



Transport
Roads & Traffic
Authority



Additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton

Online business survey report

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Report to:

Roads and Traffic Authority

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Additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton: Online business survey report



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Executive summary

The Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) commissioned Jetty Research to conduct an online survey of businesses in the Grafton and South Grafton areas regarding an additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton.

The survey, conducted with the co-operation of the Grafton Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI), was emailed to the Chamber's database of 600 local companies. It was also advertised in local media to encourage businesses not on the GCCCI database to participate in the survey. The businesses that registered were also sent the survey via email. The survey was open between Thursday 14 April and Tuesday 3 May. During this time, 104 valid responses were received.

The online business survey forms part of a wider and ongoing community consultation process by the RTA ahead of the identification of a preferred location for an additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton.

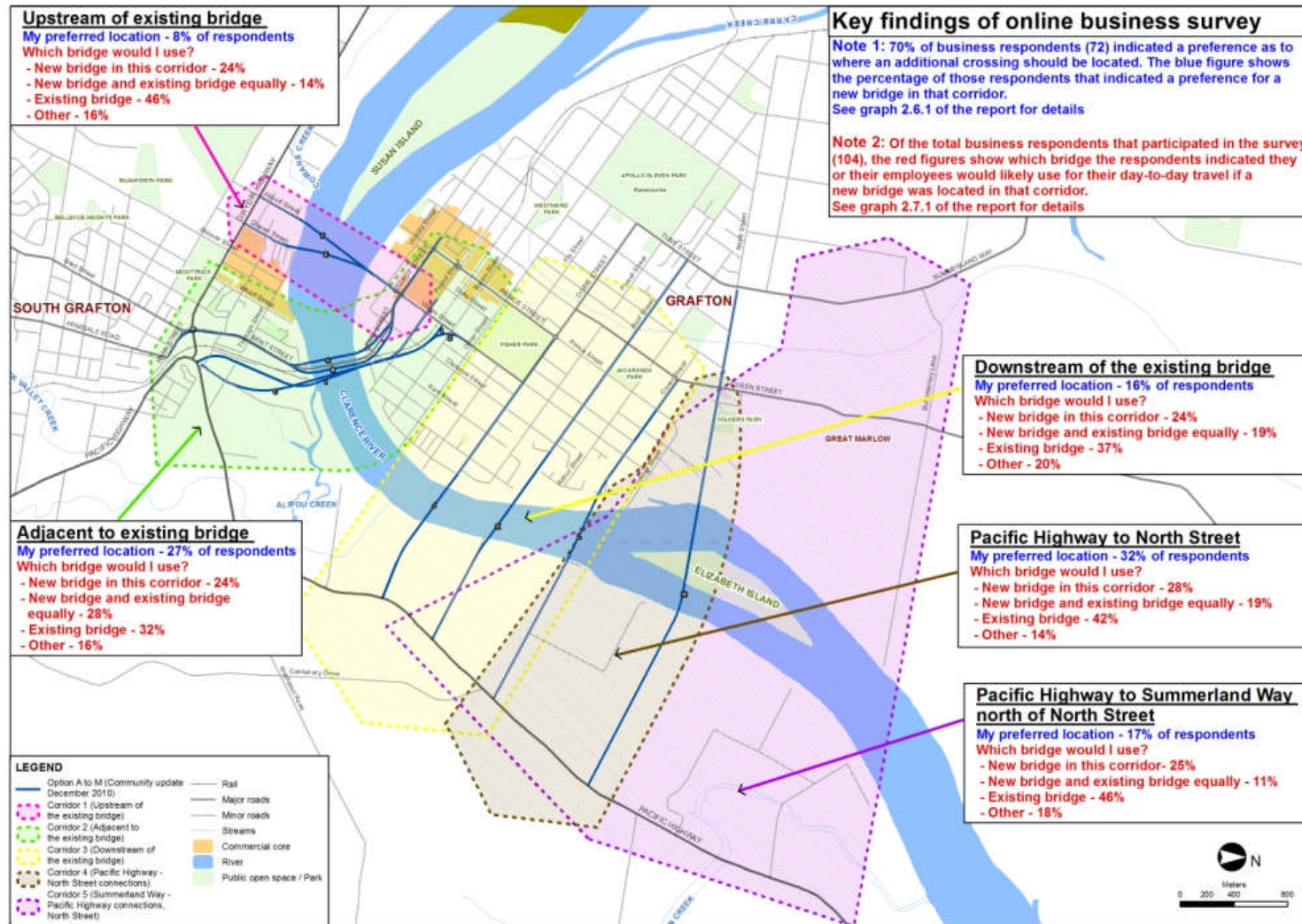
Among the key survey findings:

