



Jenny Aitchison MP

Member for Maitland

Thursday, 17 March, 2016

GOVERNMENT BUYS MORE TIME TO SELL FARE INCREASES

In the face of pressure by Labor and more than one thousand community and stakeholder submissions, the Baird Government has this week asked the regulator IPART for an extension of time to approve higher public transport fares.

Despite having almost four months to respond to the draft proposal, the Government has written to IPART seeking a six-week extension.

Labor believes the Baird Government is simply buying time so that it can develop a sales pitch to public transport users facing significantly higher fares.

The release of the proposed new fare structure by the Government late last year sparked outrage amongst commuters with many facing train fare increases of up to \$959 a year.

Five-day-a-week commuters travelling medium and long distances from the Hunter on the train are hardest hit.

The eight-trip cap is also set to be replaced by a ten-trip cap, while the \$60 weekly cap on public transport fares is also predicted to rise well above CPI.

The new fare structure is due to be in place by July 1 this year.

The Government's letter to IPART can be viewed [here](#).

See the table over the page for examples of the proposed fare increases.

Quotes attributable to Member for Maitland, Jenny Aitchison MP:

"Higher fares are coming; this is the Government simply buying time.

"The Baird Government is working on its sales pitch to try and soften the blow of steep fare increases.

"Commuters are clear on this – they don't want to pay hundreds of dollars more in fares for the same congested services.

"These fare increases are cruel and unjustified. We should be encouraging more people to use public transport not slugging commuters up to \$959 more just to catch a train to and from work."

Background

IPART's report from December 2015 can be read [here](#).

Train Fare Increases for Regular (Five Days a Week) Commuters at 1 July 2016

Origin Station	Destination Stations	Weekly Increase from June 2016	Yearly Increase	Per Cent Increase
Maitland	Hamilton	\$18.44	\$958.88	48%

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