

# Submission to IPART Opal Review, 2024

15 September, 2024

## 1. Summary and recommendation

My comment relates to Draft Recommendation 5. I am not against an investigation into ticketing irregularities and failures. However IPART Draft Recommendation 5 is in my view very poorly framed and is unreasonably biased. I specifically object to and would strongly contest the IPART phrases:

1. "Transport for NSW"
2. "attitudes and motivations"
3. "of its passengers"
4. "ticketing non-compliance"
5. "revenue losses".

My submission is that you should replace the paragraph:

"Recommendation 5: That Transport for NSW consider conducting a study into the attitudes and motivations of its passengers towards ticketing non-compliances to understand and cost-effectively address the increase in fare non-compliances and reduce associated revenue losses since 2019."

with

"Recommendation 5: That an independent study be commissioned by the NSW Parliament into: the incidence of; trends in; reasons for; and possible solutions (if required) to, any under or over charging or under or over payment arising from ticketing irregularities and failures in the NSW public transport system post 2019."

It doesn't have to be those exact words. But just something that, for the very first time in our entire lives, does not rely on denying the facts, burying the evidence, and shooting the victim.

My reasons are in the sections below.

I proceed as follows. In Section 2, I state the need for, and conduct myself, a "ticketing services audit". The reasons for my objection to IPART's 5 phrases identified above are implicit in that audit, and are then briefly spelled out, explicitly, in Section 3. Section 4 contains comments on externalities; externality pricing; and marginal costs. The Appendix then evidences the recurrent lived experience of public transport users across NSW. My main point is, that the world that most public transport users actually live in, is unrecognisably different to the picture painted by IPART.

## 2. Ticketing Services Audit

IPART should undertake and publish a dispassionate **ticketing services audit**, documenting the changes in, including the dramatic diminution in, ticketing services quality ushered in by Transport for NSW ("TfN") at the onset of the Opal regime. I can undertake and publish that exercise right here and now for you for free, as part of this public submissions protocol. You should be aghast at the losses. The "high-tech" Opal system comprehensively **underperforms** the predecessor system (a 1 ½ by ¾ inch piece of cardboard, "Green Travelpass") on every one of 13 key ticketing performance metrics.

Confucius once famously rhetorically asked: “How can we call an urn, an urn, if it lacks the characteristics of an urn?” And I would ask the same question of IPART. “How can we call a ticketing system a ticketing system, if it lacks the characteristics of a ticketing system?”

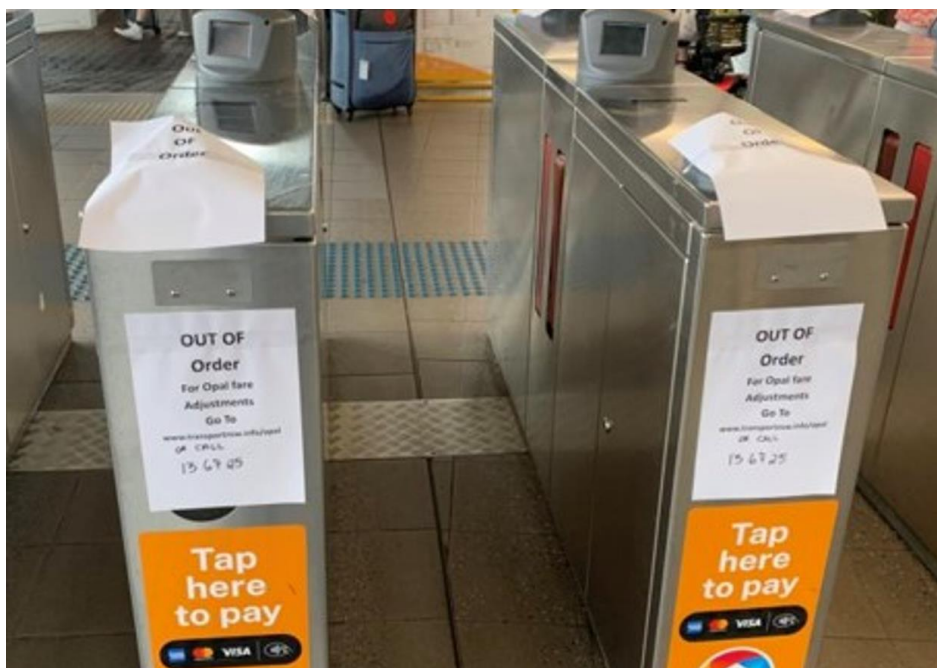
Here is the Ticketing Services Audit.

