline from making a determination for the Newcastle region (Lower Hunter Valley) and that a separate Review process be commence with the hearing to be held in Newcastle.

In support of this I note that the material provided to IPART by the Ministry about Newcastle is minimal. I also note their information only considers the position of Newcastle Buses and Ferry Services and contains no information or recommendations about other operators fare levels despite the fact that they are the issuers of the Contracts and that they collect the fare revenue.

Many of the points raised in the Ministry’s submission are not relevant to the Newcastle area.

Communities in other large regions such as Wollongong are almost ignored.

Section 2.

Validity of Information by STA

Last year those that provided submissions to IPART were severely restricted due to the failure of the Annual Report being published prior to the IPART hearing. This year the report is again not available.

I believe this resulted in the community and probably IPART being misled because the Annual report when published provided some very different and unexplainable information particularly to the STA Newcastle operation.

I believe IPART as part of this determination needs to closely examine the STA Annual Reports.

Some basic questions re the annual return are:-

1. Revenue for 2006/07
 - a. Why has the revenue risen by about 25%?
 - b. What are the additional revenue sources?
 - c. What are the major revenue sources that make up the \$44.9m
 - d. Why was this additional revenue not disclosed to IPART at the hearing or in MoT's submission?
 - e. Has this new figure subsequently been reported to IPART. If so when was this done and why were those who lodged submissions not advised?
2. Revenue in past years.
 - a. Why do past years show revenue values that differ from the published and signed off past annual reports?
 - b. Have these changes been reported to IPART?
 - c. Will these revised figures result in a refund to passengers due to past fare determinations being based on inaccurate figures? Has IPART be requested to calculate the refund?
3. Expenditure in past years.
 - a. Why do past years show expenditure values that differ from the published and signed off past annual reports?
 - b. Have these changes been reported to IPART?
 - c. Will these revised figures result in a refund to passengers due to past fare determinations being based on inaccurate figures? Has IPART be requested to calculate the refund?
4. Expenditure break up
 - a. Past reports indicate that wages represent 60%. Fuel and fleet running 17%, fleet depreciation 7% and other expenses 16%. Are these break ups appropriate for Newcastle buses in the 2006/07 year?
5. Patronage changes

- a. Why were passenger numbers raised by 910,000 in 2004/05 from those figures disclosed in the signed off annual report?
 - b. Why were passenger numbers raised by 1,560,000 in 2005/06 from those figures disclosed in the signed off annual report?
 - c. What factors have caused the 2006/07 patronage to jump by 1,449,000 over the signed off patronage in 2005/06?
 - d. What revenue did the increase patronage generate?
 - e. Where is the additional revenue generated by the additional patronage shown in the annual report?
 - f. What method was used to reliably calculate the additional patronage and invoice the relevant body?
 - g. A major basis for the proposed route network changes is the declining patronage. In light of the increase in patronage will the network review be withdrawn or revised
6. Kilometres travelled
- a. The 2006/07 Annual Report show that Kilometres travelled have increased by 66,000. Why did the distance increase?
 - b. What was the total payable route distances travelled in 2006/07?
 - c. What was the total “dead running” attributable to routes.?
 - d. What was the total school bus route distance in 2006/07?
7. Staff Numbers
- a. Staff numbers in the signed off annual report have been changed in the 2005/06 annual report. Why was the figure changed to 381 from 392?
 - b. The 2006/07 figures report a further decline to 371. How many of these are bus operators?
 - c. The annual report indicates that only three new drivers were engaged. Is this correct? Does this create an aging driver group.
 - d. How many full time positions are occupied by casual and or part time drivers / operators.
8. Where did the profit go
- a. In 2006/07 revenue exceed expenditure by \$2.53m. Where did this profit go?
 - b. Why was this revenue not disclosed to IPART at the hearing or in MoT’s submission?
 - c. Has this new figure been reported to IPART. If so when was this done and why were the parties who lodged submissions not advised?
 - d. In light of this profit will the application for a fare increase for Newcastle buses be withdrawn?
 - e. In the light of this profit will the fare increase grated last year be rescinded and a refund given to patrons.
9. Passenger per vehicle Kilometre
- a. The figure of 1.4 and 1.3 have been changed in the signed off annual returns to 1.5. Why is this?
 - b. With a bus capacity of about 60 is it correct to say that the average bus has excess capacity of 58.5 passengers per vehicle Kilometre?

10. Stockton Ferry

- a. Is it correct that the total operating cost, revenue and patrons of the ferry service are included in the bus figures?
- b. Is it correct that the ferry carried 402,000 passengers in 2006/07?
- c. Is it correct that the ferry travelled 24,000 kms per year in 2006/07?

11. Fuel consumption, emissions and the environment,

- h. Is it correct that the ferry consumed 3208GJ of energy in 2006/07?
- i. Is it correct that the buses consumed 128,000GJ of energy in 2006/07?
- j. Is it correct that 4m litres of diesel was consumed in 2006/07?
- k. Is it true that the fuel consumption of Newcastle buses has risen by about 3% despite the introduction of new fuel efficient vehicles?
- l. Is it correct that the operation of the buses at higher speeds has increased fuel consumption and increased emissions?
- m. Is it correct that the fuel used is in the order of 45l per 100 kms?
- n. Is it true that green house gas emissions is 126kgs per 100kms?
- o. Is it true that the green house emission for a Newcastle STA bus is 1.26kgs per passenger carried per kilometre compared to a fuel efficient car of 0.14kgs per passenger carried per kilometre?

12. Capital Costs

- a. The Annual Return for Newcastle shows no capital expenditure. Is it correct that the cost of new buses and other capital expenditure is not included in the Newcastle figures?
- b. The cost of refurbishing the buses is not shown in the Newcastle statement. Is expense charged against a non Newcastle operation. Eg Enfield?
- c. The major repairs to the MAN buses are done in Newcastle, Is it correct that this expenditure is included in the Newcastle costs and therefore falsely indicated that the MAN buses are more expensive to operate?
- d. Is it correct that the current cost of a new Newcastle STA bus is close to \$500,000?
- e. Is it correct that the number of STA buses in the Newcastle fleet has now dropped to a little over 160?

The questions and issues raised above are very important and the answers to the questions must form a major input into the IPART Tribunals deliberation and determination.

The answers to the above questions and issues should be made public and made available to all parties who lodge submissions. Where the answers are not obtained then the nil answer should also be reported.

It should also be noted that the dealings of the Ministry of Transport are not transparent in yet they are making application for fare increases.

Section 3.