1. 99 per cent of respondents agreed that there should be an additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton.
2. Of 15 issues arising from earlier community consultation feedback, the top five issues of importance were: ensuring the safety of all road users; catering for additional commuter and heavy vehicle traffic in future; resolving traffic congestion; minimising flood impacts; and providing a bypass of Grafton for trucks using the Summerland Way.
3. Of nine business-related issues regarding an additional crossing of the Clarence River, the five deemed most important were: supporting the role of Grafton CBD as the Clarence Valley's prime retail and service centre; improving efficiencies between manufacturers/processors and their suppliers; increased ease of access for delivery vehicles into the CBD; facilitating the development of new employment lands or business hubs; and reduction of business-related travel times.
4. 19 per cent of respondents believed that the congestion and delays on the Grafton Bridge seriously affected their business, with a further 52 per cent saying it affected their business "but not too badly".
5. The impacts of bridge-related delays included: customers avoiding respondents' businesses at certain hours (with 36 per cent saying it had some or a major effect); uncertainty in arranging appointments (32 per cent); making it harder to ensure on-time deliveries (30 per cent) and lost productivity (21 per cent).
6. The survey indicated high business usage of the Grafton Bridge, with 20 per cent of respondents and 31 per cent of their employees (salespeople, couriers etc.) making three or more trips across the bridge on an average day (excluding travel to or from home). Meanwhile 75 per cent of respondents said they received, on average, at least one delivery per working day from outside the Grafton/South Grafton areas.

7. In a series of statements asking businesses to determine between competing priorities:
 - a) 60 per cent of businesses said that if a new crossing could only achieve one objective, it was more important to ease peak hour traffic congestion on the existing bridge than to remove heavy trucks from the existing bridge (with the remaining 40 per cent selecting the contrary);
 - b) 62 per cent said it was more important for a new bridge to improve overall traffic flow in the Grafton CBD than to remove heavy trucks from the CBD;
 - c) 66 per cent wanted a new bridge to reduce passing traffic in the CBD, with 23 per cent wanting to channel more traffic into the CBD and 11 per cent unsure;
 - d) 60 per cent believed it was more important to provide a bypass of Grafton for traffic from the Summerland Way to the Pacific Highway and vice versa than to reduce travel times between Grafton and South Grafton.
8. 70 per cent of respondents had a preferred route for a new crossing. Of these, the most popular corridor options were: from the Pacific Highway north of South Grafton to North Street in Grafton (32 per cent of those answering this question) and near the existing bridge (27 per cent). Less popular options were from the Pacific Highway to the Summerland Way (17 per cent); downstream of the existing bridge from the Pacific Highway to Hoof or Dobie Streets (15 per cent) and upstream of the existing bridge to Prince or Villiers Streets (9 per cent).
9. In terms of intended usage once an additional crossing is built, the existing Grafton Bridge would continue to carry the bulk of business traffic in four of the five nominated corridors. The exception is “near the existing bridge – from the Pacific or Gwydir Highways at South Grafton to say Villiers Street”, where it appears business-related traffic would be shared equally between the two bridges.
10. When asked whether, “Were the additional crossing to be built along each of the five designated corridors, would the overall effect on their business be beneficial or detrimental”, the proportion of respondents saying it would be beneficial was consistent at between 36 and 40 per cent across all five corridor options. Between 18 and 23 per cent felt the various options would be detrimental to their business, with the balance claiming no effect or being unsure.

The results indicate strong business support for an additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton, and all five corridor options are deemed “net beneficial” by respondents.. However there is some difference in opinion as to the location of an additional crossing – from nearby the existing bridge to the downstream option linking the Pacific Highway to North Street.

Figure i: Key findings of online survey



1. Introduction

1.1 Background and objectives

The NSW Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) has commissioned Jetty Research to conduct an online survey of businesses and other employers in Grafton and South Grafton regarding an additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton.

The survey, conducted with the co-operation of the Grafton Chamber of Commerce and Industry, was designed to identify business and employer-related issues surrounding the existing Grafton Bridge, and understand the business community's views on an additional crossing of the Clarence River. This survey forms part of a wider and ongoing community consultation process by the RTA ahead of the identification of a preferred location for an additional crossing.

1.2 Methodology

Given the length of the survey, and in order to allow all interested businesses the opportunity to participate¹, the RTA decided to conduct the survey in an online format. Potential participants were alerted to the survey through:

- An email (and two follow-up emails) sent by the Grafton Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI) to its database of approximately 600 local companies.
- Advertisements appearing in local newspapers (including *The Grafton Daily Examiner*, *the Clarence Valley Review* and *the Maclean Coastal View*) and on local radio stations (including *104.7* and *2GF*). See Appendix 2 for a copy of the newspaper advertisement.
- The RTA website.