Functionality	Green Cardboard Travelpass	Black Plastic Opalcard
<b>1. Functions without any need to tap</b>	✓	✗
	Yes	No
<b>2. Obtainable as a cash purchase</b>	✓	✗
	Yes, cash was accepted at all stations. Also - you only needed to transact 4 times a year, so no need to queue. Satisfies Occam's Razor ("having a valid ticket" is sufficient evidence that the holder has paid. It should not be necessary to know the passenger's name, address, phone number, route history, credit card detail etc).	FAILS Occam's Razor - massive information overreach. For example, I tried to catch a train at Artarmon at 4.30 p.m. on Sunday afternoon - the only options were to pay by card (and give a machine your card details) or follow the sign on the machine that told you where you could buy tickets for cash, which was a newsagent 5 minutes away, which closes at 4.00 p.m. on a Sunday. Station staff were there to explain all this - but they were unavailable, to sell me a ticket. If you're going to start key-logging and shadowing every citizen and time date and place-stamping their every move, well, cool, but you need to debate that in parliament and to pass legislation, not just sleep-walk into it. I'm not against efficiency and technology, but "Opal" is not a "ticketing system", it's a direct verbatim quote from George Orwell. And if the Government are unable to accept their own money that their own Reserve Bank issues, at their own suburban stations, how come they are miraculously suddenly able to provide cash machines at Sydney Airport where tickets somehow cost \$17 just to even be there.
<b>3. Validation readable in full morning sunlight</b>	✓	✗
	Yes. Easier, not harder to read, in full sunlight.	Often (outside, in summer) you can't see anything but glare on the glass reader-panel, and you just get noises of varying levels of excruciation out of the pole. If the Opal system embodies a complex vernacular of clicks blips and whirrs that all mean different things well, this is not our native tongue and they did not provide training. They need a sign at the poles with a legend explaining, in English, what all the various sounds mean.
<b>4. Charges correct fare in the event of ticket redundancy</b>	✓	✗
	No penalty for having 2 Green Travelpasses in your pocket. The cardboard system can seamlessly handle redundancy.	What if you have 2 Opal cards in your pocket and you inadvertently tap on with one and off with the other (happens to me, all the time). That is not your fault! They are indistinguishable! They are both bare black pieces of identical inscrutable plastic. The first one will charge you a giant no-tap-off penalty surcharge and the other one will charge you a giant no-tap-on penalty surcharge. To be clear - this is not OK. And it's hard to fix at the exit (by reversing the tap on the wrong card and trying again) because (unlike the cardboard) it's direction sensitive (i.e. the gate won't let you lean over the barrier and tap to go in, when you're trying to get out, even if you have a legit reason to do that).

