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Australians prepared to tolerate longer city commutes – national survey

Australians are prepared to tolerate a daily commute to work of about 37 minutes each way according to a survey conducted by the University of Sydney Business School’s internationally respected Institute of Transport and Logistics Studies (ITLS).

Commenting on the latest Transport Opinion Survey (TOPS), the Director of the ITLS, Professor David Hensher, said the findings “could have a significant bearing on the way that liveable cities are planned”.

“There has been a great deal of talk about the 20-minute city with every suburb within a short commute to everyday services and jobs,” Professor Hensher said. “However, this survey offers up the idea of the 40 minute commute city (at least as a starting aspiration)."

The survey also found that commuter tolerance is relatively constant across the country with Western Australians the most intolerant (an average of 34 minutes) and New South Wales commuters the most tolerant (an average of 40 minutes).

The latest TOPS also looked at experience with traffic congestion and the extent to which delays are caused by vehicle accidents or breakdowns in contrast to the volume of traffic. Those surveyed claimed that one in four of their daily trips suffered from traffic congestion caused by vehicle accidents or breakdowns.

“This new evidence indicates that there could be a substantial improvement in the performance of the road network if these contributors to traffic congestion are removed,” said Professor Hensher.

In addition, the latest TOPS survey reveals that Australians are becoming less confident about transport in their local area and across Australia.

The TOPS confidence index in relation to local transport has fallen from 100 points in March 2010 to 47 in March this year. The confidence index related to transport Australia wide has fallen from 100 to 46 over the same period. The decline in confidence has accelerated since September 2013.
TOPS is the only national survey to measure public opinion on transport related issues. The first 2016 report is at: http://sydney.edu.au/business/itls/tops

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