

5 Transport coordination

5.1 Background

Transport coordination comprises the aspects of public transport service not specifically delivered or accounted for by a specific mode – rail, bus and ferry.⁵³ Elements of transport coordination discussed in this section include fares and ticketing, route and service information, service coordination, interchanges and commuter parking, and service guarantees.

Transport integration is considered to be a contributory factor to patronage growth in many cities in Australia and overseas. This was one of the key findings from ITSRR's research on best practice in procurement of commuter rail services.⁵⁴

5.2 Developments in 2007-08

Fares

In NSW, the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) determines maximum fares for CityRail, metropolitan buses and ferries. This is generally done annually, mode by mode, against criteria set out in IPART's legislation and is not limited by the State Plan targets.⁵⁵ IPART determinations in 2007-08 were for CityRail fares to rise by 5.9% from November 2007, metropolitan and outer metropolitan bus fares by 3.6%, rural and regional bus fares by 2.72% and private ferry fares to rise by 1.33% from January 2008.

Ticketing

In Sydney, multi-modal ticketing is limited to travel passes and to some tourist products. The general ticket types vary among modes. They are mostly issued by public transport operators, they are not interchangeable, and not all are available from the one outlet.⁵⁶

For some years the Ministry of Transport has sought to have an integrated public transport ticket for Sydney, Tcard, through a contract with a privately owned ticketing developer Integrated Transport Solutions Limited. On 23 January 2008, the Minister for Transport announced that the Government was terminating that contract and the parties are now engaged in litigation.

The Government, via the Public Transport Ticketing Corporation, has since called an expression of interest for a new electronic ticketing system. The new system is expected to operate over the CityRail suburban and intercity network, metropolitan and outer metropolitan public and private bus services, and Sydney Ferries' services. It is also expected to provide capability for new metro lines, once operational.

The Government has made a number of other ticketing announcements including a trial for reductions on the price of single and return tickets in some areas to encourage travel on less crowded trains, and the introduction of some discounted bus tickets.

53 In *Connecting with Public Transport* (The Audit Office of NSW, Sydney, 2007) transport coordination was defined as requiring:

- > a network linking bus routes with rail and ferry that responds to a more diverse range of commuter destinations and times
- > closely integrated interchanges and terminus facilities
- > network development involving fare coordination, schedule and service coordination, public information and marketing coordination and administrative coordination.

54 The research involved a detailed review of commuter rail arrangements in eight cities that included London, Paris, Zurich, Amsterdam, Melbourne, Perth, Brisbane and Adelaide. All surveyed cities in ITSRR's commuter rail procurement research have implemented transport coordination to some extent. Typical features include:

- > a single transport authority with responsibility for transport coordination
- > a public transport network covering all modes with coordinated services, connections and infrastructure (e.g. interchanges)
- > a single ticket type on all transport modes (i.e. integrated ticketing)
- > common branding of all public transport services
- > a single customer-facing agency for all transport modes for selling tickets, providing information, handling complaints and marketing.

The research will be published in 2008.

55 The criteria are set out in s. 15 *Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal Act 1992* (NSW).

56 ITSRR's procurement research indicated that many cities have integrated ticketing systems in place, most of which are supported by smartcard technology.

IPART review of the CityRail regulatory framework

In July 2007 the Acting Premier requested IPART to undertake a review to:

recommend a regulatory framework which will provide CityRail with the incentives to provide efficient passenger rail services.

Some rail aspects of this review are discussed in Section 2 of this report.

IPART's preliminary view is that it would be desirable to have a fare structure that includes a 'flag fall' charge plus a variable distance-based charge.

While the IPART review is limited to CityRail, its principles could be significant in the context of the National Transport Policy Framework which calls for an economic framework for transport – including public transport, cars, roads and freight.

In July 2008, the Minister for Transport stated that he would ask IPART to help develop a new fare structure for electronic ticketing for buses, trains and ferries.⁵⁷ An updated terms of reference is yet to be provided to IPART.

Route and service information – 131500

Integrated public transport route and service information for Sydney is provided through the 131500 Transport Infoline. This service is managed by the Ministry of Transport via a contract and funding is in the order of \$7.6 million per annum. The service is supported by the main transport service providers: RailCorp, State Transit, Sydney Ferries and the private metropolitan bus operators.

