Submission into the Inquiry into the investment of Commonwealth and State funds in public passenger transport infrastructure and services.

To the Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Please accept this response as an individual with ten years experience in Australia and overseas in travel demand management and I greatly appreciate the opportunity to comment on Commonwealth and State funding for public transport infrastructure.

Transport professionals in the 1990's expected South Perth residents to make many trips to the CBD as it is so close and the CBD surely offers so much? A survey done in 1996 showed it to be (from memory) only 5%!

This type of thinking has characterized Perth's public transport system with a focus on radial arms to transport people to and from the city centre. For people working in the CBD this system has contributed to high mode splits for public transport however the vast majority of trips are to 'other places' resulting in Perth's car dependence – 81% of all trips are made by car.

After years of debate Perth finally ran a Circle Route that linked various trip attractors such as universities and hospitals in a circle around the city centre without entering the CBD. To the surprise of many experts it became one of Perth's best patronised bus routes and provides an excellent reminder for future planning.

The recent expenditure on the Mandurah Rail Line, while commendable, is really only useful for those trips to the City, possibly 5% or even less! The remainder of trips for residents in the South West corridor of Perth will be made by car.

A calculation could be made based on population and trips made per day to determine how many car trips the Mandurah Rail Line has generated rather than reduced.

A better expenditure would be to use public transport funds to run highly visible and identifiable buses on high frequency routes and on bus priority lanes between commercial and residential hubs and don't necessarily focus on the city centre. Brisbane and Bogata offer good examples.

I have found that to encourage public transport use you need to balance incentives to use public transport, (frequent, direct, cost efficient and faster than driving) with penalties for driving – (congestion, parking costs, limited parking). By concentrating on one side you severely limit the opportunity for change.

Public transport use will increase exponentially when public transport is available and convenient for most the trips needed for a large number of people on most days.

If I need my car for ONE trip during my day then I will need to use the car for ALL of my trips during the day. Presently Perth's public transport fails in this regard for many people, particularly due to it's CBD focus.

The City CAT buses have proven that when parking money is transparently used to fund other convenient options to travel that people will use them.

People aren't buying 'parking' they are buying 'mobility'.

Travel Demand Management programs should accompany all infrastructure programs to achieve better efficiencies.

If I don't know there is a bus that leaves from near my house direct to my work then no matter how much money has been spent on providing that bus service in my mind it DOESN'T EXIST and I can never use it.

Travel demand management programs have consistently shown that even without any expensive changes to infrastructure travel demand management initiatives can increase active travel mode use by 10 -16% (TravelSmart Household & the City of Melville's SMARTi).

While money is made available to run pilot projects it is essential that resources are made available to CONTINUE successful projects and if successful they are treated as being just as real as an infrastructure project – WHY? Because they have achieved the desired outcome.

Travel demand management projects can have cost : benefit ratios for example TravelSmart Household of 1:30 and struggle to find funding while a road infrastructure project will have a cost : benefit of 1: 5 and receive funds.

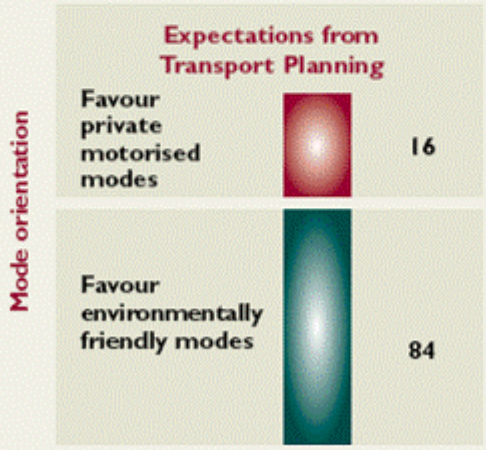
In terms of public transport use funding for new public transport infrastructure needs to have a percentage of it's infrastructure costs allocated to ensure people know how it can be of benefit to them.

FBT: Public transport needs to be able to be salary sacrificed like cars to build a level playing field. Annual public transport passes should be made available – once a pass has been bought the holder is more likely to make the most use out of it – as is currently achieved when a car is bought and the bus providers have the money in advance to run their services.

Car parking at train stations : needs to be assessed on an economic basis rather than a political one – extra parking is being built (Southern and Northern lines in Perth) even though it is known to achieve no long term benefit and at dramatically higher costs than behaviour change programs that would deliver real outcomes.

