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Despite political promises Confidence in a brighter transport future plummets - survey

Most Australians are not expecting any improvement in Australia’s roads or public transport services despite repeated promises made by both sides of politics, according to a major University of Sydney Business School survey.

The nationwide transport confidence index as measured by the regular Transport Opinion Survey (TOPS) has plummeted by nearly fifty percent since the end of 2013.

“Despite promises of significant investment in transport infrastructure, the public is clearly disappointed with their governments’ inability to make a noticeable difference to roads and public transport,” said the Director of the School’s Institute of Transport and Logistics Studies.

On an index established at 100 in March 2010, public confidence in an improvement in local transport over the next year now stands at 54, down from 94 at the end of 2013.

Public confidence in an improvement in transport conditions nationwide in the next year has fallen from 104 to 56 while confidence in an improvement over the next five years has fallen since 2013 from 101 to 65 points on the TOPS index.

The most pessimistic states were South Australia and West Australia.

Better public transport remained the travelling public’s top priority.

The wide ranging TOPS survey also found that while many people would like to ride a bicycle to work or school, safety worries discouraged them from doing so. About a third of survey participants indicated that they were interest but also concerned about aggressive driving behaviour, heavy traffic and a lack of bicycling infrastructure.

The survey found that only two per cent of Australians were “strong and fearless” when it came to bicycle riding while seven per cent regarded themselves to be “enthusiastic and confident”.

“There remains a significant challenge to provide appropriate road space and education of car and truck users so that there is a much safer environment for non-motorised modes of transport to support healthier lifestyles,” said Professor Hensher.

TOPS is the only national survey to measure public opinion on transport related issues. The first 2015 report is at: http://sydney.edu.au/business/itls/tops.

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