Those businesses receiving the Grafton Chamber of Commerce and Industry email were able to click on a link embedded in that email to commence the survey. Those businesses responding to the advertising and registering interest to participate in the survey were sent an email with the survey link embedded in it.

The survey specified that only one survey should be completed by any business or individual employer.

A questionnaire (refer Appendix 1) was developed collaboratively between Jetty Research and the RTA. The survey commenced on Thursday 14 April, and remained open until 10pm on Tuesday 3 May 2011 (with reminder emails sent by the Chamber executive to its members on 28 April and 2 May supporting the newspaper advertisement on 23 April).

At the conclusion of the survey, 107 questionnaires had been received. Three of these were subsequently excluded², leaving 104 surveys to be analysed. Of the valid 104 surveys, 25 were anonymous.

¹ Unlike a random survey.

² Two of these were due to the provision of incomplete survey data including no indication of the industry they worked in, while the third was a duplicate response from the same business.

Based on a distribution to approximately 600 businesses on the GCCCI database, a response rate of approximately 18 per cent was obtained. Though high for an online business-to-business survey, this was nonetheless lower than anticipated given the potential interest of the survey content.

Please note that due to the nature of the survey, not all respondents answered every question. The number of respondents answering each question is marked as “n = XXX” in the graph accompanying that question. Caution should be taken in analysing some questions due to the small sample size.

Survey data has been analysed in SPSS, a specialised statistical software program. Where differences in this report are classed as significant, this implies they are statistically significant based on SPSS-calculated independent sample t-scores or other analysis of variation (or ANOVA) calculations.

In statistical terms, differences termed “significant” are considered unlikely to have been caused by chance alone.

1.3 Sampling error

Were random sampling error to be applied to a sample of 104 businesses (out of an estimated survey population of approximately 860 businesses and other employers in the Grafton/South Grafton areas)³ random sampling error would be +/- 8.8 per cent at the 95 per cent confidence level. (This effectively means that were the survey to be repeated 20 times, results should be representative of the overall survey population to within +/-8.8 per cent in 19 of those 20 surveys.)

However the online methodology used for this survey, being self-selecting (i.e. “opt-in”) in nature⁴, is not strictly considered random. In a self-selecting sample it is difficult to assess the presence of bias i.e. whether the opinions or characteristics of the participants deviate from those of the target population. Participants may differ from the rest of the target population, e.g. those who take part may have a strong opinion about the subject matter and hence complete the survey.

Hence the results of this survey cannot necessarily be used to make reliable inferences about the overall population of Grafton and South Grafton businesses. The results, while a useful snapshot of business community opinion, can (strictly speaking) only be used to reflect the views of those who chose to participate in the survey.

³ Based on the Chamber’s understanding that their database represented around 70 per cent of the actual number of businesses and other employers in the Grafton and South Grafton areas.

⁴ While all businesses, employers and Chamber members had the opportunity to complete a survey, results are reliant on those who chose to do so rather than those who had been randomly selected to participate. Those who chose to take part may or may not be representative of the business community as a whole.

1.4 Survey characteristics

The following table breaks down the survey sample by industry and number of employees:

Table 1.4.1: Survey sample by industry and number of employees

Industry	Including yourself, how many employees work in the Grafton/South Grafton areas?						Total
	1	2-5	6-10	11-20	21-50	More than 50	
Retail	2 1.9%	7 6.7%	7 6.7%	4 3.8%	1 1.0%	1 1.0%	22 21.2%
Hospitality	0 0.0%	6 5.8%	5 4.8%	3 2.9%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	14 13.5%
Manufacturing	2 1.9%	1 1.0%	1 1.0%	2 1.9%	0 .0%	1 1.0%	7 6.7%
Transport/wholesale	0 0.0%	4 3.8%	0 0.0%	1 1.0%	3 2.9%	1 1.0%	9 8.7%
Agriculture/Forestry	0 0.0%	2 1.9%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2 1.9%
Professional services	2 1.9%	8 7.7%	3 2.9%	4 3.8%	0 0.0%	1 1.0%	18 17.3%
Automotive	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 1.0%	2 1.9%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	3 2.9%
Construction and Trades	2 1.9%	3 2.9%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 1.0%	1 1.0%	7 6.7%
Government services	0 0.0%	1 1.0%	2 1.9%	1 1.0%	0 0.0%	1 1.0%	5 4.8%
Educational services (private)	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 1.0%	0 0.0%	1 1.0%	2 1.9%
Health services (private)	0 .0%	2 1.9%	1 1.0%	1 1.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	4 3.8%
Other	4 3.8%	5 4.8%	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 0.0%	2 1.9%	11 10.6%
Total	12 11.5%	39 37.5%	20 19.2%	19 18.3%	5 4.8%	9 8.7%	104 100.0%

See “Demographics” (Section 2.1, below), for more detailed analysis of the online sample.

