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NSW Premier Admits Train Woes Could Sway Election After Damning Report

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New South Wales Premier Chris Minns has identified the state's struggling train network as a critical election issue following a damning performance report that highlights chronic delays and cancellations. The report underscores ongoing failures in Sydney's rail system, public frustration, and the political risks ahead of the 2027 state election.

The recent performance report revealed that Sydney's train punctuality in 2024-25 reached its lowest level since records began, with regional lines servicing the Blue Mountains, Central Coast, Hunter, and South Coast also suffering from frequent breakdowns and

overcrowding. Speaking to the media, Minns acknowledged the severity of the situation, stating, “We know the trains are a massive issue for voters” (9News, 2025). The findings have intensified commuter dissatisfaction, with many enduring repeated disruptions and crowded carriages.

Opposition transport spokesman Mark Speakman criticised the government’s response, pointing to the lack of clear timelines for improvements despite worsening service metrics. He condemned the government’s failure to resolve the crisis and highlighted the frustration on social media platforms.

The root causes of the rail network’s issues include ageing infrastructure, industrial disputes, and delays in upgrades. In 2024, industrial action by the Rail, Tram, and Bus Union (RTBU) disrupted services significantly, resulting in over 700 postponed surgeries due to train cancellations. Although the Minns government secured an injunction against further strikes in December 2024, critics argue these measures have failed to address underlying problems.

Further compounding the crisis is the \$1 billion cost overrun and persistent defects in the new intercity train fleet, first reported in 2021, with reliability issues continuing into 2025. Speakman, a Liberal Member of Parliament, accused the government of neglecting commuter needs, stating the government has “been unable to deliver reliable services despite being in power for several years” (The Australian, 2025).

With the 2027 state election approaching, the ongoing train disruptions threaten to erode public confidence in the Minns government. While the Premier has prioritised reforms such as housing and toll caps, transport failures continue to overshadow these achievements. Commuters demand tangible action to improve services, and the opposition is poised to capitalise on this discontent. Speakman said, “NSW deserves better than this chaos” (The Sydney Morning Herald, 2025).

Unless substantial progress is made to restore confidence in the rail network, the train service crisis could significantly impact the Minns government’s re-election prospects, leaving voters to weigh whether they will accept another term marked by transport challenges.