

**Submission
No 131**

INQUIRY INTO INTER-REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Name: Miss C Newman

Date Received: 21/05/2012

Inter Regional Public Tpt Inquiry.

c/- Legislative Assembly

State & Regional Development
Committee

Parliament House.

Macquarie St,

Sydney. 2000

Attn: Mr. A. Gee MP.

Re: Above Inquiry — "Submission"

At the start, let me comment on this inquiry. As has been the custom for > the last ten years, if not more, any investigation by any body, relating to NSW rail, has only been published for the benefit of Young White Australian Families (Y.W.A.F.). Always publicized by whatever means, esp. in the cities & nearby regional areas, but rarely in rural & remote areas. When done in the last two areas, it is always sparse & at the later period when one can comment — and invariably only where Y.W.A.F. see it.

This is blatantly a form of discrimination against the elderly & disabled who live in such places. These are generally the people who travel far more often, as are Aboriginal communities, NES background people, etc.

If, like myself, you were a regular traveller on many routes, a long time rail fan, and above all, unlike most, an extremely well informed consumer. It was NO accident that last year, on television, the Minister for Fair Trading said, basically, that parents refused to do their homework when it came to buying goods &/or services. So very true — I am frequently abused by Y.W.A.F., as I know a lot that they don't when it comes to the crunch. These Y.W.A.F. ONLY CONDESCEND TO TRAVEL WHEN IT SUITS THEM — i.e. rarely — AND ONLY
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IN SCHOOL HOLIDAYS. They book out everything and if regular single mature / Aboriginal / disabled / etc passengers NEED, NOT WANT, to travel, well, tough luck as far as Y.W.A.F. are concerned. It is NOT, NOT, NOT tough luck. These scum NEVER assist in keeping services running by patronizing them. And, they NEVER treat those other groups with respect.

Oh, & before I say any more, I have it on good & LEGAL authority that it is OK for me to speak about Y.W.A.F. as I do . . . ie. with massive disdain. When I, as a white Australian, single & mature, worked for Aboriginal services, & also NESB communities, at large, in NSW for many years, I was ridiculed, stalked 24/7, physically & verbally, oh & yes, psychologically abused, ad nauseum, by my WHITE peers, plus WHITE people in many communities, as I worked - and in my time off - it was getting out of hand. These people were all extremely racially abusive & discriminatory to "non whites". I took it to the government - AND WAS TOLD THAT I WAS A BLOODY LIAR & THAT WHAT THESE PEOPLE WERE DOING WAS TRYING TO ASSIST ME & THE NON-WHITE COMMUNITIES. IT WAS NOT WHAT I DESCRIBED AS THESE PEOPLE WOULD NEVER ABUSE ME. FUNNY THAT! Because I have NO idea of what one would then call the massive respect & friendship shown to me by the Aboriginal, etc communities! It was certainly the opposite to what my peers, etc, did to me. All we EVER see in the media, and hear talk of in the community at large is how badly done by Y.W.A.F. are.

And, incidentally, apart from the personal description above, I CAN back up every argument I put forward, as in academic writing. Unlike Y.W.A.F., I don't just "mouth off".

UNTIL those responsible take action, to prevent the gross discrimination, those who do travel regularly will not be able to further support services & keep them running.

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This applies to country & regional services.

1. To Improve CountryLink services.

a) Remove State Rail's ILLEGAL ruling that "you cannot throw a Y.W.A.F. off a service as "it might inconvenience them".

They cause SO MUCH trouble, & to see others — who have done NOTHING at all wrong — thrown off — well, it's no wonder I feel a lot of rage!

I have that "ruling" in writing — but not to hand, as it is in storage, hundreds of km from one of the places I stay a lot. It came from "the top" years ago, & over the years, up until now, I have confirmed it at all levels in rail.

One Y.W.A.F. "trick", esp. on the night XPT's Melbourne & Sydney bound, is to report — making a massive scene — that a young male is drunk/drugged/smells of B.O./abusing people/whatever. This often occurs so the "offender" is thrown off, in the middle of the night, at Albury & Wagga esp, with little money, no hope of getting accommodation or a meal or getting a train for at least 8 → 12 hrs. I have long & loudly spoken up in their defence as usually the young guy has been sitting next to me/nearby. They have often been asleep the whole trip, don't smell of B.O./ETOH, have obviously been quiet, etc. Well, I've been told by the Y.W.A.F. & all the carriage by that time — as usual siding with illegally acting / morally bankrupt Y.W.A.F. — to "fuck off & shut up, what would you know you fucking old slot", & totally ignored by rail staff as "obviously the Y.W.A.F. are right". As soon as the guy is thrown off . . . "fantastic, now the baby can have that seat to sleep in, I don't want to hold it all the way to Sydney, etc". If anyone is to have that seat it should be a disabled / elderly / big framed passenger who a) needs it for medical reasons & b) has actually paid a fare.