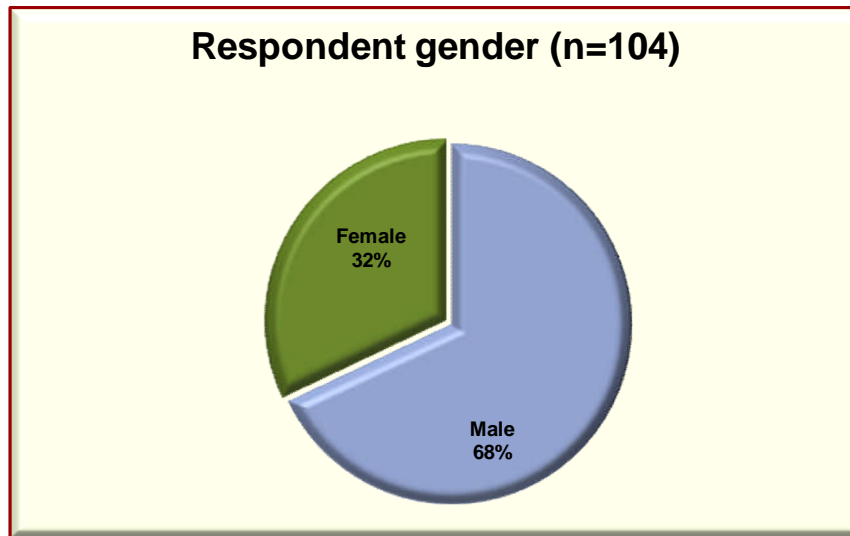
The survey sample has not been subjected to quotas other than the requirement to be a local business operator in the Grafton area, nor have results been post-weighted to meet particular demographic characteristics.

2. Survey results

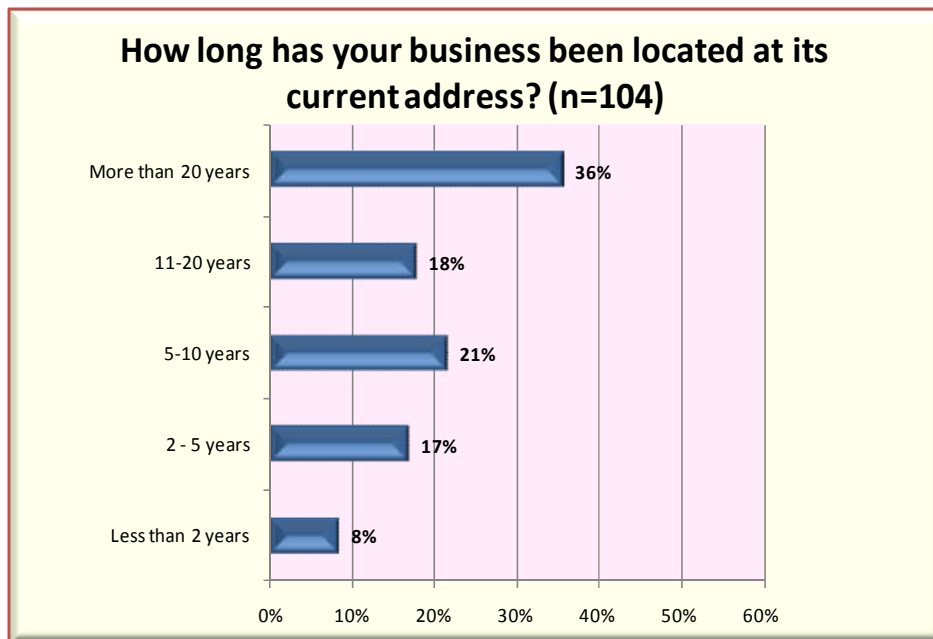
2.1: Respondent characteristics

Below is a summary of respondent characteristics for the online business survey. In the survey questionnaire (refer Appendix 1), this equates to questions 29-34. (NB Percentages may not equal exactly 100 per cent due to rounding.)

