

2014

AusLSA LAW FIRM TRAVEL
MANAGEMENT SURVEY



AUSTRALIAN
LEGAL SECTOR

ALLIANCE

PROMOTING SUSTAINABILITY

In recent AusLSA Legal Sector Environmental Insights reports, it has been noted that in many law firms, business travel (primarily flying) continues to increase and now represents nearly 40% of the total emissions of an average law firm. While the motivation for reducing travel often comes from a desire to reduce costs, reducing business travel has an added bonus of greatly reducing the associated environmental impacts.

AusLSA Members are now measuring the environmental impacts of their firm travel but how are they managing it?

The AusLSA Travel Policy and Procedures Survey sought to understand how Australian law firms are currently managing their business travel by asking what alternative technologies are being implemented as well as what policies and procedures are being utilised.

TECHNOLOGY

- 85% of firms use webconferencing
- 90% have videoconferencing facilities.
- 44% are using Microsoft Lync
- 33% have telepresence

Three-quarters of firms are using virtual meeting platforms for internal meetings, but nearly 2/3 of firms are using virtual technologies for meetings with clients (30% frequently and 30% occasionally).

Nearly 60% of firms think that technology has had an impact of = the firm's need for travel, only 15% of firms believe it has been a significant impact.

A number of barriers were thought to exist to greater use of virtual meetings, including a lack of knowledge of virtual technologies (30%) and inadequate understanding of their functionality (30%).

Habit was identified as the most significant barrier (60%) to greater use of virtual meetings. This analysis indicates that training and communication campaigns on virtual meetings would significantly increase take-up.

However, nearly 90% of respondents think that virtual meetings can't completely replace the value of face-to-face meeting indicating that business travel will continue to be a necessary component of legal practice for the foreseeable future.

TRAVEL FOR MEETINGS

In most firms (nearly 90%) all staff are required to fly economy class for shorter flights. Business class is made available only for longer flights (more than 5 – 8 hours or overnight).

Most of the surveyed firms use the services of a Travel Management Company (90%). However, nearly 40% of firms DON'T have a policy and/or procedure for approving flights for business and 1/3 of surveyed firms still allow staff to book their own flights. From this it can be inferred that many law firms could improve their management of business travel including increasing control or oversight of travel taken by their staff.

TRAVEL FOR LOCAL MEETINGS

Many firms do not have programs to encourage travel to local meetings by means other than taxi. 30% of survey firms make public transport tickets readily available for staff to travel to local meetings

Generally where a car is needed to travel to a meeting, firms reimburse staff for personal car use, or arrange a hire care. One firm has started to use car share schemes for some journeys.