Fare reduction for STA

A fare reduction (or totally fare free service) for State Transit Newcastle is quite reasonable and can be totally justified on the following basis:-

- The buses operated from the Newcastle depots at Hamilton and Belmont are of a size that is grossly excessive to the passenger requirements.
 - This very significantly raises the capital costs of the equipment unnecessarily and inflates the other costs.
 - The qualifications of the drivers are higher than necessary and thus inflate the costs.
 - The operational costs are in excess of the requirement due to operating oversize equipment.
 - The cost of fuel, consumerables and maintenance is in excess of the real needs.
 - The excess size of the vehicles in use creates severe environmental harm.
 - The use of grossly excessively oversized vehicles consumes resources needed to increase the service availability and frequencies to consumers.
- There is a very little community consultation and a very poor integration with plans for the Newcastle LGA.
 - There is no community consultation with route design.
 - Submissions appear to be ignored and there is no dialogue with the community.
 - There is no community consultation with route timetables.
 - There is no community consultation with new bus purchases.
 - There was no submission by State Transit into the City Centre Plan
 - There is little evidence of input into planning processes and transport needs of the Lower Hunter
 - The bus stops are a major issue.
- The timetables operated by Newcastle Buses are very wasteful, highly inefficient and largely do not meet the community needs.
 - Rarely do buses carry more than 10 passengers
 - Commonly buses are totally empty
 - Commonly buses are operated whilst not in service
 - Buses frequently follow each other. (often both are empty)
 - The 97% efficiency quoted would seem to be an apparition. The basis for calculating the efficiency would seem unrealistic and certainly need scrutiny by IPART.
 - Timetables do not reflect seasonal or sporting needs.
 - Timetables displayed at bus stops are frequently not the same as the timetable to which the bus operates.
 - Connectivity problems are common.

- The routes operated do not match the needs and requirements of the people of Newcastle thereby causing the buses in service to operate with unprofitable loadings. Further they fail to meet the civic needs of the City of Newcastle.
 - Poor late night services from the city and major areas.
 - Poor timetables to empty the city after the pub lockdown
 - Lack of buses after hours and at weekends
 - The failure to display timetables at bus stops
 - Hard to memorise timetables.
 - Failure to provide adequate services to 3 hospitals Mater, John Hunter and Belmont.
 - Failure to list the locations of bus stops on publications

- The highly environmentally unfriendly buses operated by Newcastle Buses impose a major cost on to the community of Newcastle.
 - Grossly oversize buses consume unwarranted quantities of fuel.
 - The emissions are well in excess of those justified by passenger numbers.
 - There are no LPG, LNG or CNG buses in operation.
 - Only 26 of the buses in the Newcastle STA fleet meet modern Euro Standards
 - The damage to the pavement by the unnecessary operation of excessively heavy vehicles is extremely costly.
 - Buses frequently traverse streets restricted to light vehicles (when not operating on a designated route) Eg Beaumont St Hamilton.

- Infrastructure provided for passengers is minimal.
 - Health safety and hygiene at bus stops and terminals is very inadequate and well below acceptable standards.
 - Very few bus stops and terminals provide shade, rain protection and wind shelter. Those that do are grossly inadequate.
 - Route signage and timetables are not available at most bus stops.
 - Route signage and timetables on display are hard to read and have small font size.
 - No Newcastle buses have bike or surfboard racks.
 - Lighting in bus structures is almost nonexistent.
 - There has been very little change since the last fare increase.
 - Many bus stops are highly unsafe to other road users, bus patrons, bus drivers and pedestrians.
 - The size and location of bus stops impede parking (and revenue collection from parking meters) by cars.

- There is little integration of STA services with other operators.
 - This is very wasteful.
 - Does not meet the needs of the travelling public.
 - Private and public buses often traverse the same roadways and corridors providing considerable confusion to passengers.
 - This is very frustrating to commuters.

- The ferry only operates to Stockton and provides no other service
 - The ferry only operates for about 10 minutes each hour and sits idle for the remainder of the time.
 - A second ferry sits idle at all times
 - There is a ferry wharf at Wickham unused.
 - There is a number charter boats located in Newcastle that could be utilised in emergencies thereby removing the very costly need for a standby ferry.

- The Review of the bus services promised at the public hearings and subsequently failed to materialise. The only work carried out has been a route investigation for Newcastle buses. That review is not as yet complete and there has been no public consultation other than the initial call for comments. There has been very little feedback despite about 1700 submissions.

Extract from the transcript.

“MS QUILTY: Only to say that there will be a review commencing shortly of Newcastle bus services. That will involve community consultation, and I think the community consultation is scheduled for 19 November. That will certainly provide an opportunity for you to be raising these kinds of issues.

MR ROWLEY: That is when it commences. The community consultation commences on about the 19th and it will go for at least a month.

MR HAYES: We have been told that, coming out of that review, services will be truncated and discontinued. We think that is putting the cart before the horse. We want to deal with the facts as they are now. There may be some good things that come out of the service review. That is not what we have been told so far. I know the unions are very concerned. I don't know whether the unions are here today. I hope they are.

MR ROWLEY: I might say that all those issues need to be raised in the community consultation process. That is exactly what it is there for.”

Given that last years fare increase was in part based on the Review of Bus Transport AND that that review did not eventuate AND that the STA route investigation is not complete I consider that last years fare increase should not have been granted.

The State Transit Balance Sheet for Newcastle buses was changed.

- The STA balance sheet used at last years hearing was out of date as the current years report had not been released.
- The release of the current years trading figures showed the previous years figures had been changed (without explanation).
- The latest STA balance sheet show that the trading profitability of Newcastle buses is far healthier than portrayed.
- Efforts to ascertain why the figures were changed have not been provided by the Minister or others.

It is therefore reasonable that **THE FARE INCREASE FOR LAST YEAR SHOULD BE REFUNDED.**

Section 4.

Standardisation of the basis for all fares for the Hunter Region.

Commuters in the Hunter are not interested in the colour or owner of the bus. They are simply interested in getting to their destination efficiently, safely and in reasonable comfort. The charging of different fares and using different fare basis calculations is very confusing, unfair and a disincentive to travel.

The failure of the Ministry of Transport to issue standardised operational contracts can no longer be the justification for a non standard fare structures.