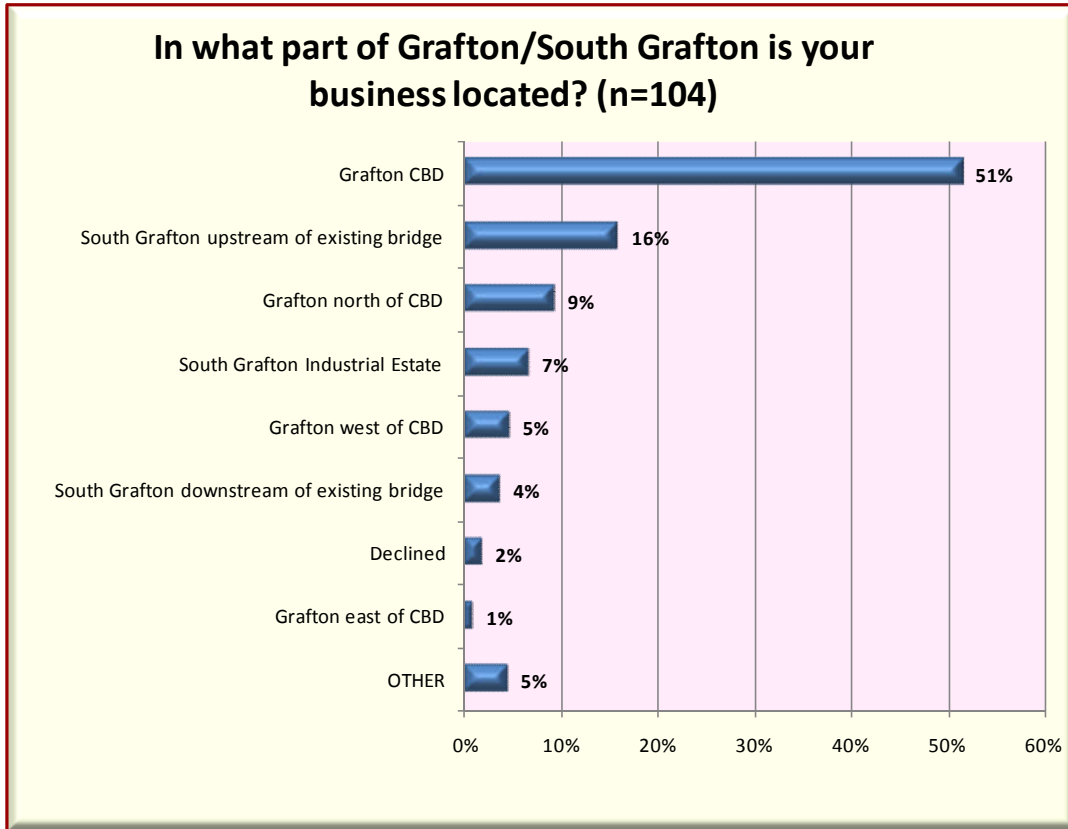
Graph 2.1.1: Gender



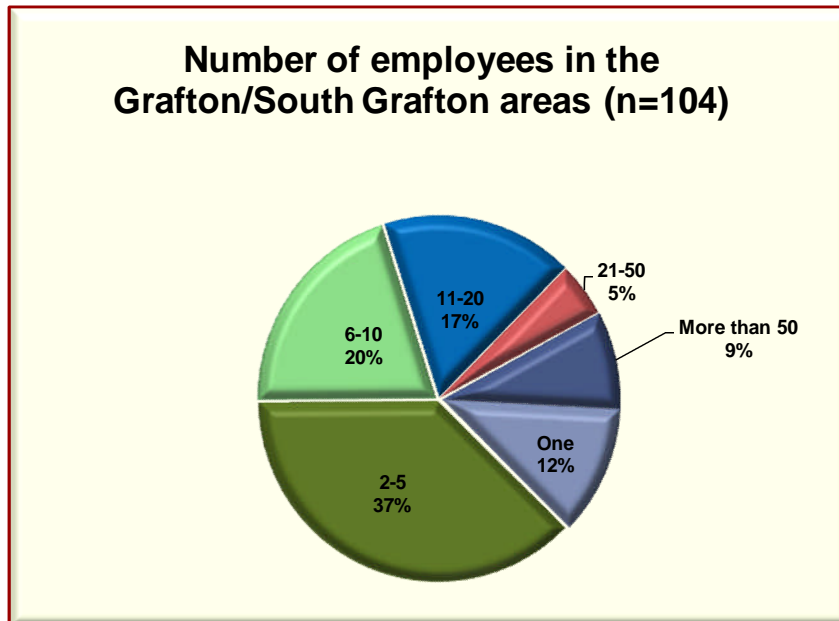
Graph 2.1.2: How long has your business been located at its current address?



