

# Congestion Survey 2015



## RAC BusinessWise-CCI

The third RAC BusinessWise-Chamber of Commerce and Industry Congestion Survey, of more than 250 small-to-medium size businesses, has confirmed that traffic congestion continues to take its toll on businesses in and around Perth.

*“Lower productivity and higher costs, sadly bad for any business.”*

The latest survey has revealed traffic congestion continues to have a negative impact on Perth businesses, with a massive 87% saying it had contributed directly to lost productivity, up from 78% in 2013.

Many Perth businesses (69%) say their exposure to traffic congestion has increased over the past 12 months and nearly all respondents (97%) said that traffic congestion had increased the time their workers spent on the roads. This

remains unchanged since the survey was last conducted in 2013.

Alarmingly, of the businesses surveyed, 35% said they had lost work, accounts or customers due to problems related to traffic congestion, up from 25% in 2013.



**For the better**

# The business cost

The 2015 RAC BusinessWise-CCI Congestion Survey has confirmed congestion is adversely impacting business in Perth.

There has again been a significant increase in the number of businesses (68%) who report they have had to turn down new or more work opportunities, up from 53% in 2013.

As one business explained *"We now don't do any jobs that require a start in peak hour."*

Perth businesses expressed frustration at the uncertainty created by congestion on making decisions: *"I refuse to work in certain suburbs as I am on the road too long."*

The ability to attract and retain staff also remains a key issue for business: *"Staff we would like to employ won't join us*

*because of the travel time due to congestion."*

Although loss of productivity remains the number one consequence of congestion, businesses also cited increased time spent on roads (97%) and increased fuel consumption (95%) as major issues affecting how they did business.

Increased vehicle running costs (including maintenance and breakdowns) featured in the 2015 survey: *"Less work completed due to more maintenance to vehicles."*

Over the past 12 months, it was clear businesses had made changes to reduce the impact of traffic congestion on their

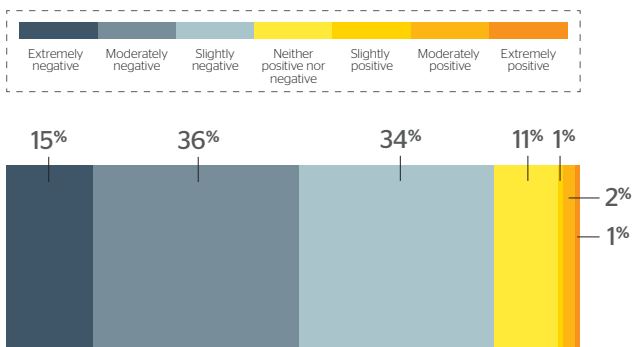
*"Loss of clients due to unknown and unprecedented delays, fuel costs are up by almost 25% and stressed drivers."*

bottom line including using alternative roads/routes (82%), allowing more time between deliveries/jobs (79%) and scheduling deliveries/jobs outside of peak traffic times (58%).

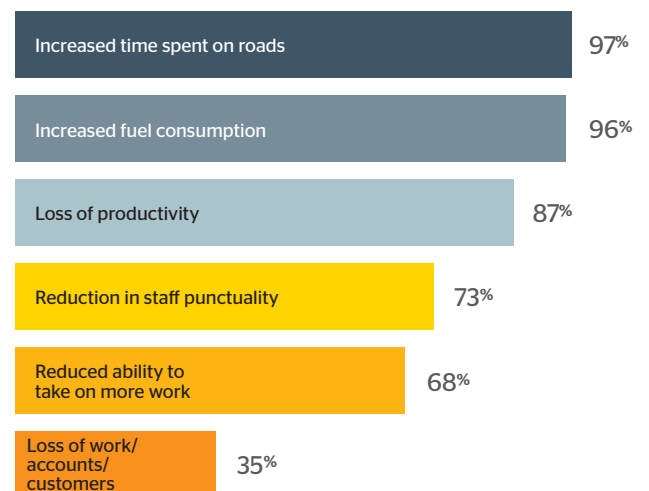
In the end, all Western Australians will pay the price of congestion: *"I have had to increase prices to cover increased time on the roads."*

*"Time between jobs has had a negative impact on customer satisfaction."*

## Impact of congestion on business



## Prompted impact of traffic congestion



# The personal cost

Business have revealed employee stress and difficulties maintaining a work-life balance has increased as a result of traffic congestion.

The health and well-being of staff is a significant concern for businesses with many revealing stress levels had increased. In 2015, 73% of businesses surveyed reported staff punctuality had been affected as a result of congestion, up from 68% in 2013.

Many businesses stated increased traffic congestion was eroding the work-life balance of workers.

As one business said: *“Employee stress increases due to the inability to reach bookings on time.”* And another: *“Time away from home due to increased travel to and from work.”*

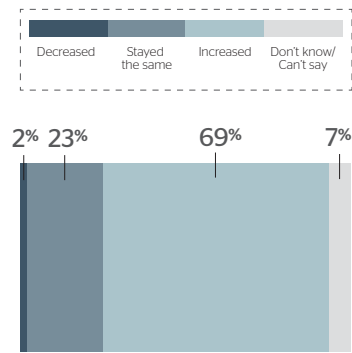
For many Perth businesses having workers on the road was unavoidable. Yet more than one third of businesses surveyed had encouraged their staff to carpool, use public transport or cycle to and from work.

Encouragingly, of the businesses surveyed, 64% provided bicycle parking facilities, 62% provided shower and change facilities, 55% allowed some staff to work from home and 63% had given staff the flexibility to change start and finish work times to avoid congestion.

