

New Intercity Fleet trains: Confidential report finds doors 'failed' when opened at speed

DT [dailytelegraph.com.au/news/nsw/new-intercity-fleet-trains-confidential-report-finds-doors-failed-when-opened-at-speed/news-story/4ece7be74153eb6e75b0bb7c5786b73f](https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/nsw/new-intercity-fleet-trains-confidential-report-finds-doors-failed-when-opened-at-speed/news-story/4ece7be74153eb6e75b0bb7c5786b73f)

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Tens of thousands of commuters are supposed to be riding them right now, but a confidential report revealed a major issue with the doors on the New Intercity Fleet, which is yet to be resolved.

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A confidential report to Transport for NSW revealed an investigation into the New Intercity Fleet found doors on the trains “would fail” and “deflect outwards” if opened or closed at speed.



The investigation into the controversial trains, conducted by contractor RailConnect, found the “door fails in a number of load cases” with the structure failing three out of the four tests conducted on the doors in a high fidelity mock-up over a six-month study.





The new Mariyung train as it arrives at Central station. The Mariyung is part of the new intercity train fleet. Picture: NCA NewsWire / Damian Shaw

“The door was tested in a static (stationary) environment with the expected loads,” the investigation found.

In confidential documents obtained in an order for papers by Labor MLC Mark Buttigieg, seen by *NewsLocal*, the government was advised of potential solutions investigated as early as November 2018, however, NewsLocal understands the issue has not been resolved.

The RailConnect study found an additional rail could be installed “to allow the door to operate at speed with expected loads”.

However, Transport found the rail “would infringe the outline gauge” and recessing the additional rail was “not feasible as the car body and collision frame structure are located behind the area where the rail is required”.



Screengrab of the new intercity train fleet being tested.

The conclusion of the report suggests the redesign to include additional railings to support the door's weight was "unverified ... bespoke and unproven" and would cause "potential for network infrastructure collisions" — suggesting the new fleet would collide with nearby infrastructure along the intercity lines.

"Modifying the New Intercity Fleet train design to accommodate this functionality has proven to be not feasible," the report said.

Revelations of faults in doors on the multibillion-dollar fleet comes just days after it was revealed the trains would be delayed for 18-months for passengers from the Central Coast, Newcastle, Blue Mountains and the south coast.

Shadow Transport spokeswoman Jo Halen told NewsLocal the New Intercity Fleet was a "transport procurement debacle".

"The Government's transport policies are in complete chaos," she said.

"The Government is still finding yet more defects in these \$2.3 billion overseas built trains more than five years since they first bought them.



Doors on the fleet could fail if opened or closed while the train is moving.

“First these trains didn’t fit the tracks, then they didn’t have the required safety features, they’re 18 months late, they still haven’t carried a single passenger and now we’ve learnt that the doors fail 75 per cent of the time.”

NSW Rail, Tram and Bus Union state secretary Alex Claassens said while the faults of doors on was concerning, “it doesn’t come as a shock”.



NSW secretary of the RTBU Alex Claassens. Picture: AAP Image/Steven Saphore

“We’ve had just one meeting to talk about what we are looking for with Transport for NSW following our win in the high court and we are waiting on them to come back with a serious proposal to make these trains safe,” she said. “We want the guard to be able to

stand in an open doorway to check the platform rather than a driver relying on CCTV.

“The government clearly allowed Transport for NSW to order these trains, designed the way they are, so we now have a train they cannot use.”

Mr Claassens said union members would refuse to drive the trains because they remain unsafe.



Interior of the new Mariyung train that is part of the new intercity fleet train, Central station. Picture: NCA NewsWire / Damian Shaw

“People will die on these trains if no changes are made, there is no doubt about it,” she said.

A Transport for NSW spokeswoman said “doors on the Mariyung fleet are safe and are designed to remain locked at speed”.

“As a key safety feature, the Mariyung train cannot move until all of the doors are fully closed,” she said. “Transport for NSW is investigating possible engineering solutions with our supplier which would allow the guard to travel with the door open, but do not compromise the safety of our staff and customers.

“It is too early to speculate what impact this will have on the project. However, we will continue to work to get this modern train into service for our customers.”

In September, Transport for NSW procured an additional 56 cars, increasing the 554 car fleet to 610.