Functionality	Green Cardboard Travelpass	Black Plastic Opalcard
5. Balance check at home	✓	✗
	Green Travelpasses have unlimited travel. So - "running out of credit" is never an issue.	I know what you're thinking. "What's this clown even doing with two Opal cards in his pocket in the first place?" It's because if you have, say, a couple of them lying on the hall-stand at home and you need to grab one before you head off to the station, there is no way of telling which one has \$194.24 on it and which one is down to the last \$0.07. And you cannot top up anonymously, at a station, so you're forced to take both, just in case.
6. Transferability	✓	✗
	Transferable (at no marginal cost to customer)	Transferable (at a marginal cost to customer, if you call that "transferable")
7. Incidence of computer error (e.g. read-error)	✓	✗
	Does not fall on the customer	Falls on the customer
8. Robustness / Infrastructure dependency	✓	✗
	Everyone can have a cardboard card in their wallet, and it works 24/7/52. Yes, an individual person can inadvertently put their card through the wash. But the whole system can't fail all in one hit.	It's a centralised system with critical failure points that can, and recurrently do, fail. We've had "system upgrades" that have brought the whole ticketing network down, and we've had I.T. and power glitches that bring whole stations down. Opal's network workability is significantly impaired when the credit card systems are down. It's a really, really poor system. And the customer cops the blame and the penalties for vendor failures, and the responsibility to remediate, <b>every</b> time. You have to "log onto our website" to avoid overpaying ("computer not supplied") or (since that clearly doesn't work) you need to read the handwritten phone number scrawled on the not-working bank of Opal readers by the non-ticket-selling station staff, wait ten minutes for Clark Kent to vacate the phone booth, and then spend 20 minutes on hold to Opal. In the meantime - either in transit, or trying to get out at the other end - you are getting vilified by Transport for NSW officers who know nothing about the outages at your station of departure because TfN's ability to communicate its own failures in its own network to its own staff is, "nil".
9. Charges correct fare in the event of failure to validate on departure	✓	✗
	Yes. You still pay the exact same correct fare	No. You are charged a much higher and incorrect "penalty" "no-tap-on" fare. When you're heading off to work in the dark in winter at 6.30 a.m. you are not thinking "Tap on, tap on, tap on" as you sail past the invisible-in-the-twilight silver poles. Your mind is often miles away, thinking about other things. Frequently, about work. I don't legit forget each and every morning but I do legit forget about one morning per 10-day fortnight. I get charged a fortune in "no-tap on penalties", not to mention exposure to seriously mean-minded prosecution. TfN need to install barriers and no, the heritage stations, the cost, the passenger flow and the accessibility are not my problem, if they are going to outsource the vendor's jobs of ticket selling, validating and checking to the customer, and to criminalise once-a-fortnight forgetting. Need barriers - <b>every</b> station.
10. Charges correct fare in the event of failure to validate on arrival	✓	✗
	Yes. You still pay the exact same correct fare	No. You are charged a much higher and incorrect "penalty" "no-tap-off" fare

Functionality	Green Cardboard Travelpass	Black Plastic Opalcard
<b>11. Ability for passenger to confirm ticket validity whilst in transit</b>	✓	✗
	Easy. You look at the date which is stamped on the front of your Travelpass in purple writing and if it's in the future, you're valid. You can check at any time.	It's off the scale galling. The ticket inspectors have a special machine that diagnoses validity, on the train. I do not, have a special machine that diagnoses validity, on the train. So - there I am, sitting in the train with a blank piece of black plastic, and I have no idea whether I tapped on or not, and no way of finding out. The policing process is rigged against the customer. If I have to be an inspector, myself, IPART should make it a requirement that you get a free card-reader machine, with every Opal purchase.
<b>12. Passengers can forget to tap without that being a criminal offence</b>	✓	✗
	If all you've done is have a ticket in your pocket, you're legal	If all you've done is have a ticket in your pocket, it's a criminal offence. Customers are dramatically worse off, under the Opal regime. Back when ticket inspection at the gate was the responsibility of salaried ticket inspectors, the inspectors were not criminally liable if they inadvertently let an unticketed passenger, through. And they were trained and they were getting paid for it. Everyone, in their working day, has an error rate. Absent gross negligence or mal-intent, that is not regarded by society as a crime. But now that the customers have been shanghaied into the role of vendor agents – untrained and unrecompensed – inadvertent omissions are suddenly portrayed as “committing an offence”??? This is not, OK.
<b>13. Environmentally acceptable</b>	✓	✗
	1 1/2 inch x 3/4 inch cardboard (4 a year) can go in your compost bin and takes 2 months to decompose	5 cm x 9 cm plastic Opal cards do not bio-degrade at all. In about 500 years they photo-degrade and become micro-plastics and absorb toxins and continue to pollute the eco-system. Number per customer per year unknown (subject of TfN cover-up).

### Ticketing Services Audit (continued) - Illustration





Jc | February 1, 2024 at 7:31 pm |

transport officers/police transport command should be up to date with opal reader outages to avoid these warning/fines to commuters. unfortunately they are not, with no training in common sense or empathy

The vendor's system goes down yet again and, as always, it's somehow the customer's fault, and responsibility to remediate. Revenue "Protection" Officers systematically harass and penalise the victims, as per the above person's post. There is no **way** that IPART should be suggesting that Transport for NSW are appropriate investigators of all this. Quis custodiet ipsos custodes.