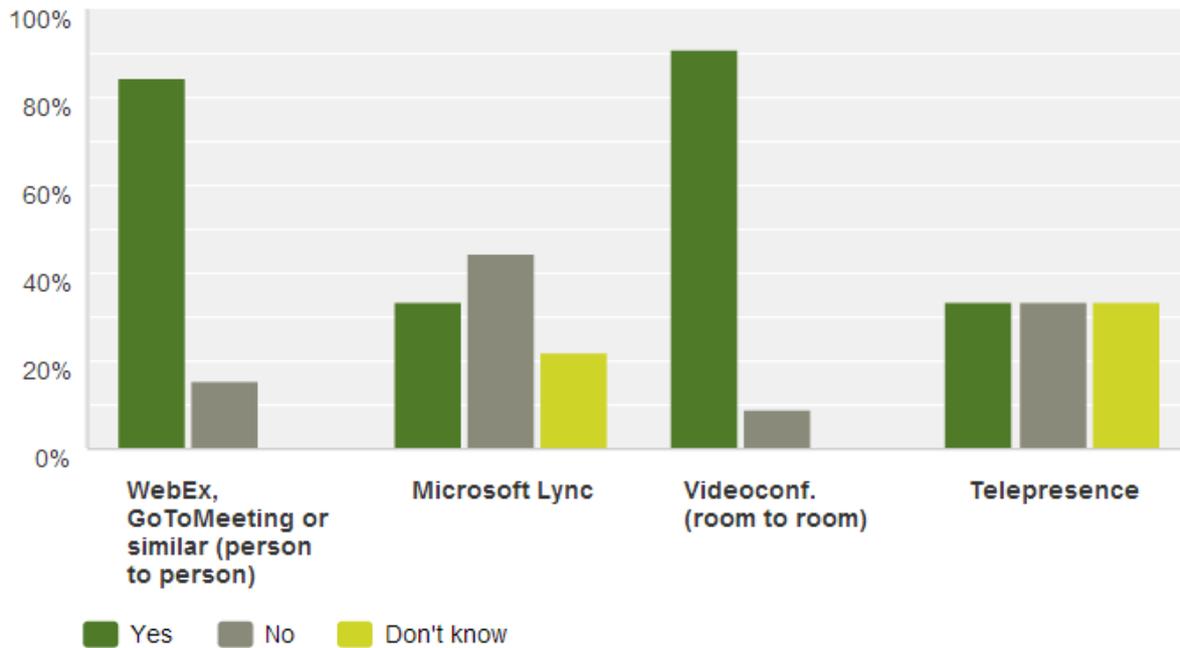
COMMUTING

Nearly a third of firms don't have facilities that encourage staff to cycle to work but 25% support their staff to purchase long term public transport tickets (but note that this is not an option in all Australian cities).

In a win for flexible working objectives, 90% of firms allow working from home occasionally and 82% allow working from home on a regular basis.

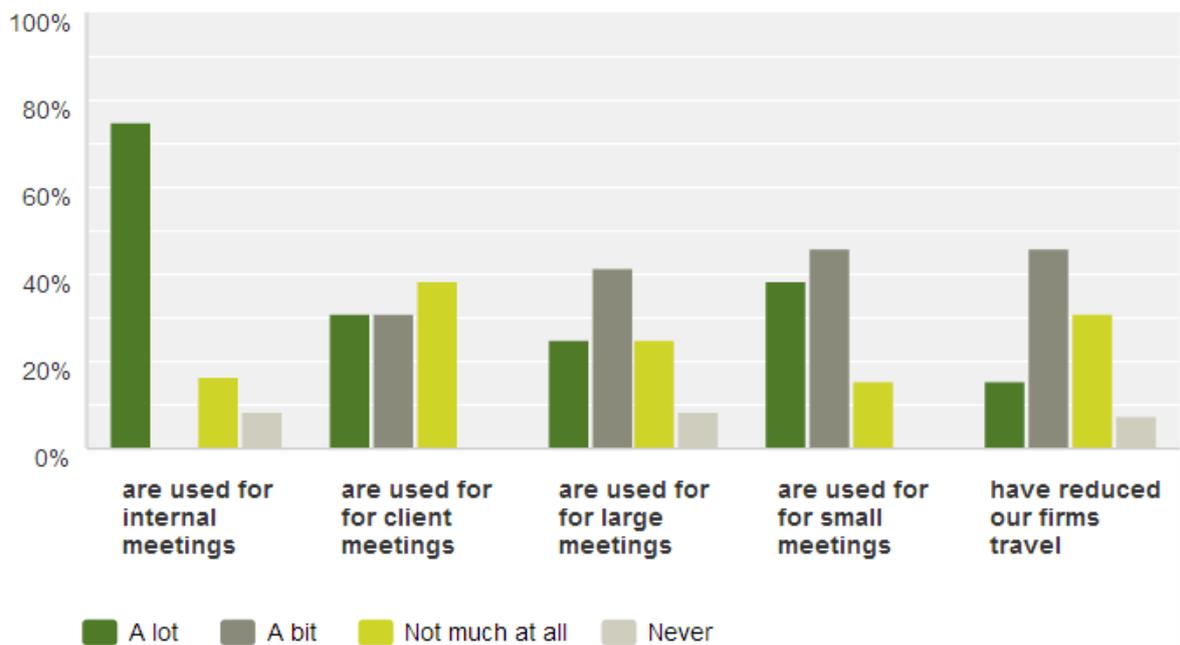
TECHNOLOGY

WHICH OF THESE VIRTUAL MEETING TECHNOLOGIES DOES YOUR FIRM USE?