b) Seniors \$2.50 fare. It is very obvious that seniors are not

. . . . wanted

wanted as passengers. One can book 4/4 in advance. When you ring to book . . . "well madam, you have to pick that up by 5pm today/close of business tomorrow". When you complain, you are told to ring back the next day . . . and the fiasco is repeated until the last day . . . "too bad, madam, there are no seats left". When you complain . . . "well madam, next time don't be so bloody minded, use your senior's half fare or your pension voucher". Many elderly are so gutless & acquiesce "for a quiet life". This is gross intimidation, & the action of those gutless people make it extremely difficult for those standing up for the situation as it's supposed to be.

Another example - you are in Sydney & want to travel Bathurst to Orange, Goulburn to Yass, etc. You cannot book & pay for it within the CityRail network, even at the Countrylink booking office at Central. You have to pick it up at Bathurst / Goulburn, etc. Then they tell you "by tomorrow 5pm". Me/other traveller - "but I won't be there until I am getting the bus/train 4 days from now". Me - having learned that the booking can be overridden on the computer due to not being in the vicinity of a booking office → "would you please override that so I can pick it up on the day because . . .". "No madam, I can't". Me - "yes you can. I've had it done many times before, & it's certainly not my fault that this illegal example of ticketing which only favours V.W.A.F., is being held against me". So, often I am FORCED to miss out. And, even if I book from the country, per phone, to the L32 no., I often still have that problem as where I stay is > 100 km from the nearest place where tickets can be collected. I ask them to extend the time until I am next visiting somewhere I can pick them up at a station. Sometimes I am given that extension, & I will tell them that it won't be until the bus/train booked is leaving as there is no tpt in until then & even if there was, I cannot . . . /afford

afford it financially / timewise.

c). The \$1 fare.

This is morally bankrupt. This was given to them as a result of pensioners refusing to travel, when illegally forced to pay the massive booking fee demanded of them, probably 2+ years ago. This was reported in the written media incl. ? Seniors newspaper (of which I have a copy somewhere around the countryside). That is, I am not imagining things. Countrylink claimed that the seats weren't being filled & they probably weren't. BUT, why couldn't the rail bosses MORALLY cut out the booking fee & fill the seats ???

Around 2 yrs ago, Centrelink & The Brotherhood of St. Lawrence (? based in Vic) both, independently, did Aust-wide surveys & found that single, elderly, females were the worst affected, by far, in coping financially with life. Hence single pensioners first got a rise - then families & couples whinged & were also given some.

As Y.W.A.F. are illegally whingeing & whining that the government is not looking after them, over this issue or that, & the government (all levels) then gives them another handout, we can therefore expect them to pay their way, considering they don't pay taxes!

Around 1 year ago, published in the Sydney Morning Herald & other places, was research done by an academic - not a student - on benefits, allowances, etc, given to Y.W.A.F. I can partly confirm this, having simultaneously, unbeknown to this study, started to count them myself. I reached 100, having not even tapped some of the sources, & got so angry that I left off. The research showed that Y.W.A.F. have access to, & note that wording, > 250 personal, NON MEANS TESTED, TAX FREE HANDOUTS PLUS > 250 community based, as above, HANDOUTS - ie. those to community groups which benefit their little thugs
... / personally

personally - eg. they are given soccer shirts, footballs, fares to sports events elsewhere, buses to same, meals, etc, etc.

So, with all this, WHY have these \$1 fares been given to the silver/gold-spoon-in-the-mouth recipients?

These fares mean they can travel from, eg. Broken Hill to Brisbane, Tweed Heads to Melbourne & return for \$2. AND they can pick up the tickets ANYWHERE. UNLIKE THE DISCRIMINATORY RULES HANDED OUT TO SENIORS. SENIORS KNOW THEY CAN ONLY USE THEM ON COUNTRY-LINK, SO WHY THE CARRY-ON ABOUT PICKING THEM UP IN SYDNEY, WOLLONGONG, WYONG, CAMPBELLTOWN, ETC ETC?

If the CityRail boundary was PROPERLY advertised in the annual Seniors booklet, part of the problem would NOT exist. One page has Lithgow, the opposite page Bathurst. If people had done their homework, they would know it is Bathurst, & the reason for it. The running of Countrylink buses from Lithgow & not Bathurst does confuse the issue - and frankly, I therefore DON'T see why the Countrylink \$2.50 fare should not apply from Lithgow.

d). Luggage.

