



INDEPENDENT TOLL REVIEW

Media Release

Independent Toll Review puts motorists first

Tuesday, 16 July 2024

The Final Report of the Independent Toll Review released today has reaffirmed the need for a major shake-up of tolls to put the interests of Sydney's motorists first. Their final report 'Motorists First' is the culmination of a 15 month long examination of Sydney's complicated toll network patchwork.

Reviewers Professor Allan Fels and Dr David Cousins stand by key recommendations made in their Interim Report:

- Uniform tolls for all 13 motorways (and two currently under construction) to establish a fairer, consistent, simpler and better functioning toll network.
- Lower tolls for the majority of trips.
- Establish a state-owned entity, 'NSW Motorways' to allow the NSW Government to take back control of tolls, set prices, make them easier for motorists to understand and deliver overdue consumer and administrative reforms. It would also promote more competition and better regulation in the public interest. IPART should also have a significant role in monitoring tolls and toll relief and ensuring greater transparency in toll setting.
- Immediate legislation to establish NSW Motorways and give the government power to set tolls. There should be a revenue adjustment mechanism to prevent windfall gains or losses by concessionaires. There would be full consultation and negotiation with concessionaires to ensure recognition of their contractual rights and reasonable expectations.

The Review stands by its approach on toll pricing which includes:

- Tolls should be based on a declining distance basis charged on a per kilometre basis but with the per kilometre rate declining the greater the distance travelled. This would deliver greater fairness to motorists in Western Sydney.
- An infrastructure charge should be introduced for parts of toll roads that have been costly to build e.g. ventilated tunnels, Sydney Harbour Bridge.

- Two-way tolling on the two current Harbour crossings and the Eastern Distributor, with this additional revenue gained being put into the lowering of tolls on the remainder of the network. This will also ensure a consistent tolling and traffic integration approach when the Western Harbour tunnel opens around 2028.

The Final Report recommends a network toll restructure plus a significant across the board toll reduction.

Accordingly, it modelled two ‘bookend’ network scenarios with the likely final result being in between.

- **Network Toll Restructure:** restructures tolls based on a network-wide approach. This restructure is supplemented by an injection of additional funding from the introduction of two-way tolling.
- **Toll Restructure plus Toll Reduction:** restructures network tolls (as above) and adds a significant across the board general toll reduction, with a large majority of motorists gaining by significant amounts (see sample of tolls at the end of this media release). The reduction would come from funding sources and efficiency gains in the tolling system identified in the report and is to be negotiated with concessionaires.

The Reviewers say changes in tolls should start to occur with effect from mid-2026 and should occur with increased public transparency about how they are determined. They emphasise the need for more modelling and fine-tuning before implementation occurs.

In the meantime, there is a big task to upgrade existing tolling infrastructure and systems development to facilitate network tolls and allow motorists to receive just one bill for a trip. There will be a need to ensure existing road infrastructure can readily accommodate any traffic changes associated with new tolls.

Other key findings:

- The Reviewers are encouraged by the willingness shown recently by the concessionaires to negotiate with the Government for an in principle agreement on toll reform. Despite this the Reviewers are not confident that a voluntary agreement could be reached in a timely manner and in the public interest. Immediate legislation is needed as a back up to negotiations and to give the government power if necessary to determine final outcomes.
- Toll relief has sought to address weaknesses in current tolling arrangements. It may have a role in helping to transition to the new network tolling system but preferably it should be phased out over time and instead used to subsidise toll reductions. Current toll relief schemes are inadequately targeted and underutilised, in part due to overly complex administration.
- A Customer Advocate should be appointed to promote customer interests in the operation of the tolling system including reviewing systematic complaint issues and issues relating to



unpaid notices. Ensuring long called for reforms to toll information for motorists and toll notice administration fees are implemented will be part of the Customer Advocate's role.

- The Government should make tolls cheaper for mid sized trucks and motorcycles to incentivise use of these vehicles on toll roads instead of clogging up non-toll roads. Large towed recreational vehicles (e.g. caravans) should also be tolled a lower rate, instead of having to apply for a rebate later.

Read the full report here: <https://www.treasury.nsw.gov.au/toll-review>

Modelled tolls for selected trips in 2026 for Status Quo, Toll Restructure, Toll Restructure and Reduction for cars (Class A vehicles):

FROM	TO	STATUS QUO	TOLL RESTRUCTURE	TOLL RESTRUCTURE AND REDUCTION
Penrith or Parramatta	CBD	\$12.74	\$11.94	\$7.88
Campbelltown	CBD	\$25.98	\$19.58	\$12.79
Zetland	CBD	\$10.71	\$7.69	\$4.30
Hornsby	Macquarie Park	\$21.34	\$13.97	\$8.90
Bondi Junction	Lilyfield	\$7.40	\$6.40	\$4.08
Artarmon	Pennant Hills	\$14.97	\$11.66	\$7.89
Haymarket	Rosehill/ Parramatta	\$12.56	\$11.30	\$7.39
Bankstown	Blacktown	\$16.46	\$11.93	\$9.18
Macquarie Park	Cheltenham	\$10.67	\$2.68	\$2.07
Punchbowl	Kingsgrove	\$10.08	\$3.40	\$2.61
Alexandria	Balmain	\$5.21	\$5.70	\$2.96
CBD	Paddington	\$0	\$7.69	\$4.30
North Sydney	Domestic Terminal	\$4.27	\$15.00	\$10.50

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