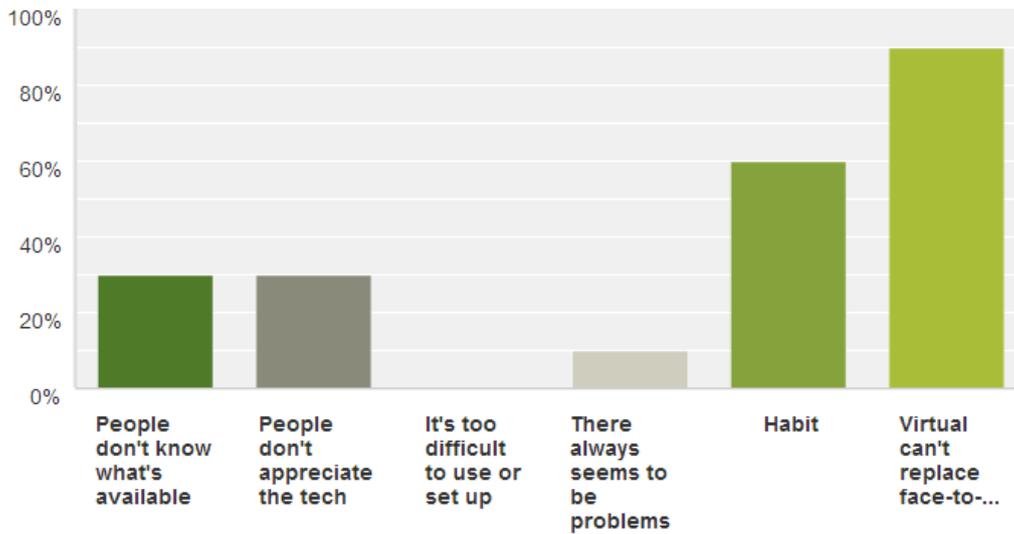
- Also use videophones
- Clients have certainly been happy to use SKYPE
- Jabber

OUR FIRM'S VIRTUAL MEETING TECHNOLOGIES:



- It is very difficult to tell if travel has reduced due to conferencing technology.

WHY DO YOU THINK YOUR FIRM'S VIRTUAL MEETING TECHNOLOGIES ARE NOT USED MORE?