If decisions made need to be political I provide this quote from the TravelSmart 10 Year Plan – page 4

The important message for decision-makers and transport professionals is that only 16 per cent want greater provisions for motor vehicles. Everyone else (84 %) wants transport policy and planning to favour environmentally friendly modes other than the car. This result is consistent with the many European countries and the middle and outer suburbs of Perth will be surveyed to determine if the same attitude prevails in these areas.



I sincerely hope that future funding for public transport infrastructure will be equal to funding that encourages car use and that Travel Demand Management will have a key role in improving the success of public transport ventures.

Smarter Mobility Achieving Reduced Traffic Initiative

Abstract

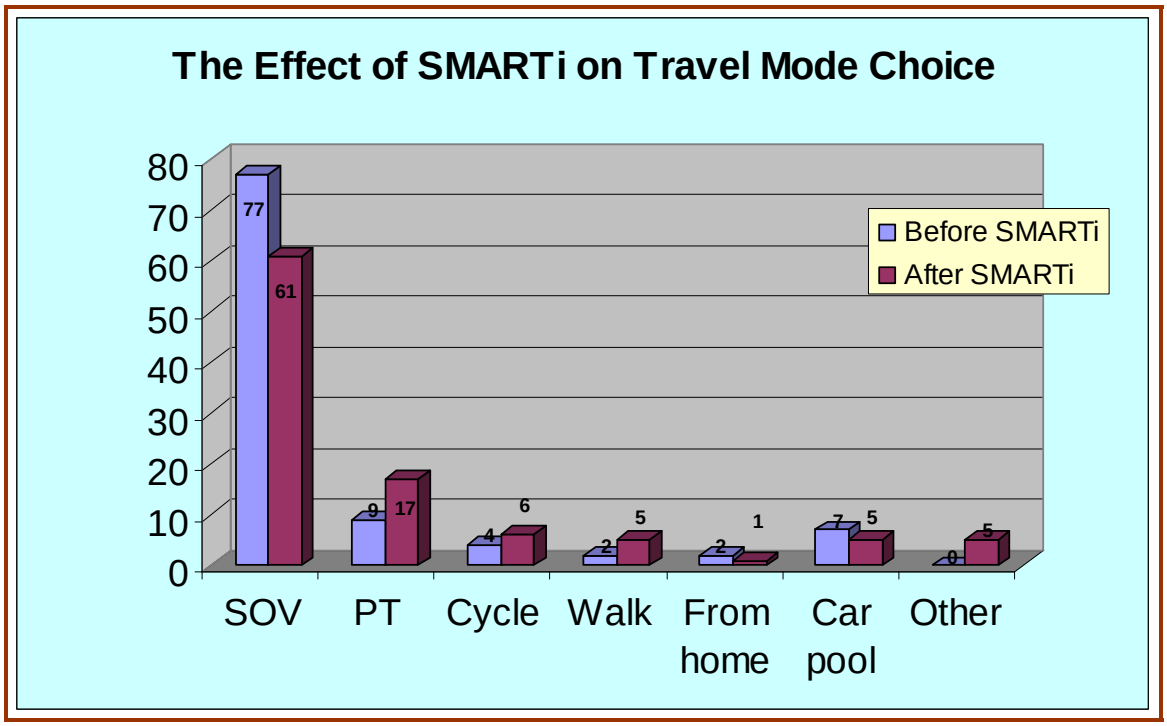
SMARTi - Smarter Mobility Achieving Reduced Traffic initiative was a pilot voluntary behavioural change program to determine the number of staff interested and able to adopt active travel modes on their commute to work 3 days per week for one year if given supporting information and incentives to do so.

Staff in the Canning Bridge Precinct, Perth Western Australia were offered either $250 worth of free public transport, a bike valued at $650 or a $150 voucher to be spent on walking products for staff that chose to exchange their single occupant vehicle commute with public transport, cycling or walking for 3 days per week for one year,