Three elements of service are provided through the Transport Infoline:

- > information for planning a trip using public transport
- > real time information about service disruptions
- > receipt of feedback, including complaints.

Public contact with the Transport Infoline is shown in Table 5.1.

As was the case in previous years, 2007-08 saw a substantial increase in use of the 131500 services, most notably the website. The new service of allowing for downloads of website pages through mobile telephones increased at a rapid rate.

The Ministry's contract for the Integrated Transport Information Services, that is, Transport Infoline, expires in 2008-09. In 2007-08 the Ministry established a project to provide a platform for the next generation of the Transport Infoline, taking account of public expectations and opportunities arising from new technology.

Service coordination

Service coordination is important for public transport, particularly where passengers wish to use several modes on their journeys, such as bus and train.

It is relatively difficult to adjust the routes and timetables for trains and ferries. Hence, the focus of service coordination is changing bus operating routes and times for better connection with those of trains and ferries. The Ministry is pursuing this matter through the bus network review process.

At present there are no NSW performance standards for coordination of transport modes.⁵⁸

Table 5.1: Contacts, Transport Infoline 131500

Performance indicator	2006-07	2007-08
Telephone enquiries	2.1 million	2.9 million
Website visits	5.4 million	6.6 million
Website downloads	25.7 million	33.5 million
Feedback		
via telephone	86,343	83,850
via e-mails	17,094	19,343

⁵⁷ The Hon. J Watkins (Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport & Minister for Finance), *New electronic ticketing to streamline public transport*, news release, 29 August 2008.

⁵⁸ Some cities in ITSRR's procurement research have performance standards for service connections. For example, Brisbane has a standard for waiting time for interchanging from one mode of public transport to another.

Commuter parking and interchanges

Commuter parking and transport interchanges are owned and managed by various transport service providers, local governments and the Ministry.

In 2006-07 the NSW Audit Office undertook a performance audit to review the effectiveness of interchanges in increasing public transport patronage.

The audit found a number of issues regarding the setting of standards for, and assessment of, performance of interchanges, and made 22 recommendations including that the Ministry of Transport establish a body to oversee interchange standards.

The audit found that:

most other major cities have established public transport authorities that exercise greater control over public transport arrangements.

The Legislative Assembly's Public Accounts Committee is currently reviewing the Audit Office Report and the responses to it from relevant Government agencies including the Ministry of Transport.

The Audit Office has reviewed the Ministry's submission and commented that while it addresses most of its recommendations, there is limited or unclear progress regarding matters such as long term funding requirements from Government for the interchange program. Regarding options for a transport coordinating body, the Audit Office considered the Ministry's response as satisfactory 'considering the limits to the role of the Ministry'.

Guarantees of service

State Plan Priority S8 aims to ensure that each agency has a Guarantee of Service displayed in a public place and that such documents are updated to reflect NSW Ombudsman Guidelines and the results of customer satisfaction surveys.

The *Transport Reliability Report 2006-07* identified existing Guarantees of Service such as for the Transport Infoline and RailCorp. These were not updated in 2007-08.

State Plan

In November 2007, the Transport Data Centre (a division of the Ministry of Transport) was asked to undertake a transport modelling exercise to examine likely performance of the transport system against State Plan targets for 2016. Over 30 alternative scenarios were examined, from a business as usual scenario (based on the Metropolitan Strategy and Urban Transport Statement) through to scenarios with strong infrastructure investment and pricing components. The modelling also included a range of land use forecasts.

The modelling results have been presented to the Transport Planning and Infrastructure CEOs and to Cabinet to inform deliberations on appropriate actions and investment strategies to meet State Plan targets and objectives.

5.3 Summary

IPART is currently reviewing CityRail's economic regulatory framework. Its preliminary view is a CityRail fare structure that includes a flag fall charge plus a variable distance-based charge.

The contract for developing the electronic ticketing system, Tcard, was terminated and the Government is currently looking at other options.

There is strong and increasing use by the community of the Transport Infoline.

There continue to be no NSW performance standards for transport coordination.

The NSW Audit Office found the Ministry's response to most of its audit recommendations satisfactory although there is unclear progress on the recommendation regarding a transport coordinating body.

There have been no updates to existing Guarantees of Service.