

Email

22 August 2005 8:20AM

To: ipart@ipart.nsw.gov.au

Subject: Stockton Ferry service users submission to IPART on fare increases supported by Hunter Commuter Council and NSW Commuter Council

FROM COMMUTER COUNCIL  
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22/8/2005. PHONE 0418226488

To IPART 2005 fare review  
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The submission below was compiled by Stockton Ferry user representatives and forwarded by the Hunter Commuter Council.

The Hunter Commuter Council was established at the request of the NSW Government in the late 1970's and has operated ever since.

It is considered that IPART should not agree to a fare increase for the Stockton ferry unless the operator is prepared to give serious consideration to the points raised below.

The Hunter Commuter Council would like to pursue an extension of running time for the Stockton Ferry Service and other improvements, as follows:

- Stockton Ferry Service is currently very well used during daylight hours, the car park being filled to capacity and spilling over to nearby streets. I have been told that there is often standing room only on the ferry, but because of the limited time of night service the patronage falls away drastically.  
The current timetables have a last ferry time at night which is unrealistic and reminds me of an old fashioned boarding school, or a hostel for delinquent children. People who go out at night would expect transport until at least midnight. If you go to the theatre etc, you would expect to have supper following and some social interaction. Therefore the night time ferry service is not well patronised, as those going to the city take the car, to avoid the scramble for the last ferry at 11.00 p.m. This is not an encouragement to avoid drink driving, especially applicable to the young people.
- The Sunday timetable is most inconvenient for connection to the train service. If you travel to Sydney from Stockton on a Sunday, in order to catch the fast train service in the morning, you need to drive over to Broadmeadow, as the first ferry does not leave Stockton until 8.45 a.m. If you were not returning that day you would have the problem of what to do with the car, therefore you are forced to take a taxi. This quite unreasonable, and costly, as well as being detrimental to the environment. Residents of Stockton have seen backpackers stranded on the ferry wharf for hours and missing their train connection, which is not a good impression for tourism.

The submission, therefore is as follows:

**Extension of services on Sundays and Public Holidays**, commencing at 6.30 a.m. to connect with the 6.37 train, and finishing at 12.00 midnight, to allow a reasonable day out.

**Extension of the weekday night service** to 12 midnight to reduce car use and alleviate city parking provision.

**Opening the western end of Newcastle Station.** The connection to the train from the ferry is good, but would be vastly improved if you could go direct to the station platform. Currently you need to walk right to the other end and around to go in from the other side. This causes difficulty for elderly or disabled passengers, who sometimes miss the train because of the time taken to reach the platform. **It would also provide better access to the Hunter Street Mall and the new Markets.**

It is hoped that IPART will include these points into its consideration.

Note, while the third dot probably belongs in a rail section, it is most important to Stockton people and those from the Port Stephens area, and would most likely have to be paid for by the ferry operator..