Background

As part of its communication and engagement efforts with the ACT community, the ACT Government Capital Metro Agency engaged Piazza Research Pty Ltd to conduct reliable research into community attitudes regarding the Capital Metro light rail system. Issues examined included community level of awareness and support, perceptions of benefits and concerns.

Methodology

A telephone survey of Canberra residents was conducted as this method provided the most representative results of the ACT population.

Sample design

In order to prevent self-selection and other biases in sampling, a randomised sample of ACT residents was conducted. This survey has been conducted over time and each cycle of the survey has achieved a highly reliable sample size. Cycle 1 in June 2014 achieved a sample size of 1,192, cycle 2 in Dec 2014 achieved a sample of 1,230 and cycle 3 in Aug 2014 achieved 1,265.

Results for this most recent survey are calculated to provide results accurate to within +/- 2.8% margin of error for the 95% confidence interval. This is considered highly reliable for this type of research.

Piazza Research

Piazza Research is a Canberra-owned ISO 20252 certified market and social research firm. The project complies with the ISO 20252 Market, Opinion and Social Research Standard. This summary report shows quantitative findings of research conducted in August 2015.
Perceptions of why Government is investing in light rail

The highest proportion of residents (43%) believed the government was investing in light rail to upgrade or improve transport options. Twenty nine per cent (29%) thought it was to reduce or prevent traffic congestion, and 24% believed it was for political reasons.

Perception of traffic congestion

Sixty-nine per cent (69%) of residents believed traffic congestion would be a problem in the future. The majority of residents have maintained this view over time (79% December 2014 and 69% in August 2015).

Do you think traffic congestion will be problem for Canberra in the future?

Usage

Sixty-one per cent (61%) of residents believed they would be more likely to use public transport if it involved a light rail system within easy walking distance or was accessible via other means.

Would you be more likely to use public transport if it involved a light rail system within easy walking distance or was accessible via other means.
While substantial proportions of all age groups believe they might use the light rail system, younger residents appear more likely than older to want to use the system (66% of 18-34 year olds, 67% of 35-49 year olds and 46% of those 65 or above). Households with children (67%) may be a little more likely to use the light rail than households with no children (58%). Females (65%) may wish to use it more than males (58%).

Perceptions about spending on light rail vs buses

Sixty-three per cent (63%) of ACT residents would support money being spent on a light rail system rather than buses if they knew there would be more long-term benefits for Canberra (e.g. cleaner environment, better public transport access, more jobs and investment). Younger people (18-34) showed the highest support rate for investing in light rail (71%), whereas people who were 65 or above had the lowest (44%).

Overall support – In August 2015, 56% of the ACT population supported the Government’s plans to develop the Capital Metro light rail system. Majority support has remained consistent over time (between 54% and 56% with an average support rate of 55% across the 3 survey periods). People aged 18-34 had the highest support rate (66%). Support levels declined as age increased with the majority of 35-49 year olds (62%), almost half of 50-64 year olds (46%) and 36% of those 65 years and older showing support.
Support after knowing about integrated plan for the whole city

After knowing light rail was part of a wider plan to connect the broader city, 67% residents support light rail for Canberra, and non-support falls to 24%.

Would you support the Capital Metro light rail system if you knew it was part of a wider plan to connect the whole city with an integrated transport system?

![Bar chart showing support for Capital Metro light rail system in Dec 2014 and Aug 2015.](chart)

After understanding that the Capital Metro is part of a wider integrated transport plan for the city, public support rates increase over the general support rate for ACT Government plans to develop the light rail system for Canberra. This is true for both the December and August survey periods when the support rate was higher than 65% in both surveys (72% Dec 2014 and 67% in Aug 2015).
Belief that Capital Metro will stimulate the Canberra economy

Sixty-three per cent (63%) of Canberra residents agreed or strongly agreed that the Capital Metro development will provide a good economic stimulus to the Canberra economy.

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
The Capital Metro development will provide a good economic stimulus to the Canberra economy.

This report was produced by Piazza Research Pty Ltd for the Capital Metro Agency.
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