We have this group in Bathurst, currently, agitating for a daily return train to Sydney.

This is NOT the main problem BY FAR.

If you are a regular traveller, you would know that what is on view daily would be >100 pax travelling with large luggage. With the explosion of cruise and air holidays, many travel from the country to Sydney, etc, by bus & train.

Well, unless you are a M.W.A.F., you must man-handle your luggage off a bus onto a train, & vice versa, at Lithgow esp & other places on the Newcastle line (I don't know about the other lines adequately enough to comment). Also, on CityRail regional services, you can't book your luggage thro' (many
... times

times I've seen Y.W.A.F.'s luggage booked thro' !!). This means you have to take it in the carriage with you. The few overhead racks (on the platform level seats) are inadequate for the size of the cases. Besides if you are elderly / disabled / health problems, you cannot reach up & down to store smaller bags up there. Often you get Y.W.A.F. get in at Westmead, e.g. when travelling to Parramatta, demand a seat, throwing large bags up there to obtain one. Then they "piss off", leaving the elderly, etc, unable to get their bags down at Central. Usually no-one will help them either (I know as I wait for everyone else to get out first).

I was told recently of one guard who announced over the train's PA system - "those pax with bags on the seat & / or floor, taking up 2 or 3 seats, get them off or you will be charged. Families need those seats" (yes, from Central to Redfern if stopping to pick up there!). You cannot put them in the vestibule like you could 20 years ago, as Y.W.A.F. pilfer them / vandalize. I was on a train from Mt. Victoria recently (due to trackwork there to Lithgow), & one pax, whose husband was a Countrylink manager (& should have known better!) put her luggage there against advice. Not one stop later, . . . Y.W.A.F. at it! She chased them thro' the train.

Most of us would book them thro' as you could maybe < 10 yrs ago. This would make i) jobs for people, ii) seats available for other pax & iii) a safe working environment for any staff who need to access carriages, & other pax. OHS as it should be!

Often at Lithgow a bus arrives late, due to . . . / roadworks

roadworks en route. There may only be a normal 10 min. changeover before the train leaves. For an elderly / disabled pax to manhandle bags down to the platform - hassled by Y.W.A.F. - AND TO GO TO THE TOILET BEFORE THE TRAIN LEAVES, AS THOSE ON TRAINS REGIONALLY ARE ALWAYS FOUL, is impossible. Then, ONLY 2 HRS LATER, they can get the next train, missing appointments in Sydney, (They can't afford too many overnights).

It is NOT the fault of pax that State Rail REFUSE to use a country train, to allow us to book luggage thro', so why should we be penalized ???

e). Destinations.

It is obscene that you & State Rail should be looking at encouraging tourists to travel intrastate WHEN LOCAL RESIDENTS OF COUNTRY VILLAGES ESP, CANNOT EVEN HAVE A SERVICE TO GET OUT OF THERE, TO ATTEND MEDICAL, DENTAL, ETC, APPTS!. EG. TRUNDLE (AS FEATURED LAST WEEK ON ABC TV), HOBBS YARDS, TRUNKY CREEK, ETC ETC ETC. Why should they move elsewhere if they don't drive, have had their licences rescinded due to unethical actions by Y.W.A.F., are too ill to drive, etc, etc? Country towns & villages will die - do you want that?

f). Meals.

When there is trackwork on the Lithgow Line, there is often a bus service Orange → Sydney - NON STOP, (If we had wanted to go on a bus we would have booked on Australia-wide Coaches !!) How in the hell is someone like me, who needs frequent small meals supposed to cope? Diabetics, massive surgery type patients, & so on? On one occasion it was electric train to Blacktown arriving around 4pm, to allow

. . . / arrival

arrival in Lithgow by 8.30PM for the last connecting bus to Orange. At Blacktown we were coralled for about an hour waiting for an express bus. The bus I was on "broke down" at Bell, the other 5 were only going to Lithgow. The driver phoned Lithgow & a mini bus was sent to pick us up — 1 hr late arrival in Lithgow. My Countrylink bus had to wait for me ONLY as I had been bashed, luggage kicked around, & LOCKED IN A LIFT AT BLACKTOWN BY Y.W.A.F., causing me to miss the earlier bus which other pax had caught.

On arrival in Orange I had to collect my vehicle out of town, then come back & do some messages, before eventually arriving where I stay (> 100 km W) at 0200 hrs the next day.