My preferences in order of priority are:-

1. Fares for all buses in operating in Sydney metropolitan (STA and private) and all outer metropolitan (STA and Private) (including Blue Mountains, Wollongong, Central Coast and Hunter regions) should all be:-
 - FARE FREE
2. Fares for all buses in operating in Sydney metropolitan (STA and private) and all outer metropolitan (STA and Private) (including Blue Mountains, Wollongong, Central Coast and Hunter regions) should all be:-
 - FLAT FEE per journey with distance and time unlimited.
 - standardised fare for all locations
 - no discounts or bulk buy to be provided by drivers
3. Fares for all buses in operating in Sydney metropolitan (STA and private) and all outer metropolitan (STA and Private) (including Blue Mountains, Wollongong, Central Coast and Hunter regions) should all be:-
 - TIME based
 - sliding scale (2hour, 5hour, 10 hour, 24 hour)
 - standardised fare for all locations
 - any number of buses used within the time period
 - no discounts or bulk buy to be provided by drivers
4. Fares for all buses in operating in Sydney metropolitan (STA and private) and all outer metropolitan (STA and Private) (including Blue Mountains, Wollongong, Central Coast and Hunter regions) should all be:-
 - SECTION (or distance) based per bus
 - sliding scale **OR** flag fall plus distance charge
 - standardised fare for all locations
 - no discounts or bulk buy to be provided by drivers

Special notes.

- IPART should set the maximum charge for bus travel for a single journey.
- IPART should set the maximum charge for the carriage of extras by all passengers travelling on a bus. Eg luggage, shopping trolleys, strollers, bicycles, surf boards etc.
- IPART should determine the ages for free travel and reduced fare travel by children and others.
- IPART should determine the maximum fare for people who occupy more than one standard seat.
- IPART should consider, when determining the maximum fares, fares for journeys at a range of times. Eg peak hour, daylight travel, night travel, weekend travel and public holiday travel.
- IPART should **not** determine fare packages and discounts. Eg weekly passes, travel tens, T-way tens etc. This would allow the bus operator a marketing tool to encourage bus travel and when combined with the retaining of cash box fares should reward operators for skills and entrepreneurial activity.

Section 5.

A seamless Hunter Valley bus transport system

The Hunter Valley is one regional zone that is characterised by industries, retail and health services being located in key areas. These areas are frequently remote from residential areas.

Some examples include:-

- Coal Mines in the Central and Upper Hunter
- Wineries in the Cessnock area
- Entertainment in Newcastle CBD
- Main Beaches along the Newcastle coast.
- Health based on John Hunter Hospital.
- Industry at Kooragang Island

Traditionally workers, tourists and the public have used their cars to commute. There are two main reasons for this. Firstly car travel has been cheap, easy and convenient. Secondly public transport has been very poor or simple non existent.

Fuel prices, population changes, environmental concerns and some road congestion now forces a rethink. Public transport must be part of the solution.

Public transport must develop a seamless travel system. Part of that system must include a process of people to move from one bus to another in a well timed and simple process is essential. Old planning strategies are no longer appropriate.

The Newcastle ferry is included as it is the “bus over the water”.

People of the Hunter are not traditional bus commuters and must be educated and enticed to use buses.

A key to increasing bus use is to make bus travel as “car like” as possible. The bus must look like a car, feel like a car and have the same convenience as a car. It must take people where they want to go when they want to go quickly, safely and efficiently. Frequency of service is critical with 20 minutes or less being the target.

Whilst some of the private operators like Blue Ribbon and Toronto Buses have introduced midi buses there is an urgent need for Newcastle Buses and Ferry Service to introduce a large fleet of minibuses. (about 15 seat capacity). I would nominate that 100 of the existing bus fleet be sent to Sydney to help meet its overcrowding and old vehicle issues and 300 12 - 15 seat mini buses be provided to Newcastle in replacement. These vehicles are available for \$50,000 to \$75,000 each.

As the system grows and passengers are re educated to the concept of public transport larger efficient low operational cost buses can be reintroduced.

The current patronage numbers for Newcastle buses are scary. The STA annual report shows that patronage is about 1.5 passengers per bus km travelled. Information

provided to me indicated 236kms per day of the approximately 23,000 kms have all seats occupied. This figure has not been disputed by Transport Minister Watkins.

For those that say mini buses would not work I ask the Tribunal to consider the following:-

	Volvo	Toyota Hiace Commuter
Capital cost	\$500,000	\$55,000
Seating	43	12
Fuel used per 100 kms	45	10
Weight	17 tonnes	2.5 tonnes
Tyres	6 (huge truck)	4 (light vehicle)
Manouverability	cumbersome	Easy
Ability to use weight restricted roads	no	Yes
Operating costs	huge	Very low
Resale value	low	high
Number of empty seats based on average patronage from STA Annual report	41.5	10.5

The Toyota Hiace is simply used as an example. There are about 10 similar vehicle on the marked with off the shelf models.

An extensive range of extras including automatic doors, wheelchair fitment etc is available.

The following British web site shows an extensive range with extensive detail and comparisons. Most are available in Australia.

www.minibus.co.uk

Section 6.

A plan and timetable for the integration of all modes of people transport in the Hunter Region

Buses are only one form of public transport and as such there need to be a conscious plan and timetable in place to integrate all forms of air, water, road and rail transport into a full public transport system for the Hunter region.

That integrated transport system must meet the major needs of workers, tourists and residents.

The plan must also incorporate the use of cars, community transport, motor cycles, push bikes, scooters, mobility scooters and pedestrians. Eg Cycleways to bus terminals with buses using bike racks.

The plan should also identify infrastructure needs.

Incorporated into any IPART determination should be a directive to the bus operators to actively participate in the development of a Hunter Region Plan.

IPART should specify the timetable for the development and implementation of the plan.

Section 7.

Other important issues and considerations.

1. Fare Payments

Fares collected by Sydney, metropolitan and outer metropolitan operators are paid to the Ministry of Transport.

Fares collected by rural and regional operators are retained by those operators and “this means that around 15% of operators’ profit depends on the number of passengers they carry and the fares they charge.”

(Quote from IPART Fact sheet page 2/3)

This concept gives operators a strong incentive to meet their customers’ needs.

I believe IPART should in its determination request that all contracts in all regions allow the bus operators to retain their cash fares.

2. Transparency of the Ministry of Transport

The dealings of the Ministry are hard to locate.

The Submission of the Ministry quotes a number of costs and payments in isolation.

This is unreasonable as clearly the community has no indication of the financial position, spending or operation costs of the Ministry’s activities.

It is hard to reconcile how the operating costs etc of an operator can be used by the Ministry to seek a fare increase.

3. Disabled bus passengers.

The concept of attempting to treat disabled passengers equally is great in theory but a total disaster in practice.