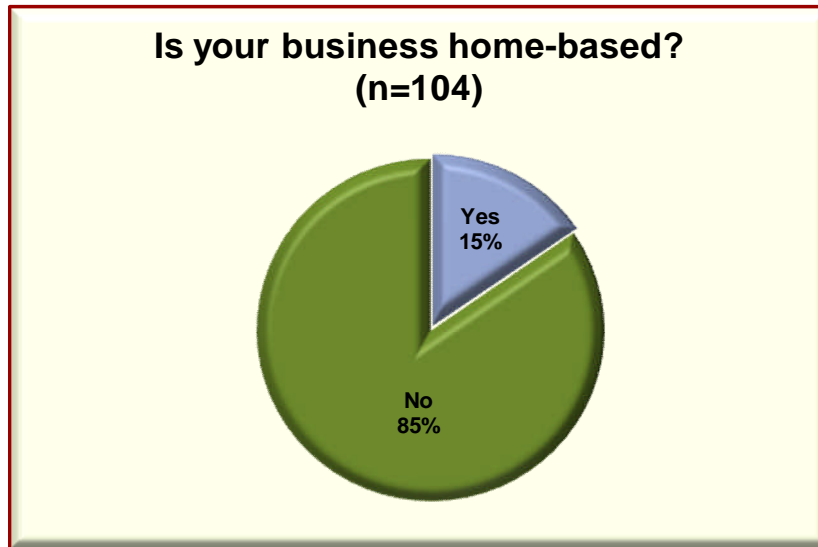
Graph 2.1.3: In what part of Grafton or South Grafton is your business located?



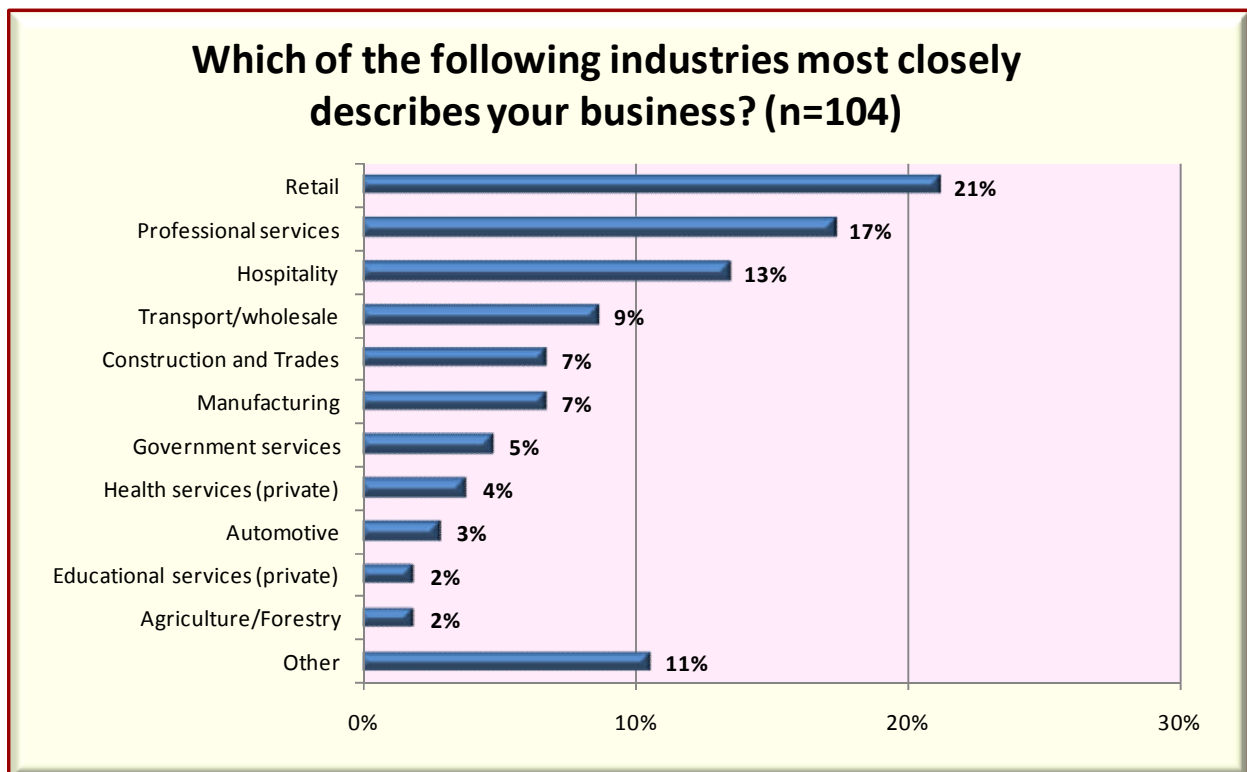
Graph 2.1.4: Including yourself, how many employees (full-time equivalent) are employed in the Grafton/South Grafton areas?



Graph 2.1.5: Is your business home-based?