### 3. Summary of Problems with IPART's Recommendation #5

So – in light of that clarifying compare/contrast – like – seriously! – 13 ✓'s for a scrap of cardboard and 13 ✗'s for "state-of-the-art" Opal and the Silicon Valley "masters of the universe"; I am not making this up – my objections to the five objectionable IPART phrases should now be clear and flow naturally.

1. **"Transport for NSW"**. IPART – who are presumably supposed to be experts on Governance – are proposing putting the fox in charge of the hen-house. Ticketing failures are caused by both the vendor and the purchaser, and one variable of interest is the apportionment of responsibility and diagnosis of the causes. You need someone to conduct the research and to write the report who is either (a) truly independent, or alternatively is (b) a committee with equal representation from vendor and purchasers. The proposed IPART wording ("Transport for NSW should .." ) is like an Agatha Christie novel – where the criminal is invariably disguised by pretending to assist the investigation.
2. **"attitudes and motivations"** *That*, is just not true. If my mind is off with the pixies at 6 a.m. as I sail obliviously past an invisible-in-the-twilight silver pole, I don't have an "attitude or motivation", and if the Opal system is down, I don't have an "attitude or motivation", and if the card reader glitches, I don't have an "attitude or motivation", and if the credit card system is down or there's a power outage or the only newsagent within 2 kilometres that sells train tickets has shut for the day well – I don't have an "attitude or motivation" for any of that, either. The very term, **"Fare evasion"**, is offensive and wrong. It implies **intentionality** – which is in many cases the exact **opposite**, of what is happening, or rather, not happening. IPART should use truthful and unbiased language.
3. **"of its passengers"** We are grappling with systems, I.T. and vendor errors here. That phrase is just a nasty, gratuitous attempt at blame-shifting, deeply corrosive of the social contract. Transport for NSW should go look in the mirror.
4. **"ticketing non-compliance"** The problem is not – or is not only – that transport users are "not **complying**". It is not, only, a "compliance" issue. Machine malfunctions are not an "accidental evader". That's an "accidental neglected to charge". "Accidental evader" is an oxymoron.
5. **"revenue losses"** These are not unexceptionally "revenue losses". Customers are getting absolutely fleeced by Transport for NSW and *a priori*, you don't know whether the revenue losses are greater than the gains, or vice versa. That, is part of the **question**.

It's simply wrong, that stations and bus drivers/clippies no longer sell tickets. It's *morally* wrong.

To inform itself on the facts of this issue IPART should get onto the Internet – Reddit, X, Facebook, wherever – and browse the samizdat. (I provide a taste of that, in the Appendix to this submission). It would also be helpful if you could survey older public transport users, who may (possibly) well be underrepresented in the internet chat rooms that I have trawled. I have done a straw poll myself of over-60s, and the mean, median and mode response has been: “Thank you for asking. No, I can never remember whether I have tapped on, or not, and no, I can never remember whether I have tapped off, or not”. It’s a gigantic design flaw of the whole system that is not, the customer’s fault.

IPART need a true up, and a balanced recommendation. No-one is denying that bilkers exist – there would not be a word for it, if they did not. Public transport users just want balance and fairness.

## 4. Technical issues: Externalities; externality pricing; marginal costs

### 4.1 Externalities

IPART should acknowledge that there are two separate reasons why their Recommendation 5 is wrong.

1. For the long list of reasons set out in the “ticketing audit”; but also, in terms of externalities:
2. Analyse the root causes of ticket fraud by commuters

*“As ye sow, so shall ye reap” – Matthew 10:27*

So – a lot of my reasons why IPART is wrong to frame their Recommendation 5 as they have, is that much of the ticketing error is due to direct vendor error and, let’s be frank, direct systematic rip-offs that are in no way the customers’ fault.

But there are externalities at work here as well. They are big, and they are negative. I object, to the “Independent” Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal’s framing of its externality questions. Too late to change it now but in future issues papers you should use neutral language at the information seeking stage. Please replace “external benefits” with “externalities”, and replace “provides” with “generates”.