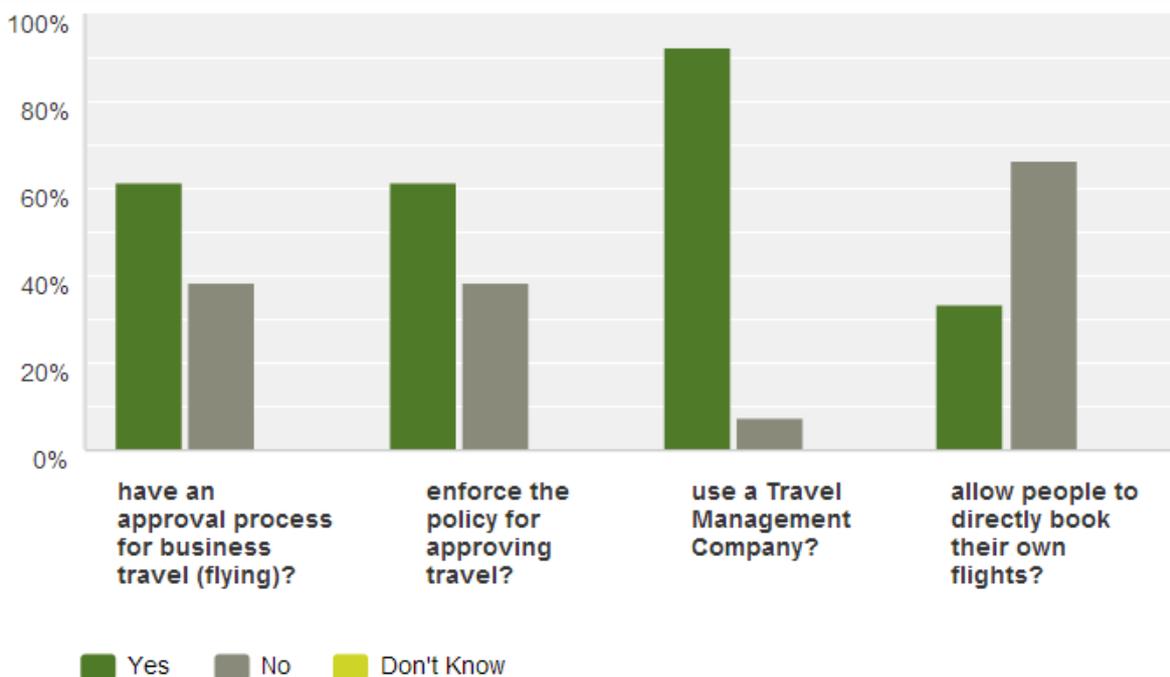


COMMENTS

- Used when required which is not often, being based [in one city there is] not much call for virtual meetings
- Our technologies are used to capacity most of the time
- We fully utilise the technology for our regional clients but prefer to focus on face to face with local clients

TRAVEL FOR MEETINGS

DOES YOUR FIRM:



- Current travel policy presently under review
- Have just implemented a travel policy and appointed a travel provider, trying to encourage staff particularly senior management to use, though old habits die hard

PLEASE BRIEFLY DESCRIBE WHAT YOUR FIRM IS DOING TO REDUCE BUSINESS TRAVEL.

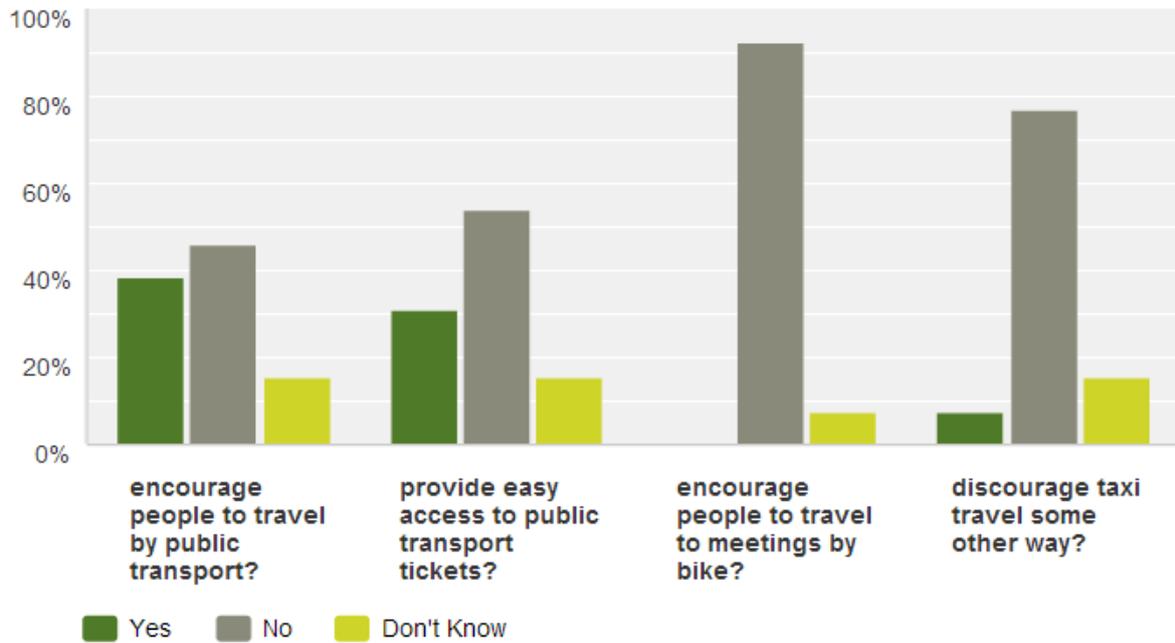
- Economy only unless over a certain number of hours of travel time
- Upgrading VC technology and promoting the use of iPads and iPhones for remote communication. We have also upgraded our remote working facility. The firm has a sustainable travel working group with representatives from each office.
- A review of the current travel policy is presently being undertaken to attempt to minimise business travel.
- Unfortunately nothing not a lot, just opened a small office in [another city] so our travel this year will probably exceed all other past years. Will look at Cab Charge use sometime this year and try and implement strategies to reduce usage.
- Investment in technology for conferencing
- we do not fly very often as the majority of clients are based in [the same city]
- Most of our travel is at the request of clients
- Promoting the use of Virtual meetings.