Graph 2.1.6: Which of the following industries most closely describes your business?



N.B. Graph responses total 101 per cent due to rounding.

The above data suggests that:

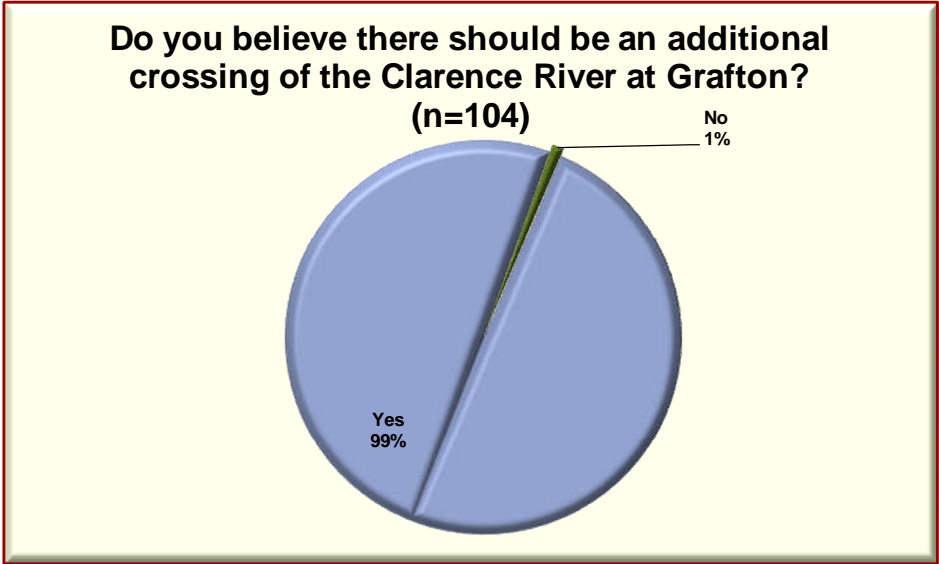
- Approximately half the businesses completing the survey were located in the Grafton CBD, with a further 15 per cent based in other areas of Grafton north of the Clarence River. Twenty seven per cent were based in South Grafton (including the Industrial Estate);
- There was an appropriate mix of business sizes, with the largest proportion of businesses (37 per cent) having between two and five employees;
- Retail businesses made up the largest proportion of respondents (at 21 per cent), though a wide range of other industries were also represented in the survey sample.

While there is not (to our knowledge) a way of benchmarking this sample against all Grafton businesses, organisations and other employers to establish how representative it is of the overall business community, it appears to represent a spread of businesses by type, age, size and location.

2.2: Support for an additional bridge crossing

Respondents were initially asked whether they felt there should be an additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton (see Question 7 of attached survey). All but one answered this in the affirmative:

Graph 2.2.1: Do you believe there should be an additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton?