#### Seek Comment



20. Are there other external benefits that public transport provides?



21. Which external benefits of transport are best addressed through fares?

So – first up – there are negative outcomes, **external** to the Opal ticketing system but **internal** to NSW public transport. If Transport for NSW’s Opal process systematically acts in mean, tricky and dishonest ways, then it’s a foreseeable public response that a growing number of passengers will repay like with like. Public perceptions of moral equivalence are endemic in the ticketing space.

*“if Transport for NSW isn’t using the Opal card system correctly, then I should be able to fine them somewhere between \$200 and \$550 myself.”*



# Dear Transport for NSW, Stop Stealing My Money, Sincerely Sydneysiders

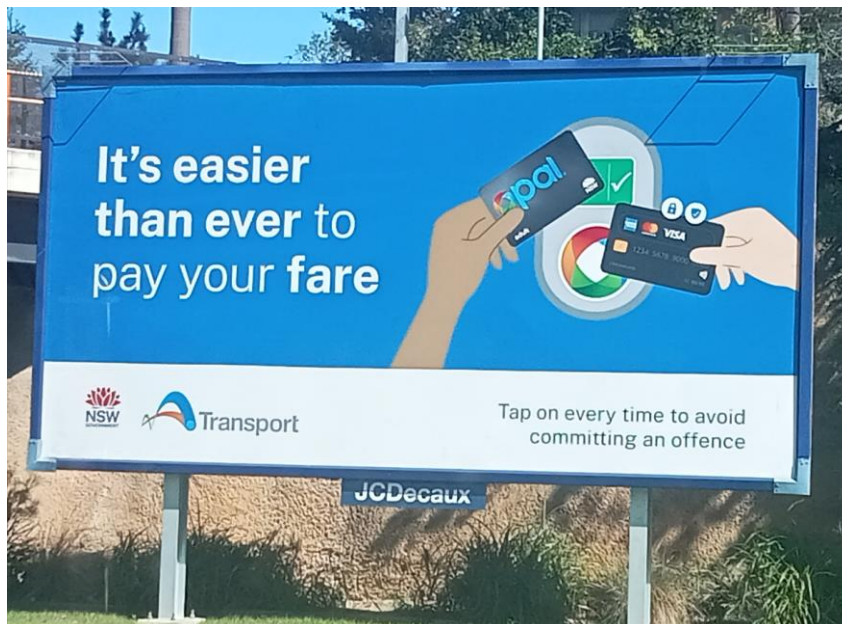
August 12, 2022

It takes time for a dishonest Department of Transport to corrode the honesty of the citizenry, but once it starts, it passes a tipping-point and snowballs. That's a further reason why "ticketing irregularities and failures" and downright fraud by customers, has accelerated "in the NSW public transport system post 2019."

**IPART should price this externality cost of the Opal system and publish the amount in their report.**

Second up, there is a further, larger externality, that is, endemic negative outcomes, **external** to the Opal ticketing system and also **external** to NSW public transport.

This is the **topic du jour** in Australia at the moment – it was the whole point of Senate Estimates in Canberra, August 2024. It's not keyboard warriors having a gripe, we are talking here. A succession of captains of Australian industry noted that strident, performative, cartoonish and transparently fraudulent public administration, is corroding societal trust. The cost of that, is huge, compared to the leakage of ticketing revenues. It makes a bonfire of societal cohesion. So try running a society without trust, and see how far you get. Here's an example of Transport for NSW's contribution to that conflagration – these signs are popping up all over the rail network at the moment:



Transport for NSW, and by association the NSW Government, are not merely stealing from public transport customers. They're in-your-face lying about it. Pushed in everyone's face. On a 15 foot by 20 foot bill board. Paid for by the taxpayer. And why would you even need to **say** it, unless it wasn't true?

“You used to have to tap on **no** times to avoid committing an offence, and now you have to tap on **every** time to avoid committing an offence, and this is somehow “**easier than ever**”????”

This cannot imaginably be true. The billboard is an oxymoron (white writing top left contradicts the grey writing bottom right).

The buccaneers at Transport for NSW are robbing their customers blind.

Go check Reddit – or anywhere on the Internet – for an absolute catalogue of examples of ongoing system failure. This is not “old news”, or “teething problems”. It has been ongoing for 16 years. As recently as a month ago, a simple 3 word post about Opal – [REDACTED] – garnered 49 upvotes in an eye-blink.



