Australians back Uber-type services

Despite strong opposition from traditional taxi operators and some governments, Uber and Uber-type ride sharing services, have proven very popular amongst travellers, according to a University of Sydney Business School survey.

The Transport Opinion Survey (TOPS), conducted by the Business School’s internationally respected, Institute of Transport and Logistics Studies (ITLS), found that nearly a quarter of all Australians have used a ride sharing service while more than 40 per cent would if one was available locally.

“What we are seeing with Uber-styled services is the growing appeal of high quality mobility services that in due course might be a substitute for the taxi and indeed one’s own car,” said the Director of the School’s Institute of Transport and Logistics Studies, Professor David Hensher

The latest Transport Opinion Survey also found that 7% of those who used an Uber or Uber-type services did so as a substitute for some travel in their own car and 4% substituted all of their own car travel. 10% used a ride-sharing services but did not want to lose the option of their own private car.

TOPS also asked Australians if they would be willing to make their car available to other people for a fee. About 20% said they would share their car with other people either by driving for Uber or similar companies (10%), peer-to-peer car sharing, through organisations such as Car Next Door (4%), or by both (5%). More than half (56%) said that would not be prepared to share their car with anyone outside their immediate friends and family.

“These percentage are relatively low at present but suggest a growing interest in mobility as a service in contrast to having to own a car in order to use a car,” said Professor Hensher. This will open up in the future with the aid of digital apps and new ways of serving the transport market that are not dependent on ownership.”

The latest TOPS survey also reveals that Australians are regaining confidence in their local transport services. The TOPS Confidence index rose from 44 to 62 over the past year but remains well below the base line of 100 set in September 2010.

As for the future, more people now look to the next 12 months with confidence than did in 2015 (46 to 65) and to the next five years (62 to 78).
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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