In Newcastle the numbers of total passengers is extremely low. Of the 12m passengers carried by the STA about 4.5m are school children, 1.6m are fare free zone passengers and .4m are ferry passengers. That leaves only 5.5m passengers.

Of those passengers the numbers of wheelchair passengers is almost zero. The Bus companies provide no statistics of the wheelchair patrons carried and the distance of those journeys.

I put forward that the cost of such provision is disproportionate to the benefit provided AND that wheelchair patrons could have their travel provisions met to a much higher standard using alternate methods.

4. School buses

Newcastle Buses and Ferry Services operate a considerable number of school buses on dedicated school bus routes. For the operation of these services they are paid under the school student transport arrangements.

These routes, the operating costs of these services and the income derived from this operation should not be considered by IPART whilst determining the fare structure for normal routes.

The Ministry provides no statistical information about this operation in their submission.

5. Vehicle operation procedures

Drivers of Newcastle STA buses are directed and instructed to drive fast.

Whilst this may marginally assist with journey times it has a number of very negative impacts.

Firstly continual rapid acceleration and heavy braking significantly raises operating costs especially fuel consumption.

Secondly noise, dust and vibration are far more significant.

Thirdly safety levels are reduced.

IPART should consider the need for this style of vehicle operation and its serious impact on operating costs.

6. STA Newcastle route review

The much heralded route review of the Newcastle Buses and Ferry Service network is not due to be trialled until the end of November 2008.

Only in the last few days has any details been released to the public. The very limited detail is only available on the internet. There is no detail of bus stop location or connections with other routes, other operators or other forms of transport.

There has been insufficient time and information to consider the value to the community. Given that there is no increased route distance, many frequencies seem reduced and long routes would seem to be a recipe for poor on time running the outcome does not seem promising. One should however keep an open mind.

IPART should undertake, as part of its determination process, an examination of the route review to determine if its claimed effectiveness is likely to be a benefit to patrons and its impact on operating costs. The Ministry provides no information in its submission.

7. Fare free Zone

The CBD of Newcastle is a fare free zone for STA buses. It operates in daylight hours and carries about 1.6m patrons.

Given that this is a free service it is very concerning that passenger loads are extremely low. I can only assume that the service does not meet the need of the community.

Many of the patrons of the Fare free zone are school children. I understand that many schools do not issue bus passes for children who are residents of the fare free zone. This has two impacts. Firstly it inflates the fare free zone patronage and secondly it avoids school children passengers being funded under the school transport funding arrangements.

The fare free zone also generates considerable fine revenue particularly as passengers are carried over into the Hamilton area. The carry over is due to buses simply not stopping, lack of advice to passengers, unrealistic zone boundaries and evasion.

8. Need to comprehend the real issue and situation

Newcastle is not Sydney. Newcastle is an extended region of low density, a number of population centres and centralised public facilities. Shift work is common and there are major seasonal influences. There is no peak hour and cars are the transport norm.

The STA management seems to think that Newcastle is a depot of its Sydney operations.

The following unanswered letter to Transport Minister Watkins clearly illustrates the lack of understanding of Newcastle by the Minister and STA Chief Executive Mr Peter Rowley.

Rick Banyard
Newcastle
cdcopy@hunterlink.net.au
18th June 2008

Mr John Watkins
Minister For Transport
Sydney

Dear Minister,

Thank you for your reply via your Chief Executive Mr Peter Rowley.

I find the reply very wide of the mark and totally absent of convincing facts.

I believe you should be very concerned about the reality of the situation.

My initial suggestion was made because of the major problems you have in Sydney in providing sufficient bus transport to meet the public transport up surge. My suggestion was to transfer 100 buses from Newcastle and replace them with 150 mini or midi buses.

Newcastle buses currently operate like a “stretch limo” fleet with a large number of buses operating with only one passenger and very commonly no passengers.

Mr Rowley talks of a need to move people during peak periods. He provides no details of peak times or routes or sections of routes. Most buses leaving the Newcastle CBD between 4.30pm and 6.00 pm would be lucky to have 15 passengers even though the fare is free.

I surveyed (on a weekday morning last week at the Stuart Ave intersection) about 10 buses entering the CBD via Hunter St between 8.30am and 8.45am. The maximum passenger load was 7 and the common load less than 5. AND this is in the FREE BUS zone.

What does your CEO Mr Rowley consider to be “peak periods” and what does he consider to be a “peak load”?

CEO Rowney talks about having a peak fleet and an off peak fleet. This again demonstrates that Mr Rowley did not comprehend my suggestion, does not understand the Newcastle situation or appreciate the needs of commuters both in Sydney and Newcastle.

Mr Rowney provided no evidence of buses or routes that had all seats occupied.

I have been advised that there is only about 238kms travelled per week when a bus has all seats occupied.

My suggestion was that Sydney would have an additional 100 45+ seat buses in their fleet within 3 months. Newcastle would have a fleet of 65 45+ seat buses AND a fleet of 150 15 to 25 seat buses within 3 months. (obviously subject to funding).

The mini buses are available off the shelf and do not require fully custom made bodies. Mercedes, Toyota, Mazda, Mitsubishi and others can provide suitable vehicles. Wheel chair facilities are readily available. They are certainly far more environmentally friendly.

Mr Rowley refers to the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act and its requirement for all new public buses to have two wheelchair spaces. Mr Rowley has provided no facts about the numbers of wheelchair patrons or in fact the numbers of able patrons. It should be noted that the Act does provide for exemptions and

modification of standards with just cause. Clearly a 15 seat mini bus with 1 disabled seat is a higher level of provision than a 45+ seat bus with two wheelchair provision.

A bus service with inappropriate frequencies, poor routes and a long way from patrons homes in my view certainly does not meet the requirements of disabled people. It is not even appropriate for able bodied people.

Other Government departments and most community organisations operate a considerable number of small buses that are equipped with wheelchair access.

Mr Rowley also chooses to ignore the fact that the number of disability compliant bus stops in Newcastle region is almost nil.

The STA annual report has an average bus patronage in Newcastle of only 1.5 passengers per km travelled. That means a 15 seat mini bus will still have 13.5 empty seats every loaded running kilometre!

Mr Rowley also claims that State Transit is very conscious of its environmental responsibilities. I ask the Minister to ponder the concept put forward by Mr Rowley that operating a \$500,000 heavy bus as a stretch limo with nil or less than 5 passengers is environmentally friendly! I view it as totally irresponsible.

