

A Daily Telegraph report *RailCorp spends \$90,000 on taxis* (21 September 2009) contained factual errors. RailCorp expenditure on taxis provided to CityRail and CountryLink customers was \$52,073.62 in FY 2008/09.

The quoted figure of \$86,291.03 spent by RailCorp 'last financial year' was a Daily Telegraph error.

Emergency taxi fares provided to CityRail customers totalled \$38,161 in FY 2008/09, down from \$48,382 in 2007/08.

CityRail's significantly improved on time running and greater reliability of services has resulted in a recent reduction in expenditure on taxis, despite an increase in taxi fares.

The \$1000 fare highlighted in the article was a return journey (not a 'single trip') and was provided to a wheelchair-bound CityRail customer travelling during a period of trackwork in September 2007.

On 24 January 2009 a taxi fare of \$800 was paid for a CityRail customer who was delayed by a signal failure on the ARTC managed Hunter network. This customer, travelling to Campbelltown, was stranded after missing the last train from Hamilton.

RailCorp generally uses buses as an emergency transport alternative for CityRail and CountryLink customers. However, it is sometimes more cost effective and better customer service to provide taxis. There are a number of reasons for this which include buses sometimes not being available. Bus companies also charge a three-hour minimum hire rate for emergency services and there may be only one or two passengers requiring emergency transport.

The overall expenditure on taxi services for customers is considered to be modest considering the wide geographical coverage of the CityRail and CountryLink networks and the total number of passenger journeys each month.

RailCorp balances customer service with financial responsibility and there are approved guidelines to assist staff make decisions on customer requests for alternative transport. As a customer-focused organisation, the provision of taxis is in many cases considered a goodwill gesture.