Nothing is open in Orange late to start with, but even if it were, then it does not suit what I need to drink & eat due to medical reasons.

That meant from NLT 1430 hrs the previous day I HAD HAD NIL TO EAT OR DRINK, causing me a massive medical event.

Why? Because you are NOT ALLOWED to eat or drink on the buses.

So, how in the hell is one supposed to manage the problem ???

2. To Improve Regional Services.

Simple!

A. Ban short trip suburban pax, People often board the Lithgow train at Westmead to go to . . . Parramatta (or V-V), or Hornsby to go to Epping on the Newcastle Line THEY DEMAND SEATS — and throw your bags off if they don't get one.

MANY A TIME I HAVE HAD TO STAND UP FOR the > 3 HR TRIP CENTRAL TO LITHGOW, STANDING IN THE VESTIBULE WITH MY LUGGAGE. WHY? BECAUSE . . . / ON

ON A WEEKEND OR SCHOOL HOLIDAYS ESP, THE Y.W.
A.F. PUSH ON BEFORE YOU & SPREAD OUT TAKING
EVERY AVAILABLE SEAT. WHEN YOU LEGALLY DE-
MAND A SEAT & ONE FOR YOUR BAGS, YOU ARE LIKE
A \$M31 LOTTO WINNER IF YOU EVEN GET ONE.
ONE SEAT IS NO USE SO YOU ARE FORCED TO RE-
MAIN STANDING. AT EACH STOP YOU WILL USUALLY
FIND ONE STATION'S PLATFORM IS ON THE RIGHT, THE
NEXT ON THE LEFT → RIGHT → LEFT. THESE SCUM
TRY TO FORCE YOU TO MOVE & IF YOU DON'T CLICK
YOUR HEELS & SNAP TO IT, YOU WILL FIND YOUR-
SELF & BAGS TRYING TO BE EVICTED FROM THE
TRAIN. THE OTHER TIMES I'VE ARRIVED VERY
EARLY AS USUAL & SETTLED IN, JUST AS THE TRAIN
IS ABOUT TO LEAVE, OVER THE P.A. SYSTEM
"WOULD PAX ON THE 1724 TO LITHGOW PLEASE
CHANGE TRAINS TO THE ONE ON PLATFORM 5." ETC.
NEEDLESS TO SAY, WITH MY LUGGAGE, I HAVE LOST
THE BATTLE WITH THE PEAK HOUR WORKERS WHO
ARE SMASHING THEIR WAY TO A SEAT TO STRATH-
FIELD. I LET THE SARCASM FLOW FREELY AS THEY
TOO BASH ME IN THE VESTIBULE AS THEY EXIT.

ONE INTERESTING POINT. IF ONE COMPARES
THE COUNTRYLINK & CITYRAIL TIMETABLES FOR
THE SAME SERVICES — i.e. THOSE CONNECTING WITH
A COUNTRY BUS — YOU WILL FIND THE FORMER
HAS SYMBOLS REPRESENTING "DOES NOT PICK UP/
SET DOWN" AT CITYRAIL SUBURBAN STATIONS!

I am NOT your typical gutless, lazy,
abusive, ad nauseum Y.W.A.F., who, late last year
in NSW media had said about them, by the Fair
Trading Minister, that "they didn't do their home-
work" (how true). I have advocated, at GREAT
EXPENSE OF MY TIME & MONEY, loud & long,
- - - - /for

for changes to the system in general, TO BENEFIT ONLY THOSE WHO DESERVE IT & TRAVEL REGULARLY, whatever regularly is in their existence. This, of course, EXCLUDES Y.W.A.F.!

3. General

I have one hell of a lot more constructive things I needed to put forward—as all before this is—

However, with the lack of ADEQUATE PUBLICITY regarding this inquiry, I don't have the time.

As well, Mr. Gee has copious notes, inherited from Russell Turner MP, regarding many of these hassles—as yet, no action on same.

One must assume that as I am ANTI-Y.W.A.F. & the damage they do to public transport—I am intent on restoring what used to be for honest pax.

IF YOU DISAGREE WITH MY STANCE IT IS BECAUSE LIKE MOST AUSTRALIANS, YOU ARE i) RACIST & ii) HAVE NO IDEA OF THE SITUATIONS & iii) UNWELLING TO EVER PUT ANY BLAME FOR ANY ILLEGAL/UNETHICAL ACT WHERE IT RIGHTLY BELONGS—i.e. WITH Y.W.A.F.!

Yours Faithfully,

(C. Newman) (Mrs)