

# Residents rail against cuts

By Jim Gainsford

RESIDENTS are rallying to save the station master at Bexley North railway station from being moved as part of government cuts.

CityRail revealed on Sunday that station manager positions would be axed at Arncliffe, Banksia, Carlton, Como, Kirrawee, Loftus and Woolooware.

A spokeswoman said decisions had still to be made about Bardwell Park, Beverly Hills, Bexley North and Narwee, Gymea and Oatley stations.

Jo Warrington, a retired school teacher, and her daughter Louise, a nurse, have collected more than 1000 signatures from commuters in less than five days.

They say many people have decided to miss their train so they can sign the petition which they will present to Kogarah MP Cherie Burton this Friday.

It notes residents' concerns at the State Government's intention to cut station staff in their area.

"We are particularly concerned at the intention to move (station master) Peter Sorras who is a long-term, much valued member of our community. We demand that you reconsider this decision," the petition states.

Mrs Warrington said Mr Sorras had been at Bexley North station for 17 years and he was considered part of the community.

"We have also heard that the station masters at Turrella and Bardwell Park are also being moved," she said.

"You would think that RailCorp



Long list: Bexley North resident Jo Warrington and daughter Louise Warrington with their petition in support of the Bexley North station master.

Picture: Jane Dyson

would be rewarding their staff for years of faithful service, not treating them like rubbish."

Ms Warrington said there were safety concerns if the stations were unmanned.

"We have lots of elderly people who won't have anyone there to help if they get into trouble. It is a huge safety issue," she said.

NSW Transport Minister David

Campbell said the aim of the station staff review was to align staffing levels with commuter passenger movements at CityRail stations.

"The aim of the review, agreed to by unions and staff as part of the 2008 Union Collective Agreement, also saw staff receive a 4 per cent wage increase in April 2008 and a further 4 per cent in April 2009 in return for efficiency improvements.

"There will be no loss of employment as a result of the station staff reviews, though some positions will change.

"On-site reviews with staff and unions at Bexley North, Bardwell Park, Turrella are due to be held in July. No decisions will be made about staffing at these stations until this part of the consultation is complete."

# Overcrowded trains spark new knocks

By Murray Trembath

NEW figures showing overcrowding on the Illawarra railway line will come as no surprise to regular commuters.

The figures obtained by the Opposition under freedom of information show that during the morning peak, trains are carrying a load which is 130 per cent of the seated capacity.

In the afternoon peak, the load is 110 per cent.

The morning situation is just below the 135 per cent regarded as "crush load".

Opposition Leader Barry O'Farrell said commuters were paying the price for Labor's incompetence.

"It also highlights the Government's stupidity in pressing ahead with a \$5.3 billion Rozelle Metro to nowhere," he said.

Opposition transport spokeswoman Gladys Berejiklian said the Coalition was proposing an integrated transport authority.

The authority would ensure projects and upgrades were planned, promised and delivered on time and within budget.

An independent board will oversee the authority to guarantee projects meet public needs and will be delivered on time and on budget.

"New train carriages due last year are already running two years late, as well as massively over-budget, which is worsening the overcrowding problem," she said.