As a Newcastle resident I am keen for Newcastle to be provided with as many resources a possible. I am certainly reluctant to see buses lost from Newcastle if they were being efficiently used. On the other hand I can not condone total waste. To replace a major portion of our bus fleet with more cost effective and environmentally appropriate smaller buses used on a higher frequency is a win for Newcastle and a win for Sydney and a win for the taxpayers of New South Wales.

I ask that the Minister examine the very unsound response provided by Mr Rowley.

I look forward to a quality response.

Rick Banyard.

Copy to Minister Costa,
 Local MP's
 Mr Peter Rowley Chief Executive State Transit Authority

13 JUN 2008

ML08/03936

Mr Rick Banyard
cdcoper@hunterlink.net.au

Dear Mr Banyard

I refer to your correspondence addressed to the Minister for Transport concerning the fleet operated by Newcastle Buses. The Minister has asked me to reply on his behalf.

Bus fleets are sized to meet peak requirements and during these periods buses are usually at or near full capacity, carrying loads that mini buses could not accommodate.

Newcastle Buses already has a fleet of 17 MAN Midi sized buses that are allocated to routes with lower patronage. However, to increase the mini fleet as suggested would severely restrict scheduling capability and has the potential to lead to inefficient schedules with high proportions of dead running (distance travelled between passenger carrying trips when not in service).

Newcastle Buses needs the larger buses to move people during peak periods and to maintain one fleet for off peak and another for peak periods is not economically viable.

Importantly, the Disability Discrimination Act requires all new public buses to be wheelchair accessible and to have a minimum of two wheelchair spaces. The buses described in your correspondence do not meet this specification.

State Transit is very conscious of its environmental responsibilities. To that end, Newcastle Buses was allocated 26 Volvo Euro 5 buses costing \$11 million in the last year. These buses meet the requirements of the most stringent environmental emissions standards of Euro 5.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely



PETER ROWLEY
Chief Executive

Section 8

Proposal to Update the STA Newcastle bus network.

Following is a major extract from a submission I made to Mr David Witherden Manager Newcastle Buses January 11 2008.

I believe the content is pertinent to the IPART fare review as it clearly identifies and reinforces many issues and offers considerable alternatives.

Start of extract

The bus services in Newcastle provided by STA are a disaster and clearly do not meet the needs of the community, taxpayers, residents and commercial activity.

To prove this I put forward the following points.

- Passengers carried per kilometre travelled is only 1.3 (See Annual Report)
- For each kilometre travelled the STA buses make a loss of about 80 cents (See Annual Reports)
- For each passenger carried the STA buses make a loss of about 50 cents (See Annual Reports)

The STA bus service is very environmentally harmful.

To prove this I put forward the following points.

- The bus fleet contains a large percentage of old technology buses (Note 4)
- The bus fleet uses buses that are grossly oversized and have 58.5 empty seats for each kilometre travelled.
- The bus size and weight exceeds the traffic standards of many locations. Eg In the Maryville area where 17 tonne buses travel on light traffic roads and roads with 5 tonne weight limits.
- The bus speeds necessary to meet the timetables require the buses to be used in a very uneconomic and unenvironmentally friendly manner. Hard acceleration and heavy braking is the norm.
- The vehicle noise is very intrusive.
- The use of very heavy single axle vehicles places major stress and wear on suburban streets along with major deposits of pollution such as tyre rubber, dust and grime.
- The exhaust gasses emitted is huge due to the use of 12 litre engines. They are about 10 times greater than an average car on a per kilometre travelled basis.
- The buses emit in the order of 2kg of greenhouse gas per km travelled. That is about 15,000,000 kg or 15,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas per year.

- The requirement of air conditioning in the bus that is grossly oversized is extremely wasteful and harmful to the environment.
- The new buses that are claimed to be Euro five are Euro four with urea injection into the exhaust system to simulate Euro five standards (Note 5)
- The STA operated routes duplicate routes provided by private operators.
- STA work practices and operational strategies require STA buses to travel about 1.4m kms per annum or 18% of the total distance without being in operational mode exacerbating the environmental harm and incurring the taxpayer in considerable expense for no benefit.
- The STA Newcastle bus fleet contains no LPG, CNG, LNG, dual fuel or other alternate fuel vehicles.

The STA bus service and supporting infrastructure falls short of meeting the *Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport*.

To prove this I put forward the following points.

- Tactile markings are almost non-existent.
- Less than 25% of bus stops and kerbside infrastructure meets the current standards and requirements.
- The bus fleet is not compliant.

The STA Newcastle bus service is potentially inherently very unsafe for drivers, passengers, other road users and the community.

To prove this I put forward the following points.

- The bus fleet carries a large number of school children from about 70 Newcastle schools. Very few bus pick up points at schools are purpose built facilities designed specifically for the safe embarkation and disembarkation of students. It is my understanding that there are no facilities constructed within the school grounds.
- Most bus stops at schools are located on main roadways and rarely are rear or quiet entrances to the schools utilised thus considerably increasing the safety risk.
- Standards on most bus stops would not meet realistic basic risk assessments.
- The sighting of bus stops on curves, narrow roadways, crests of hills and within main traffic lanes is clearly a breach of a major fundamental safety requirement. The stops at Tighes Hill near the TAFE rear entry and at Mayfield near Woolworths are two glaring examples.
- Whilst there has been some inroads in the provision of wheelchair capability on the buses access to the bus and the facilities at the bus stops creates unacceptable risks to disabled and other passengers.
- Very few bus stops meet acceptable lighting standards for night use.

The above deficiencies are raised as they are very important considerations in any review or adjustment of bus services in the Newcastle region.

Clearly adjustments to routes must:-

- Be an improvement over existing services
- Be safe
- Be environmentally responsible
- Be financially attractive.

Newcastle buses have annual revenue of about \$35m from its 10.4m passengers. This comes from the following income streams:-

- School bus travel to about 70 schools over about 150 routes carrying about 6000 students a day on about 2.268m trips per year.
- University students to Calan and the CBD. over numerous routes carrying about 2000 students a day on about 200,000 trips per year.
- Pensioners and concession card holders. On about 6m trips per year.
- Full fare passengers on about 1.8m trips per year.
- Free Travel zone passengers on about 1.3m trips per year.
- Fare evaders on about 200,000 trips per year

Newcastle buses have an annual expenditure of about \$42.2m.

This is expended in the following expense streams:-

- Wages represent about 60% or \$27m
- Fuel and fleet running of about \$7m
- Fleet depreciation of about \$2.5m
- Other expense of about \$5.7m

It is also understood that the capital cost of new and refurbished vehicles is funded by STA from funds outside Newcastle.

