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More than one third of Australian could cut traffic congestion by working from home

More than a third of Australians workers could help to cut traffic congestion by working from home but choose not to do so, according to a survey conducted by the University of Sydney Business School’s Institute of Transport and Logistics Studies (ITLS).

The latest Transport Opinion Survey (TOPS) also found that a majority of these people have flexible working hours and could be persuaded to change their travel arrangements.

“This evidence sends a very strong message about the opportunities that exist to encourage a switch to off peak travel," said the Director of the ITLS, Professor David Hensher. “It also reinforces previous evidence that there is a sufficient number of commuters who would switch from the peak to the off peak to commence their travel if a peak period distance-based charge is introduced.”

According to the survey, up to one in four workers could work at home or telecommute at least one day per week, and one in ten workers do use this compressed working week to have one day off work per fortnight.

“This evidence shows that already there is a noticeable amount of telecommuting, in part we suspect as a way of avoiding peak period traffic congestion; and hence it is a significant contribution to managing traffic congestion”, says Professor David Hensher.

However, this flexibility at work varies substantially across Australian states with three in four workers in Queensland having flexible working hours compared to just over one in three workers in South Australia.

In addition, the latest TOPS survey revealed that Australians became less confident about transport in their local area and across Australia with the transport confidence index falling to its lowest level since the survey commenced in 2010.

TOPS is the only national survey to measure public opinion on transport related issues. The second 2014 biannual report is at: http://sydney.edu.au/business/itls/tops.
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