ACCORDING TO YOUR FIRM'S POLICY/PROCEDURES, WHICH PEOPLE AT YOUR FIRM ARE REQUIRED TO TRAVEL IN ECONOMY CLASS?



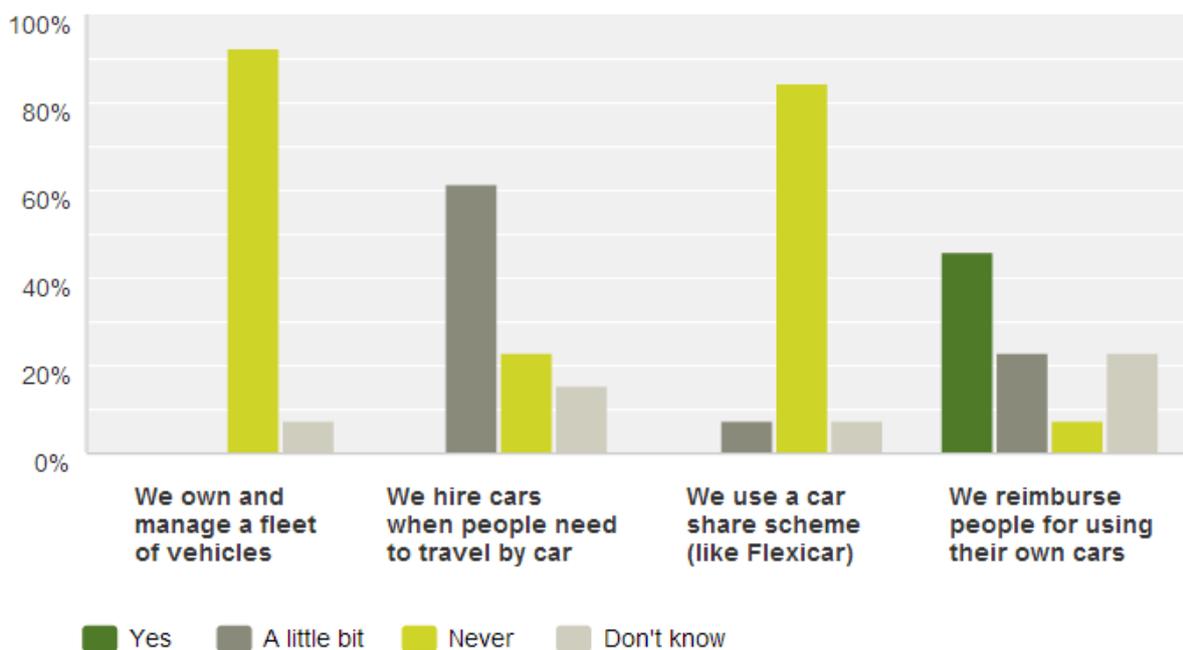
- Policy allows premium economy travel if the flight time exceeds 6 hours
- Business class is available for international flights of 5+ hours.
- Not presently stipulated in the policy
- For air travel over 8 hours Partners and Special Counsel can fly business all others require approval from the MD
- Business class is permitted for overnight travel only for all flights of 6 hours or more