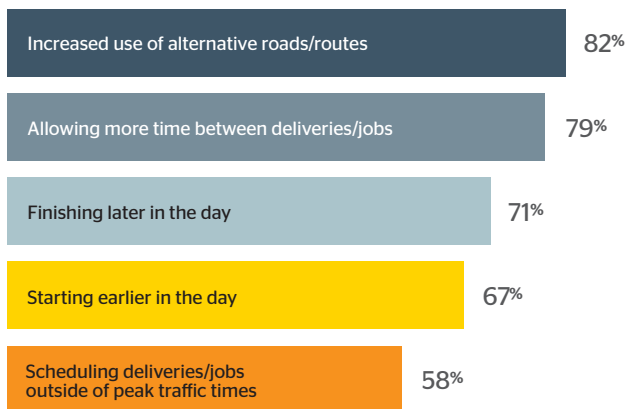
*“Better public transport in the area, running more frequently and after work hours.”*

*“More time in transit is less time doing productive work or enjoying life outside of work.”*

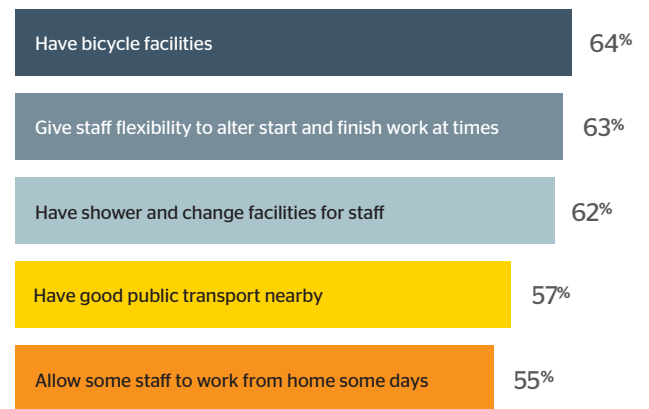
## Exposure to traffic congestion



## Changes in business due to congestion



## Staff travel options to avoid congestion



# What can be done?

**Confidence in the business community in the ability of governments to better manage the congestion crisis remains low with 61% stating they are ‘not at all confident’ that State and Federal Governments have adequate plans in place to tackle congestion.**

The frustration of business is clear with comments like: *“Why aren’t the road infrastructure changes that are required to service new localities dealt with at the beginning of the development instead of once these areas are inhabited?”* and *“More infrastructure is needed. Government needs to look further than 5 year ahead. Need to plan 50 years ahead.”*

Perth businesses indicated that their top three priorities to help manage congestion on Perth’s roads should be a greater investment to expand existing or build new roads (80%), the introduction of intelligent transport technology to better manage the existing road network (78%) and changes to how road-works are managed and coordinated (74%).

Support from business to decentralise employment and jobs from the CBD and rezoning areas to allow for higher density living increased since the survey was conducted in 2013.

In addition only 21% of respondents supported the introduction of toll roads. One business pointed out: *“Many of the changes I would make would be low cost traffic light sequence changes.”*

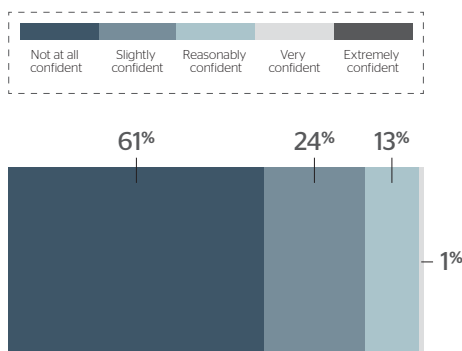
It is obvious that the business community remains concerned about the negative social and economic impacts of congestion. The latest survey reaffirms the need for a long term infrastructure plan to prioritise and coordinate projects and provide certainty for business and potential investors.

*“Our company definitely notices the impact of greater congestion on our roads and would love to see more public transport options for outer suburbs, including smaller buses.”*

The development and implementation of technology solutions across our road network, investment in alternative transport options like public transport and cycling, new approaches to land use and transport planning and exploring innovative ways to support different and flexible working arrangements will go a long way in managing traffic congestion and commute times, improving economic productivity and the quality of life for employees.

In the lead up to the next Federal and State Elections, the message from business is quite clear, as one business stated *“Governments need to be able to make large scale bi-partisan structural changes to benefit the community for the next 50-100 years rather than playing politics.”*

## Confidence in state and federal government plans to tackle congestion



## Support for initiatives to help reduce traffic congestion

More money spent to expand existing or build new roads	<b>80%</b>
The introduction of new intelligent technology to manage the existing road network	<b>78%</b>
Changes to how roadworks are managed/coordinated	<b>74%</b>
Decentralising employment/jobs from the CBD	<b>65%</b>
Reallocation of road space for the construction of a light rail network serving inner city suburbs	<b>63%</b>
Increased government spending on public transport infrastructure at the expense of expenditure on the road network	<b>50%</b>
Reallocation of road space to provide dedicated bus lanes	<b>45%</b>
The re-zoning of your local area to allow for higher density living	<b>36%</b>
A congestion charge for all vehicles travelling through the Perth CBD during peak hours	<b>30%</b>
Increased public transport fares to pay for better infrastructure and services	<b>25%</b>
A charge for each kilometre you travel in a car on a road and a decrease in registration fees	<b>22%</b>
The introduction of toll roads on major arterial routes to generate revenue for better infrastructure and services	<b>21%</b>



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