

**Submission  
No 25**

**INQUIRY INTO REMOVING OR REDUCING STATION  
ACCESS FEES AT SYDNEY AIRPORT**

**Organisation:** The Greens NSW

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# The Greens NSW

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Social Equity & Economic Justice | Ecological Sustainability | Grassroots Democracy | Peace, Nonviolence & Disarmament

The Director

13/11/2013

General Purpose Standing Committee No. 3

Parliament House

Macquarie St

Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Madam/Sir

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Inquiry into Removing or Reducing Station Access Fees at Sydney Airport on behalf of the Greens NSW.

I encourage the inquiry to consider the following points.

- Equity issues for workers

Workers at Sydney Airport who use the train to get to work have to pay the Station Access Fee, unlike all other workers using Sydney Trains. This is inequitable and costs these workers, many of whom are on the basic wage, a minimum of \$20 per week in fees in addition to the train fare.

The committee must consider short term and long term strategies to ease the burden on workers, such as waiving the station access fee on weekly tickets.

- The effect of an inefficient airport transport system

The roads in and around the airport are at, or near, capacity and are congested for large parts of the day, with queues of up to 4 kilometres long near the Domestic Terminal. The environmental consequences of stalled traffic are serious: air pollution, wasted fuel consumption, heightened CO<sup>2</sup> emissions and Urban Heat Islands. The public health impacts can also be pronounced, especially from vehicles emitting fine particles, which are known to be carcinogenic.

It is therefore imperative to reduce road traffic in the airport precinct by encouraging greater use of the train service. Removing or reducing the station access fee will be the biggest step towards achieving this.

- Governance Issues relating to the station access fee

The Restated Stations Agreement of 2005 between Railcorp and Airport Link Company (ALC), which owns and operates the stations, provides for sharing of the Station Access Fee revenue once an ALC cash flow threshold has been reached, which has now occurred.

The Government is, reportedly, already receiving at least \$2 million per month in such revenues, which we understand is going into consolidated revenue.

Therefore, as usage of the Airport Line stations increases, the government will receive 85% of station access fees from the additional usage.

We believe this creates a disincentive for the Government to reduce or remove the station access fee. The committee must examine how the Government's share of this revenue is used and whether the income the Government makes is offset by the cost of having an under-utilised train system.

We also understand there are significant compensation payments to the private operator from Sydney Trains for trackwork and late running trains which must be investigated.

- The Airport line in underutilized

On a typical weekday in 2013 there are an estimated 155,000 surface movements to and from the airport precinct. Only around 11.5% of all surface movements are by train, the rest being by shuttle bus, taxi and private/rental car. This is half the original design estimate of 25%.

Although the new train timetable of October 2013 has increased the services from 8 trains per hour to 10 trains per hour, this is still well below the Airport Line's capacity of 20 trains per hour.

Some other reasons, apart from the high cost tickets, for underutilization of the airport line include lack of early and late services for shift workers, crowding and lack of luggage racks.

It is requested that the committee consider the above points in their deliberations.

Thankyou for the opportunity to make this submission

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Convenor  
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