

27 October 2008

To: IPART

Re: Upcoming Increase in Rail Fares

I would like to submit my objection to any increase in rail fares starting at the beginning of 2009.

I feel IPART has been misled in coming to the conclusion that rail commuters have an average household income of \$97,917 per year. From where did you get this figure? No-one has asked me or my husband how much we earn, nor has anyone I know been asked.

My net income is \$36,000 and my husband's net income is \$16,000, giving us a total yearly net income of \$54,000.. I know of many commuters who have incomes very much like ours and a lot who have even less than us.

If IPART has been told that the average household income is \$97,917, then all I can think is that there are very many rich people using public transport.

To slug everyone with the same increase, therefore, is totally unfair. An increase in fares in my family would impact on our already stretched budget much more than it would impact on those with the high earnings IPART claims as the average, or on those who have even higher incomes.

Another point is the fact that CityRail claim to have improved services. I have not noticed this at all. In fact, it seems to me that all CityRail is interested in is getting from A to B, without any consideration for the commuter.

There are many times when trains do not stop at stations they are supposed to stop at. There are many times when, with the excuse that the train is running late, stations are missed out.

Last week, I caught a train that was supposed to stop at all stations from Town Hall to Lindfield. This in fact did not happen. At North Sydney station, we were told that because the train was running late, the next stop would be St Leonards, then Chatswood, followed by Lindfield. That meant there were FOUR stations where the train failed to stop. I got off the train at Chatswood. Six minutes later, a Hornsby train arrived and all people who had intended travelling to Roseville and who were forced to get off at Chatswood, boarded this train, which was already overcrowded as it only had 6 carriages. This during the peak afternoon period, mind you. This is not an isolated occurrence.

IPART and the government should look elsewhere in order to cut costs. There is a lot of waste involving CityRail. There is very bad management. There is no commonsense when it comes to timetables. There is total disregard when it comes to moving people. As I said earlier, CityRail only seems to be interested in getting from A to B and does not have any regard for the commuter at all. The rail system in NSW is a disgrace. It is much worse than what some in our government call Third World countries.

I trust that IPART will consider submissions from the public in a fair manner, and not just fold give CityRail what it asks for. To ignore the ordinary commuter in this instance would be a slap in the face to all commuters.