After allowing for a 6% fare increase as per the IPART submission and the 4% wage increase granted it would seem that Newcastle Bus and Ferry operation will have an overall performance in 2007-08 of:-

- Loss per passenger carried \$1.02 (IPART tabled documents)
- Loss per vehicle kilometre \$1.28 (IPART tabled documents)

This represents an increase in losses of about 30% since 2005-05 (Annual Reports etc).

I believe this blow out in losses is a major reason for the network review. Clearly there is almost no limit to the strategies that can be used to arrest this disastrous and unfundable trend.

The options are

- Change routes
 - To contain costs to existing levels using the existing fleet as stated in the network review documents the only way is to reduce services and routes.

- Given that the school bus routes are contractual the cuts must be made to the other routes.
- Remove the “dead running” and “empty running” by converting to “fare paying running”
- To incorporate interchanges and feeder buses with express routes.
- Change the fleet vehicles
 - To change the fleet mix to incorporate cost and environmentally efficient vehicles that is matched to the need of Newcastle.
 - Use vehicles that have a lower skills and operator training requirement.
 - Use vehicles that meet the safety and environmental requirements of Newcastle routes
 - Use vehicles that match the passenger needs of commuters rather than the operational needs of the bus company.
 - Use vehicles with lower fuel requirements.
- Integrate the STA services with services provided by private operators.
 - Private operators have extensive networks that abut the STA network. By establishing connectivity between the two networks passenger needs across the boundaries can be met rather than losing passengers to taxis, private cars and other forms of transport.
 - Private operators provide services within the STA area and STA services extend into other areas. Passengers do not care who owns the bus, its colour, shape or size. They simply want their travel need met quickly, efficiently and safely. For STA not to incorporate the provisions by private and other operators is selfish, inefficient, a blight on the bus industry and certainly not in keeping with the needs of the traveller.
- Use subcontractors to meet peak and special needs
 - In all industries it is the norm to use contractors and sub contractors to meet specific needs and requirements. The provision of buses to STA Newcastle could help improve fleet efficiency, satisfy peak demands and cover non norm circumstances. EG STA could eliminate all spare buses by having a sub contractor meet that demand. This could reduce the Newcastle fleet by about 20 buses.
 - Sub contractors could help Newcastle STA generate revenues. EG STA will not accept charter work at some hours. A full day’s charter revenue could be missed by meeting a school obligation for 30mins.
 - Sub contractors could provide a specially designed wheelchair bus service to meet the special needs of wheelchair bus travellers to a much higher and more cost effective way than simple requiring that all buses, bus stops and kerbside infrastructure meet the needs and doing it poorly.

- Have bus maintenance and repairs carried out by contractors.
- Relinquish the route contracts for some services.
 - Where Newcastle Bus and Ferries are not prepared to operate services within their contract area to the level required by the travelling public other operators should be permitted to establish services. As an example Newcastle Bus & Ferries has indicated it is not prepared to conduct a service to meet the needs of Honeysuckle Drive.
 - Where Newcastle Bus & Ferries consider a route to be not viable then they should hand back the rights to that route to MoT for allocation to another operator.
- Increase revenue to reduce the loss of the bus and ferry business. There are a wide range of options available that with some imagination, planning and marketing that could be achieved. These include
 - Charter work
 - Scheduling special services to special events and specific activities. EG 1 beach buses. EG 2 Concert specials EG 3 Sporting event specials.
 - Railways track work and emergency travel operations.
 - Increase passenger numbers by increasing market penetration, marketing and communications.
 - Increase full fare passengers. The park and ride concept would be one strategy.
 - Increase fares and charter charges.
 - Offer additional services such as rapid freight and courier services particularly along express route.
 - Utilise maintenance and service facilities to generate income.
 - Install a CNG filling station and sell to other consumers.

The issue of what can be carried on a bus needs consideration as it has a major impact on costs and passenger potential.

I ask that the following be considered:-

- Pets are often the reason why people travel by car etc.
- If buses travel to shops then patrons will require their purchases to be carried. If the bus can not meet this need then the patronage will be lost to other forms of transport eg Taxis.
- Eskies, picnic hampers, travel rugs and baby clothes etc are part of passengers hand luggage
- Strollers, walkers and shopping carts.

When these items and goods are carried I see no reason why a fee should not be charged for that service. Eg Pets at ½ full adult fare.

Conclusion

I find it very difficult to comment on the specific routes as proposed as there is no information about frequencies, likely timetables or location of bus stops. I will certainly be wishing to make comments when such information is available.

Newcastle Bus and Ferries is the operator of a contract bus service. It is not the operator of a fleet of stretch limos.

It is their responsibility to provide for the tax payers of NSW a quality efficient bus service to the people of Newcastle.

If the fuel company that delivers the 4m litres of fuel to the bus depot used semi trailer tankers to deliver a jerry can of fuel on each trip I am sure they would be the laughing stock of the depot management and staff.

The community is aghast at the performance of Newcastle buses as each monster environmentally unfriendly 60 passenger bus only carries 1.4 passengers for each kilometre travelled.

It is time to develop a route strategy, time table and fleet structure that use a bus fleet as buses and not stretch limos.

The aim of the route adjustment **MUST** be to

- increase patronage and raise revenue streams.
- Introduce current non bus users to the bus service.
- Increase the frequency of bus use by current patrons.
- Increase the average journey lengths of patrons by encouraging patrons. to travel further destinations.
- Increase the revenue raised from each passenger carried.
- Cut costs.
- Improve efficiency.
- Improve travel times for patrons to reach their destinations

Provide a seamless integrated travel option

End of extract.

Section 9.

Factors IPART must consider in relation to buses and in particular to Newcastle (Lower Hunter Region).

The cost of providing Services.

The operation of grossly oversized buses with extremely low levels of patronage is clear evidence that the costs of operation are grossly excessive. The operation of the STA buses for 18% of the time “not in service” is also a very expensive practice.

The protection of consumers from abuses of monopoly power

The Newcastle Buses and Ferry Services route review is clear evidence that a monopoly operator has abused its power. That review has among a host of other factors failed to integrate its services with other operators.

The absence of adequate statistical information, the absence of the STA Annual Report and the vagaries of the Ministry of Transport's submission is also further clear evidence of monopoly power.

The need for greater efficiency in the supply of services.

The frequency of services, lack of integration and low patronage is clear evidence that the services are not inline with the needs of the community and the fundamental service provisions recommended by industry experts.

The need to maintain ecologically sustainable development.

The carriage of 1.5 passengers per kilometre at 45litres per 100 kms travelled in monstrous \$500,000 “stretch limos” is clearly not ecologically sustainable by any measure.