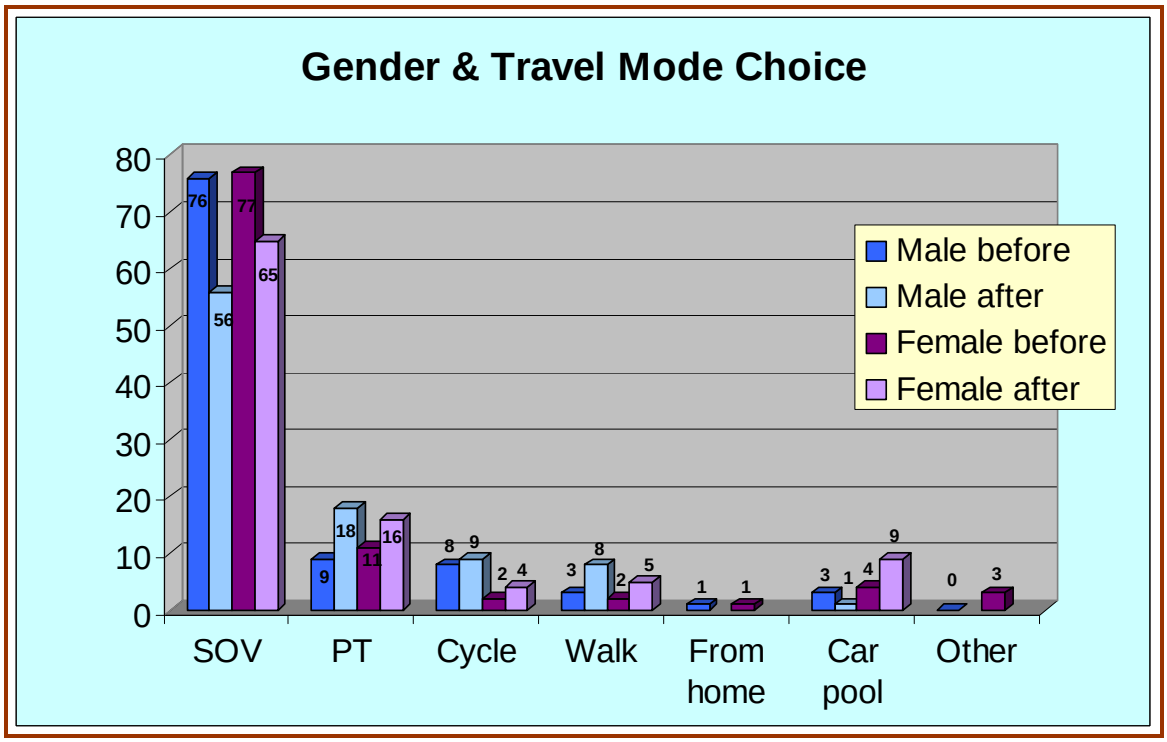
SMARTi resulted in 79 staff committing to public transport, 57 adopting cycling behaviour and 3 staff agreeing to walk.

In addition to increases in physical activity, through individual and voluntary actions SMARTi reduced single occupant vehicle trips by 16% among the participating organisations, saved 147,360 kilograms of CO_2 emissions over one year and freed up 83 car bays each day for customers and staff that need to drive.

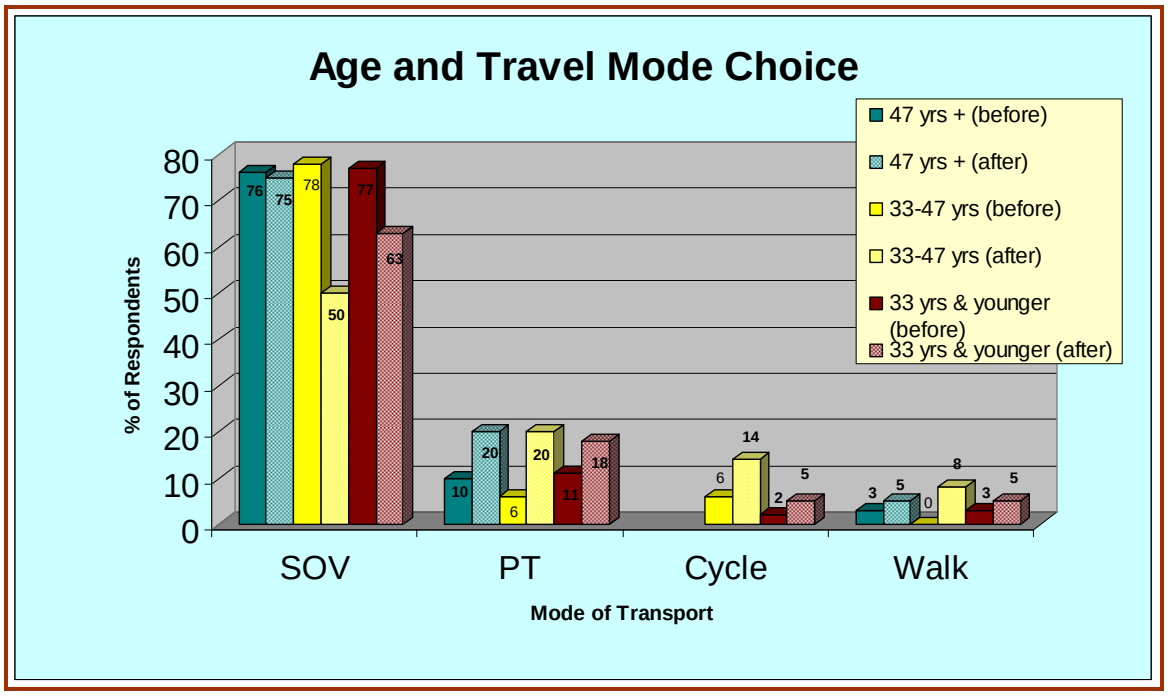
SMARTi was funded by the Australian Government, Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts and the City of Melville.



