

Blue Mountains Commuter & Transport Users Assoc.Inc.

Ref. Bus Fares 2007

Date: 28th Sept.06

To Mr.James Cox
The Chairman.
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal.
44 Market Street
Sydney

Dear Sir.

On behalf of the Association I thank the Tribunal for the opportunity to submit the following issues and concerns in relation to the fare structure of the Bus System.

The Association is based on the area from Lapstone to Mt.Victoria. The Association members well as the community of the Blue Mountains Local Government use the Transport System Bus Rail Taxi Ferry within the Blue Mountains and destinations beyond. The Issues that the Association regardless of fare types are as follows.

Ticket Boundary Exclusions.

The ability to use the Day Tripper and Travel Passes as the boundary stops at Emu Plains we have evidence from informed sources that persons are buying a ticket to Emu Plains and then obtaining a Day Tripper.The Associations seeks the support of IPART to have the same ticketing facilities available to the Community of the Blue Mountains for the reason that we do travel around the whole of the transport System.The fare pricing has not been raised only the lack of availability.

Bus Fare Boundary.

The Private Bus Company has two basic fare types One for the metropolitan area that includes Penrith & Emu Plains Area and the other from Lapstone to Mt Victoria in other words the Outer Regional Area. The Association request that the IPART seek a correction to this situation.

Harmonisation of Outer Suburban Areas

The Association seeks harmonisation of the fare structures of the bus fares outside the immediate Metropolitan Areas taking into consideration the topography and demographics but with due consideration for affordable fares especially the lower income earners.

Zonal Fare Structure.

The Association seeks a Zonal Fare structure similar to the system that applies to Metropolitan Area Travel Pass Zones. The Association seeks a travel pass zone for rail and bus between Penrith to Mt.Victoria and from Lithgow to Lawson These Travel Passes to be used on Rail and Bus.

Over 2

(2).

Reform and Ticketing

As Secretary of the Association I have attended many presentations by various Authorities in relation to the T Card and Bus Reform; unfortunately the Bus Reform has not included a Reform of the Ticketing Products within the Private Bus or State Transit concurrently within the Bus Reform Process.

This is unfortunate as the Reform process looked at costs of operating the system but the fare box collection process appears to have been left out

Now we observe another process that the user has to spend time looking at various aspects of the Bus Operations in order to come to a conclusion whether to agree to fare increases Providers of the Transport System will be seeking increases in fares but has IPART established that the Bus Reform Process has produced savings resulting from the Reform?

It would be interesting to see whether the new practices and procedures that the Bus Companies have had to put in place resulted in savings or have costs increased because of the following

a. Costs to meet the contract specifications as stipulated in the Contract.
i.e. In house costs to prepare documentation

b. What costs that are incurred in operating to the new contract?

c. What the ongoing costs are in reporting to the Ministry?

d. Also is the information tabulated by the Bus Company of value?
both the Ministry and the outcomes are of value to the
Community.

e. What is the costs savings that have been achieved by reducing the
number of Providers to 15 in the Sydney Area?

In other words has the Reform process reduced the overhead costs in operating the system or has new procedures etc increased overhead costs, from a commercial aspect there should be a reduction in costs when a Reform Process is created With Respect we request to IPART to investigate this aspect before the fares are decided on.

T Card

I have raised the issue of the T card as the a trial is taking place with this system and the introduction is imminent impression is that it will be introduced throughout 2007 and as the fare increases proposed are to be enforce for the next twelve months I believe the costs of the t card should be taken into account I request the following should be investigated before the fare increases apply. Questions to be investigated.

- Cost of introduction of the t card System both Hardware and Software?
- Cost savings derived from not handling cash.

Over 3

(3).

- The Cost to the consumer buying the T Card?
- Will there be discounts to the Consumer using the T Card?
- As the funds contained in the Election Purse are earning some interest will this money be used to defray the costs of managing the T card System?
- If the Consumer forgets to Tag Off what charges will the Consumer incur and will they be refundable when the circumstances are explained?

I submit that all these extra costs will be attributed to the costs of travel

The Association suggests that IPART consult with the various Authorities as to what tickets will be available on the TCard will we see Travel Ten, Day Tripper, on the T Card System

Another issue that I have observed is the introduction of the Pensioner Excursion Ticket is the ability to use all the Transport Modes Rail Bus & Ferry for \$2.50 The Range of Use can be for Example from East Gresford to Lithgow but other users who are in the very low income bracket have to pay half to full fare pending on their individual circumstances as pointed out at the Rail Fare Inquiry from members around the table the PET was considered too cheap. (Yes it is a sensitive matter).

I submit this for due consideration by IPART and will be available for discussion if the Tribunal agrees

Yours faithfully
Paul Trevaskis CMILT J.P.