AkisFatHusband • 1mo ago



↑ 49 ↓ Reply Award Share ...

[Have tapped on Opal card but the officer still give me the interaction card. : r/sydney \(reddit.com\)](https://www.reddit.com/r/sydney/comments/1000000/Have_tapped_on_Opal_card_but_the_officer_still_give_me_the_interaction_card/)

And that was just a sampling of the particular people reading that particular post at that particular time. These are not egregious loners with idiosyncratic one-off bad experiences. The entire system just totally sucks.

Daily commuter transport is the nuts and bolts of 8 million New South Welshpeople interacting on a daily basis with the NSW Government. It needs to be handled, sensitively. We’ve all read Machiavelli. I get it, that lying to the populace is an indispensable tool of stable and effective government. But that should be used sparingly; should be convincing; should be reserved for matters of genuine national security or welfare; and should retain plausible deniability. Where possible, it should be deceit via omission (i.e. keeping schtum about the bad stuff that you have to do), and not via implausible commission.

They shouldn’t be shredding their cred with fraudulent and antagonistic billboards, and generating a widespread and endemic [REDACTED] response across the citizenry, just on train bus and ferry tickets.

**IPART should price this externality cost of the Opal system and publish the amount in their report.**

### Externalities (continued) - Pollution

NSW Parliament asked, in 2017, whether Opal cards are recyclable (Answer – “No”) and how many plastic Opal cards are thrown out each year (Answer – “No answer”. TfN seriously expect Parliament to believe that they do not know how many Opal cards they produce, and how many are still getting tapped. 100% of cards produced will have a use end-date eventually, that is a tiny fraction of their persistence horizon. Ring-pull cans, plastic supermarket bags and plastic straws, by way of contrast, are all illegal.

**IPART should price this externality cost of the Opal system and publish the amount in their report.**



## 1802 - Transport and Infrastructure - OPAL CARD RECYCLING

Faruqi, Mehreen to the Minister for Resources, Minister for Energy and Utilities, Minister for Arts, Vice-President of the Executive Council representing the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure

1. Are Opal Cards recyclable?
  - a. If yes, how can members of the public recycle their Opal Cards?
  - b. If no, are there any plans to make Opal Cards recyclable in the future?
2. How many Opal Cards are estimated to be disposed of each year?

Answer -

I am advised:

1. Opal Cards are not recyclable due to the materials they are constructed with and there are no plans to make Opal Cards recyclable in the future.
2. Data on how many Opal Cards are disposed of each year is not collected, but customers are encouraged to keep their Opal Cards, as they can be re-used for up to 9 years.

Question asked on 11 October 2017 (session 56-1) and published in Questions & Answers Paper No. 127

Answer received on 15 November 2017 and published in Questions & Answers Paper No. 133

## 4.2 Marginal costs

Transport for NSW has deleted the entire functionality of the whole ticketing system, and they no longer even sell tickets, and the uniformed station so-called "staff" milling aimlessly around the concourse and now getting paid to do absolutely nothing except impede the passenger flow yell at you, and tell you vitriolically that they are "not a newsagent", if you even have the temerity to ask them to sell you a ticket, and THEN they are wondering why fewer people have tickets?

???

You would not have to be Albert Einstein.





The key point is, from an IPART marginal pricing point of view, that the marginal cost of selling tickets again – and for that matter checking tickets for you again, at the barrier – would be zero, because the station staff are a sunk, fixed cost and they are not doing anything at the moment, and their spare unused capacity is about 100%.

(I do get it, that it's going to be tram-car-tram, all over again. Cardboard-plastic-cardboard.

**Step 1 (1879 – 1961)** Sydney had a perfectly good tram system. It worked fine for 80 years.

**Step 2 (1962 – 2019)** Ripped up the tracks and spent 57 years in a delusional fantasy land where the politicians kept telling us that we were somehow better off and that “It has never been easier to travel around Sydney”.

**Step 3 (2019 - )** Reality triumphs. It was always going to win, eventually. Rebuild a tram system (although – not nearly as good as the old one yet. Coogee? Bondi??).

I get all that. **But** – do we **have** to wait 57 years for the Green Quarterly Travelpasses to come back???. Can IPART give the whole full-circle cardboard-plastic-cardboard thing going back to cardboard tickets again, a bit of a hurry along? Thanks for any help).