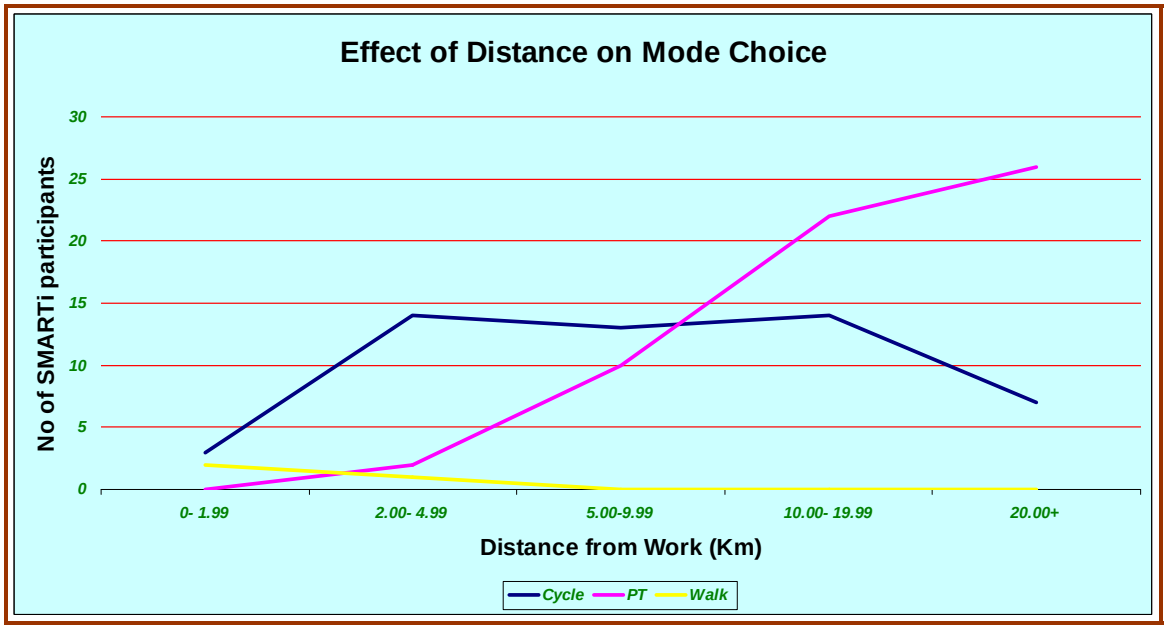
Graph 1 *- **SMARTi resulted in a significant voluntary change in the travel mode choices of staff in the Canning Bridge Precinct.***



Graph 3 – ***The effect of gender on behaviour change.***



***Graph 4** – The effect of age on behaviour change.*



***Graph 5** – The effect of distance on mode choice used.*

A doctored picture showing representing the amount of space in the Canning Bridge Precinct SMARTi has saved each day

Conclusions

SMARTi has shown that employees in the Canning Bridge Precinct were interested in active travel modes providing they had access to appropriate information and incentives to do so without upgrading the existing transport network. SMARTi was responsible for raising awareness about active travel modes. In addition this was done at a price that was competitive with providing additional car bays and also provided the additional benefits of increased staff physical activity, reduced traffic congestion and greenhouse gas emissions.

The SMARTi program could be replicated in any business area which has a public transport network with high frequency services especially in peak periods, a bicycle network and pathways accessible by pedestrians.