The social impact of the determination

When patrons can not travel safely, efficiently and within reasonable timeframes by public transport to and from major centres, activities and events there is clearly a negative social impact.

Standards of quality, reliability and safety of the services

Patrons constantly complain about the quality, appropriateness and reliability. There is very little evidence that risk assessments have been carried out at bus stops.

Contractual arrangements prevailing in the industry

The contractual arrangements are monopolistic and are stifling the entrepreneurial skills of the operator to provide services. This is highlighted by the collection of fares by the Ministry of Transport.

Other matters IPART considers relevant

Clearly my submission and the submissions of others raise a host of issues particularly with the Newcastle regional services.

Section 10

Additional Information.

1. The following are some examples of how other bus operators infiltrate the Newcastle STA area and form an important part of the process of passengers getting to their destinations.

- Toronto Bus Services**

Routes 270, 271, 272, 273

TORONTO to UNIVERSITY, BHP, JOHN HUNTER HOSPITAL
via Fassifern, Bolton Pt., Booragul, Glendale Centre and Charlestown

Weekdays

	am	am	am	am	am	am	am	am	am	am
Route	270	271	270	271	271	270	272	271	270	271
Toronto West	6.00	.	7.34	8.10	.	.	9.05	.	10.45	.
Toronto	6.05	6.49	7.45	C8.15	8.30	8.55	9.13	9.40	10.55	11.33
Fassifern Station	6.13	.	.	.	8.40	.	9.25	9.52	.	11.43
Fennell Bay	6.17	6.54	7.50	N8.20	8.45	9.04	9.30	9.57	11.03	N11.47
Bolton Point	6.22	6.58	7.55	.	8.50	9.09	9.35	10.02	11.08	.
Marmong Point	.	.	.	.	8.55	.	.	10.07	.	.
Woodrising	6.28	7.03	8.01	.	.	9.15	9.41	.	11.14	.
Booragul	6.30	7.05	8.03	8.26	8.57	9.17	9.43	10.09	11.16	11.53
Teralba Bowling Club	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	10.13	.	.
Teralba Station	6.33	T7.08	T8.07	.	T9.01	9.20	9.47	T10.15	11.19	.
Speers Point	.	.	.	.	9.06	.	9.52	10.20	.	.
Boolaroo Shops	6.38	.	8.12	.	9.09	9.25	.	10.23	11.24	.
Glendale supercentre	.	.	8.20	.	9.15	9.32	.	10.29	11.32	.
Glendale Crossroads	G6.43	.	8.24	.	.	9.35	.	.	11.35	.
Wallsend Shops	W6.50	.	8.34	.	V9.37	9.45	.	.	11.45	.
Jesmond Centre	6.55	.	8.39	.	V9.42	9.50	.	.	11.50	.
	U7.00	.	8.52	.	V9.47	9.55	.	.	11.55	.
University										
Industries	7.08	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Lake Fair	.	.	.	.	.	.	10.02	.	.	.
Charlestown	.	.	.	.	.	.	10.12	.	.	.
Garden City	.	.	.	.	.	.	10.20	.	.	.
John Hunter Hospital	.	.	.	.	.	.	10.30	.	.	.

Toronto Fares Information

We believe in lower fares to provide affordable travel for our local community.

Section based fare scale for adult, pensioner, child		
Section	Full Fare	Concession
1	\$1.20	\$0.60
2	\$1.80	\$0.90
3	\$2.20	\$1.10
4	\$2.20	\$1.10
5	\$2.60	\$1.30
6	\$3.20	\$1.60
7	\$3.20	\$1.60
8	\$3.20	\$1.60
9-12	\$3.60	\$1.80
13+	\$3.80	\$1.90
Charlestown	\$4.20	\$2.10
Charlestown Return	\$5.60	\$2.80

"Special Fares"

We offer weekly tickets for adult return fares, 5 return trips for the price of 4.

Return Charlestown fare

Buy a return ticket to Charlestown, Garden City, John Hunter Hospital and get 40% off normal fare.

Pensioner Excursion

Is now accepted on Toronto Buses. For the \$2.50 enjoy unlimited travel on all public transport.

- **Sugar Valley Bus Services**

This page contains links to Sugar Valley Coachlines timetables and route maps. Our timetables can be viewed on screen or downloaded in printable Adobe PDF format (this requires the Adobe Acrobat Reader software to be installed on your computer and can be downloaded here). If you require further information regarding bus service information please phone 02 4958 2057

Bus timetables and maps: Click on the links below to access individual services. Please note that Sunday timetables operate on all public holidays.

West Wallsend – Edgeworth District Bus Services

Routes 265, 266, 267

Linking Barnsley, Cardiff, Charlestown, Edgeworth, Garden City, Glendale, Holmesville, Jesmond, Seahampton, Killingworth, University, Wallsend and West Wallsend

Sugar Valley Bus Services

Routes 265, 266 & 267

John Hunter Hospital to Seahampton

Weekdays

	am	am	am	am	am	am	am	am	am	am	am	am	am
										S			
From West Wallsend	265	265	265	266	266	267	266	265	267	266	267	267	266
Seahampton	.	.	.	.	7.16	7.35	.	8.13	8.36	.	9.55	.	.
West Wallsend	5.50	6.00	6.50	.	7.20	7.39	.	8.16E	8.39E	.	9.58	11.00	.
Holmesville	5.55	6.05	6.54	.	7.25	7.44	.	8.25	A	.	10.04	11.06	.
Killingworth	.	.	.	.	7.25X	7.44XS	.	.	.	9.50	.	.	11.56
Barnsley Shops	6.00	6.10	7.00	.	7.32	7.51	.	8.31	8.47	9.55	10.10	11.10	12.01
Haawkins Village Loop	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	8.51	9.59	.	.	.
Edgeworth Heights	6.04	6.14	7.04	.	7.36	7.55	.	8.33	9.02	10.04	10.14	11.14	12.05
Suttor & Garth Sts	6.08	6.18	7.08	.	7.40	7.59	.	8.38	9.04	.	10.18	11.18	.
Northlakes & Oakville	.	.	.	7.04	.	.	7.48	.	.	10.11	.	.	12.10
Jupiter Cct	.	.	.	7.06	.	.	7.50	.	.	10.14	.	.	12.14
Harper Ave	.	.	.	7.11	.	.	.	.	.	10.19	.	.	12.19
Edgeworth Oasis	6.11	6.21	7.11	.	7.43	8.02O	8.02O	8.41	9.08	.	10.21	11.21	.
Crossroads	6.14	6.24	7.14	7.14	7.46	8.06	8.06	8.45O	9.12	10.25	10.25	11.25	12.25
Stockland/Glenvale	.	.	7.18C	7.18C	7.50	8.12C	8.12C	8.50	9.16	10.29C	10.29C	11.29	12.29C
Cardiff Railway	6.21	6.31	.	7.25	7.59	8.20	8.20	9.00	9.24	10.37	10.37	11.37	12.37
Charlestown Sq	.	.	.	7.36	8.12	.	8.33	.	.	10.54	.	.	12.49
Garden City	.	.	.	7.46	8.20	.	8.52	.	.	11.06	.	.	1.06
Elermore Vale	.	.	.	.	.	8.27	.	.	9.31	.	10.43	11.43	.
Lake Rd	.	.	7.22	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Wallsend Shops	.	.	7.26	.	.	8.34	.	.	9.37	.	10.49	11.49	.
Wallsend Hosptial	.	.	.	.	.	8.36H	.	.	9.38	.	10.52	11.52	.
Stockland/Jesmond	.	.	7.30N	.	.	8.44J	.	.	9.42	.	10.55	11.55	.
University	.	.	.	.	.	8.50	.	.	9.47	.	11.00	12.00	.
Newcastle Railway	.	.	7.50L	.	8.42B	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.