Every time there's a ticketing upgrade, we lose yet another layer of functionality. IPART themselves note that, pursuant to yet another "upgrade" (viz., to credit card and iPhone tapping and a centralisation of customer travel information) we are losing yet another basic and essential functionality, i.e., the ability to know how much you are paying.

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<sup>h</sup> Unlike using an Opal card, the price of travel is not displayed on the Opal reader at tap off when using a contactless payment option. Instead, users need to register their device or look up the last 10 payments on the Opal website.

So – first point – Fels and Cousins, in the context of toll-roads, are complaining that road users are expected to use toll-roads in the absence of signage saying how much it costs. If you buy a lettuce in Woolworths, they can't get away with "go read our website for the prices". But under Transport for NSW's ticketing debacle, it is going the **other** way. **Less** information at point of sale.

I'm not against technical progress but in the giant snakes and ladders checkerboard of ticketing steps forward and steps back, Opal slides us down the whole Rainbow Serpent.

And then, second point – IPART again – **your** problem with that absence of pricing signal at point of sale appears to be, that it buggers up your ability to model elasticities. Well soz – I shoulda brought a smaller violin. You have a giant free trial on public transport price elasticity, at no cost to NSW, just by seeing what 50c fares elicit in Queensland.

The real actual reason why we need point-of-sale visibility on ticket prices is because Australia is a liberal democracy and a free, market-based economy and to have consent to voluntary transactions, you need **informed** consent.

## Seek Comment



16. What types of new fare options would you like to see following the transition to a new account-based ticketing system?

So – here again – IPART is part of the problem, not part of any solution. IPART predictably *like* centralised (“account-based”) ticketing systems, because they can build and make recommendations about mind-bogglingly complicated algorithms and pricing structures that optimise price elasticity responsiveness (or at least they could, if anyone had remembered to design a system that tells the purchaser what the price is.)

BUT – this is the exact opposite direction of where Australia is going right now. The whole entire research program and zillions of dollars in research funding, currently have their focus on **decommissioning** centralised honeypots of consumer data, and ring-fencing and walletizing personal information. Optus, Medibank, Canva, Latitude, ProctorU – so just how many hacks does it take, for you to realise that account-based ticketing is a knuckleheaded idea? In every other field of I.T. endeavour, that is to say, they are trying to **invent** and **introduce** whatever their equivalent of Green Travelpasses is; and for a host of reasons: (a) the “Big Brother” aspect of centralised data troves is increasingly regarded as being at an unacceptable risk of going the full Yevgeny Zamyatin (b) system-wide vulnerabilities to accidental outages and (c) unacceptable exposure to inevitable hacks.

But over and above all that – guys – I just want to buy a train ticket. How hard can it be. Life was never this complicated under Stan Butler and Jack Harper. I don’t need a whole ticket-price recalculation every time I hop on a bus and go two stops. We’ve already been through all that, when we were forced to make totally pointless trips at lunchtime to make subsequent train travel that week, free. That was catastrophically awful from a user’s point of view. It’s been scrapped, with good reason. Just because IPART can write some giant algorithm to create dynamic pricing, doesn’t mean you should. We do not, need to go all around the houses all over again with Byzantine account-based ticketing systems that no regular human being can understand and with ridiculous redundant trips at lunchtime.

To answer your question (“seek comment”) about a transition to a new account-based ticketing system:

“Overwhelmingly strong preference to scrap the lot”. And also save \$568 million.

I would scrap the lot, even if it saved **less than**, half a billion.

### Key message for IPART:

The Opal system does not work. It didn’t work 16 years ago when they introduced it, it has not worked for 16 years, it is not working now, and there is zippo evidence that there is any likelihood that it is about to start working, in the future. On the contrary – at the rate you are introducing upgrades it will soon have no functionality left whatsoever.



## Appendix: “Real world reality check”

### Injustice Goes Brrr: The Bus Won't Let Me Tap Off

For the most part, I'm a model citizen. When I catch the bus in the morning, I'll groggily tap on without question. Nevertheless, there have been multiple times this year when I've gone to tap off and the machine has glitched the heck out. This means that I leave the bus in a foul mood.