FOR LOCAL MEETINGS, DOES YOUR FIRM:



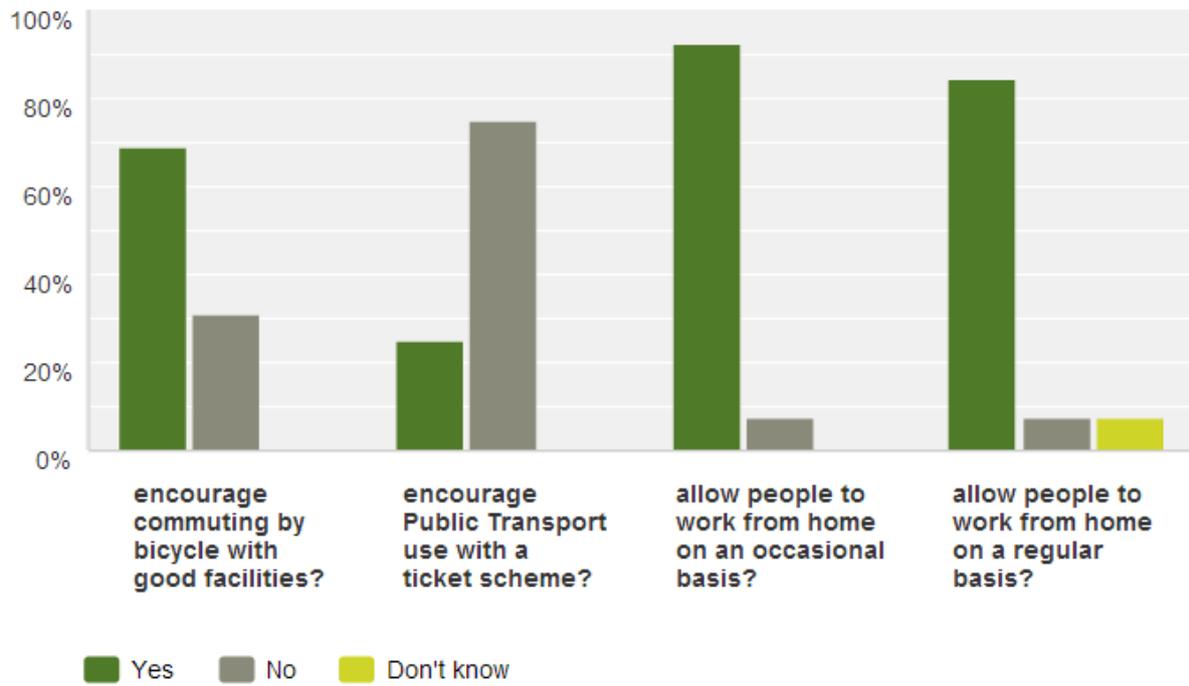
- Will look at ways this year at reducing our usage of Taxis
- Travel to clients via car is still required due to our location

HOW DO PEOPLE TRAVEL TO MEETINGS BY CAR (NOT INCLUDING TAXIS)?



COMMUTING

DOES YOUR FIRM:



- The Public Transport scheme is just related for those who travel a long distance and want to purchase a yearly ticket

RESPONDENTS TO THE SURVEY INCLUDED

Allens & Linklaters



gadens



HERBERT
SMITH
FREEHILLS

Lander & Rogers
Lawyers

LAVAN LEGAL
Leaders in Law

KING & WOOD
MALLESONS

sparke
HELMORE
LAWYERS

RK
Russell Kennedy
Lawyers



WALLMANS
LAWYERS