Sugar Valley Coachlines Fares

We believe in lower fares to provide affordable travel for our local community.

Section based fare scale for adult, pensioner, child		
Section	Full Fare	Concession
1	\$1.20	\$0.60
2	\$1.90	\$0.90
3	\$2.60	\$1.30
4	\$3.00	\$1.50
5	\$3.40	\$1.70
6	\$3.70	\$1.90
7	\$4.00	\$2.00
8	\$4.00	\$2.00
9-12	\$4.40	\$2.20
13-19	\$4.60	\$2.30

Multiride Tickets

Multiride tickets offer the travellers 10 trips for the price of 8. Ask your driver for more information.

Pensioner Excursion

Is now accepted on Sugar Valley Buses For \$2.50 unlimited travel on all public transport.

- **Morrisset Bus Service Fares**

We believe in lower fares to provide affordable travel for our local community.

Section based fare scale for adult, pensioner, child		
Section	Full Fares	Concession
1	\$1.70	\$0.80
2	\$2.40	\$1.20
3	\$2.80	\$1.40
4	\$3.00	\$1.50
5	\$3.20	\$1.60
6	\$3.50	\$1.80
7	\$3.70	\$1.90

Pensioner Excursion

Is now accepted on Morrisset Buses. For \$2.50 enjoy unlimited travel on all public transport.

Morrisset Bus Services

This page contains links to Morrisset Bus Service timetables and route maps. Our timetables can be viewed on screen or downloaded in printable Adobe PDF format (this requires the Adobe Acrobat Reader software to be installed on your computer and can be downloaded here). If you require further information regarding bus service information please phone 02 4973 2114

Bus timetables and maps: Click on the links below to access individual services. Please note that are no services operating on Sundays and public holidays.

Morrisset – Morrisset Peninsula Bus Services

Routes 278 & 279

Linking Morrisset with Bonnells Bay, The Bay Estate, Yarrawonga Park, Balcolyn, Silverwater, Morrisset Park, Windermere Park, Brightwaters & Mirrabooka - Sunshine

Routes 280

Linking Morrisset with Cooranbong & Avondale

- **Busways**

Route 99 : LAKE HAVEN – GWANDALAN – SWANSEA – CHARLESTOWN

From Lake Haven to Charlestown

From **Lake Haven Shops** via (R) Goobarabah Av, (R) Lake Haven Dr, (R) Pacific Hwy (**Charmhaven**), (R) Pacific Hwy (**Doyalson**), (R) Boronia Rd, (L) Anita Av (**Lake Munmorah**), (R) Terence Av, (L) Rosemount Av, (L) Elizabeth Bay Rd, (R) Pacific Hwy, (L) Kanangra Dr, (L) Summerland Rd, (L) Yeramba Rd (**Summerland Point**), (R) Cams Blvd, (L) Ginganup Rd, (R) Government Rd, (R) Summerland Rd, (L) Kanangra Dr, (R) Orana Rd (**Gwandalan**), (R) Winbin Cr, (L) Gamban Rd, (R) Parraweena Rd, (L) Kanangra Dr, (L) Pacific Hwy, (R) Montefiore St, (L) Clarke St (**Catherine Hill Bay**), (R) Lindsley St, (L) Flowers Dr, (L) Pacific Hwy, (R) Awabakal Dr (**Nords Wharf**), (R) Government Rd, (L) Phillip Rd, (R) Marine Pde, Nords Wharf Rd, (L) Crangan Bay Rd (**Cams Wharf**), (R) Cams Wharf Rd, (L) Pacific Hwy (**Swansea & Belmont**), (L) Smart St, (L) Pearson St (**Charlestown Sq**).

Section 11.

Conclusion

Whilst

- the capacity of the buses and ferries continue to be in greatly in excess of the capacity needs of Newcastle.
- the timetables are inappropriate and not linked
- the routes inadequate
- the infrastructure substandard
- there is little standardisation of fares between operators
- there is not a seamless transport system
- there is no regional integrated transport plan
- the environment seems to be ignored

It is totally unreasonable for the Government or the users to fund the extravagance and waste.

IPART has the role to demonstrate that it is an independent pricing regulator.

IPART has a responsibility to direct the Ministry and bus operators (in particular Newcastle Buses and Ferry Service) to cease the practice of using oversized buses and operational practices that seriously harm the environment and drastically escalate costs

The charges to users of STA buses should be reduced by 25% AND the management of the Newcastle STA operation be directed to increase the service delivery and reduce operating costs.

The Ministry of Transport should also be directed to address the transport issues of the Hunter and to ensure (and demonstrate) that its funds are not wasted.

I believe the Newcastle community supports the user pays principle and believe transport user will be willing to pay reasonable fares for a transport system that meets their needs to a high standard. It should be noted that freight charges are 100% user pays and there is a ready acceptance to pay significant freight charges for quality logistics services.

It is essential for a metropolis (the seventh largest in Australia) like Newcastle (Lower Hunter) to have a quality bus service matched to the community needs. Frequencies, routes and infrastructure should be to a high standard.

I trust the Tribunal will find my submission of value.

I am available for questioning if required.

I formally request to be granted a “seat at the table” when the public hearing is held.

Rick Banyard