But what's so bad about not being able to tap off? Basically, it means that I'm getting charged for a longer trip than I took. “If you tap on at the beginning and then forget to tap off at the end of your trip, you will be charged the default fare for an incomplete trip,” asserted Transport for NSW. This organisation additionally wrote, “If you tap on at the beginning and then forget to tap off at the end of your trip, you will be charged the default fare for an incomplete trip.”

Therefore, if I'm able to tap on and not able to tap off, that's stealing. Transport for NSW, this is a two-way street, you have to work with me here. If you steal my cash then I have less money to spend on extra services, like breakfast, and new infrastructure projects, like an IKEA chair to eat my breakfast on.





←  **r/sydney** • 1 mo. ago ...  
No\_Air7077


### Have tapped on Opal card but the officer still give me the interaction card.

But on the evening when I take the bus, I find the balance on my opal card seems not right. I checked my travel details and find I have successfully tapped on at Rhodes Station and there is no tap off. That means I have tapped but the machine doesn't detected that. I do nothing wrong but be wronged.

←  **r/sydney** • 2 yr. ago 📄 ...  
HolyHypodermics

### Opal reader wasn't working on the bus today so I was unable to tap off. Is there a way to get the money partiall refunded since I'd be paying the full fare?

The bus driver said I'd have to contact Opal, but I'm not too sure where to start.

 **TikkiTakkaMuddaFakka** • 1mo ago

I worked in PT for 25 years, I was there when they implemented the opal system. It is far from a fool proof system. Lost count of how many times I had faulty readers and people thinking they had tapped on when the reader did not pick it up. Not really their fault, not trying to evade a fare but this is the end result if revenue protection get on.

←  **r/sydney** • 2 yr. ago 📄 ...  
saladfriends63

### Transport NSW charged \$49 for single bus trip?

I started to tap on/off with my debit card this week as my concession opal card has expired and have seen \$1 pending on statements as what I assume to be a holding amount. Yesterday I saw that I was charged \$49 for a bus trip from the inner west into the city and I feel very confused about applying for a refund. Has this happened to others? How was the refund process?





r/AskUK • 4 yr. ago  
Frank\_and\_Beanz



## My contactless has stopped working on Buses, what could be the problem?

Answered

It works fine in shops and other areas. However when I try to use it on the bus, it doesn't even react to the card. What



Superg0id • 1mo ago

I've tapped on with a CC in the past and their device has errored 3 times trying to check it (their screen was angled enough that I could see the results).



AkisFatHusband • 1mo ago



49 ↓ Reply Award Share ...

[Have tapped on Opal card but the officer still give me the interaction card. : r/sydney \(reddit.com\)](https://www.reddit.com/r/sydney/comments/2y8p0p/have_tapped_on_opal_card_but_the_officer_still_give_me_the_interaction_card/)

### Re: Introducing OPAL Card

by moa999 » Tue Apr 01, 2014 8:01 pm

Interesting today at Sydneyham station two police standing a couple of metres inside Opal barriers asking to see tickets. I showed Opal card, he looked at it, then said You need to sign the back then passed it back to me...

Now nowhere does it ask for a Signature.

It merely states "Space for your name and phone number"  
This I read as Optional,

and I am certainly not putting those details there.



r/sydney • 7 yr. ago  
iron\_pi



## Why do so many people struggle with tapping on or off at stations?

Almost every single time I'm walking behind someone as they're approaching the Opal Gate. JUST as they get to it the stop. WHY? Because they didn't even have their opal card out to tap out. Now I must wait for them to look for it.

Why do people find it so difficult to leave it to the last second to get their opal cards out to tap off.

Or other people who wait until the gates close completely to tap. You know the gate stays open for each person who taps and goes through.

(Now **that**, is **not** true. The gates do **not**, "stay open for each person who taps and goes through". The stations that do **not** have gates, rip you off by not effectively reminding you to tap and the stations that **do** have gates, have the gates out of synch, and you end up with bruises down both thighs when they pincer you just after you've swiped and as you're half-way through an erstwhile "open" gate.

Do the people who **design** these things, ever **use** these things? Or do they all get limmoed?)



r/sydney

Got fined on the trains. Somebody help explain.

24 upvotes · 67 comments

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