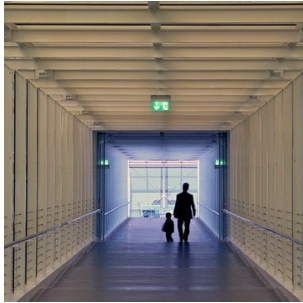


SYDNEY AGAIN RANKED AS AUSTRALIA'S WORST AIRPORT



For the fourth year in a row, Sydney airport has been ranked the worst in Australia. Lower quality of services led nevertheless to greater profits.

Australia's main international gateway, Sydney Airport, has been ranked the worst with respect to customer satisfaction among the country's five biggest airports - for the fourth year in a row. Sydney airport is privately owned by Macquarie Bank, part of the Southern Cross Consortium. This is not the sole reason for extortionate prices, yet goes a long way towards explaining them. Indeed, **Sydney airport actually welcomed fewer passengers last year yet had greater profits than usual**, reported Australia's consumer watchdog, the Government-run Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC). The number of passengers went down by 1.4% yet the turnover was up by 5.4%. Passengers are getting more and more annoyed by rising parking fees, massively overpriced drinks, expensive rail journeys and the lack of care for public interest. The ACCC concluded that Sydney airport had enjoyed constant increased profits by lowering the quality of service at the expense of airlines and passengers.

Parking fees have doubled in the last few years and drinks have soared in price since liquids started being confiscated at security checks. Passengers have reacted to the feeling that they are being blackmailed by condemning Sydney airport to the position of Australia's worst airport. Whether the owners start caring or not is another matter. After all, the importance of the airport means it will not lose business and people, angry as they may be, will not leave their cars in fields or miraculously overcome thirst.

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