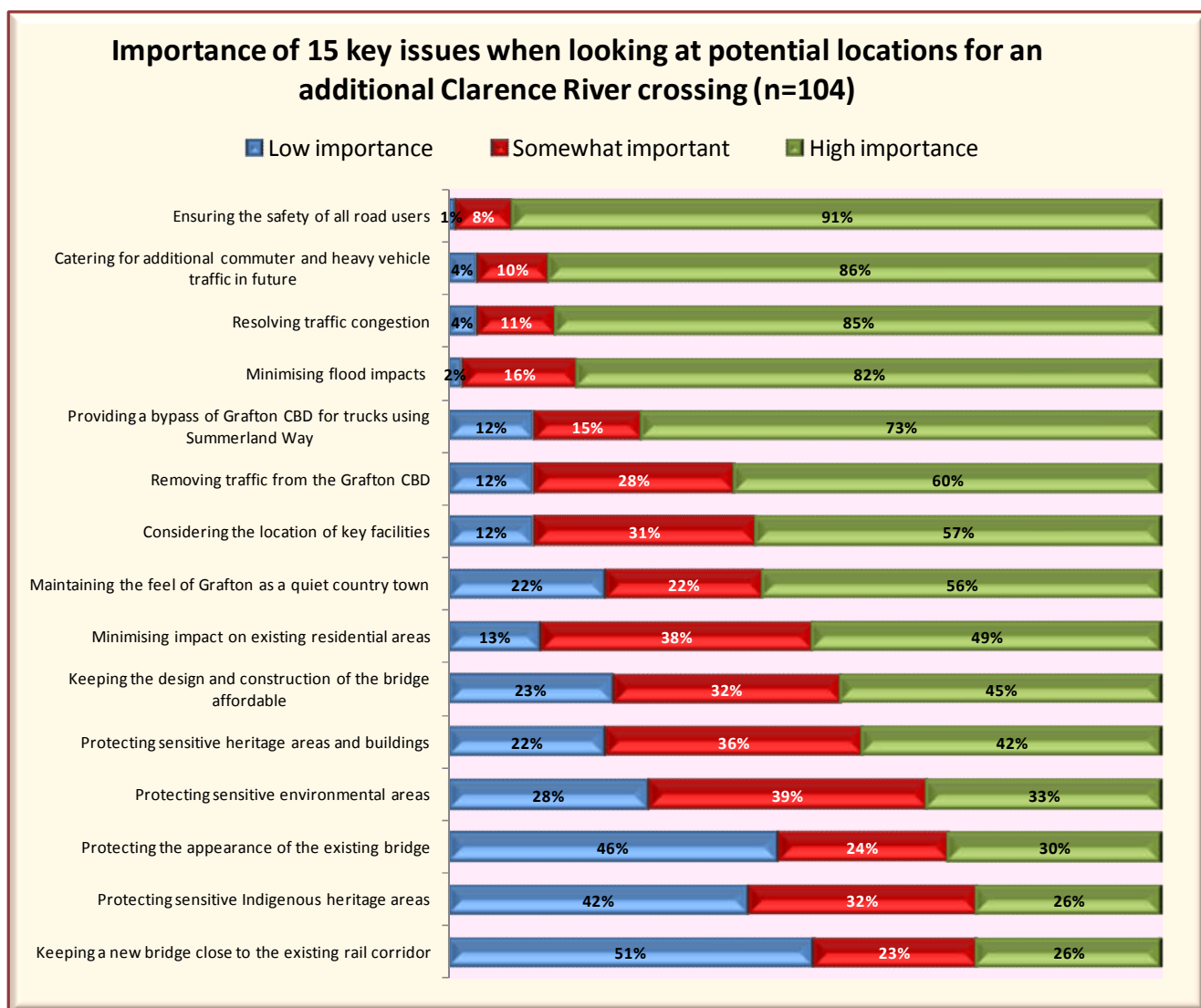
This indicates all-but unanimous support for an additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton among the survey respondents.

2.3: Issues relating to an additional crossing

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of 15 different issues relating to an additional crossing of the Clarence River, using a 10-point importance scale (where 1 = not at all important, and 10 = critical). These 15 issues, shown in the attached questionnaire as question 10, had been raised in prior RTA community consultation activities, including the community postal survey in late 2010/early 2011.

The results are shown in Graph 2.3.1: the proportion of respondents scoring an issue 1-4 is classed as “low importance”, with those scoring it 5-7 deemed “somewhat important” and those scoring it 8-10 rated as “high importance”.

Graph 2.3.1: Below are some issues that have arisen from previous community feedback. Please rate how important each of the following issues is to you on a scale of 1-10, where 1 is not at all important and 10 is critical



The results suggest that among business respondents, the top five issues of importance were: ensuring the safety of all road users (with 91 per cent scoring this as an 8 or more out of 10); catering for additional commuter and heavy vehicle traffic in future (86 per cent); resolving traffic congestion (85 per cent); minimising flood impacts (82 per cent); and providing a bypass of Grafton for trucks using the Summerland Way (73 per cent).

These results are also seen in Table 2.3.1, which indicates the mean (average) score for each statement, the standard deviation⁵, and the proportion scoring that issue as 10 out of 10.

Table 2.3.1: Summary of issues by mean, standard deviation and proportion scoring that issue as a “ten out of ten”

Issue	Mean	Standard Deviation	10/10
Ensuring the safety of all road users	9.21	1.38	62%
Resolving traffic congestion	8.85	1.77	54%
Catering for additional commuter and heavy vehicle traffic in future	8.75	1.91	50%
Minimising flood impacts	8.73	1.71	46%
Providing a bypass of Grafton CBD for trucks using Summerland Way	8.20	2.64	51%
Removing traffic from the Grafton CBD	7.58	2.57	31%
Considering the location of key facilities	7.42	2.14	18%
Minimising impact on existing residential areas	7.06	2.40	19%
Maintaining the feel of Grafton as a quiet country town	6.90	3.04	27%
Keeping the design and construction of the bridge affordable	6.38	2.81	18%
Protecting sensitive heritage areas and buildings	6.37	2.70	14%
Protecting sensitive environmental areas	5.94	2.77	12%
Protecting sensitive Indigenous heritage areas	5.10	2.90	8%
Protecting the appearance of the existing bridge	4.99	3.33	14%
Keeping a new bridge close to the existing rail corridor	4.60	3.22	10%

⁵ Standard deviation (SD) is a measure of variance. Hence the higher the SD, the greater the variation in results between different respondents.

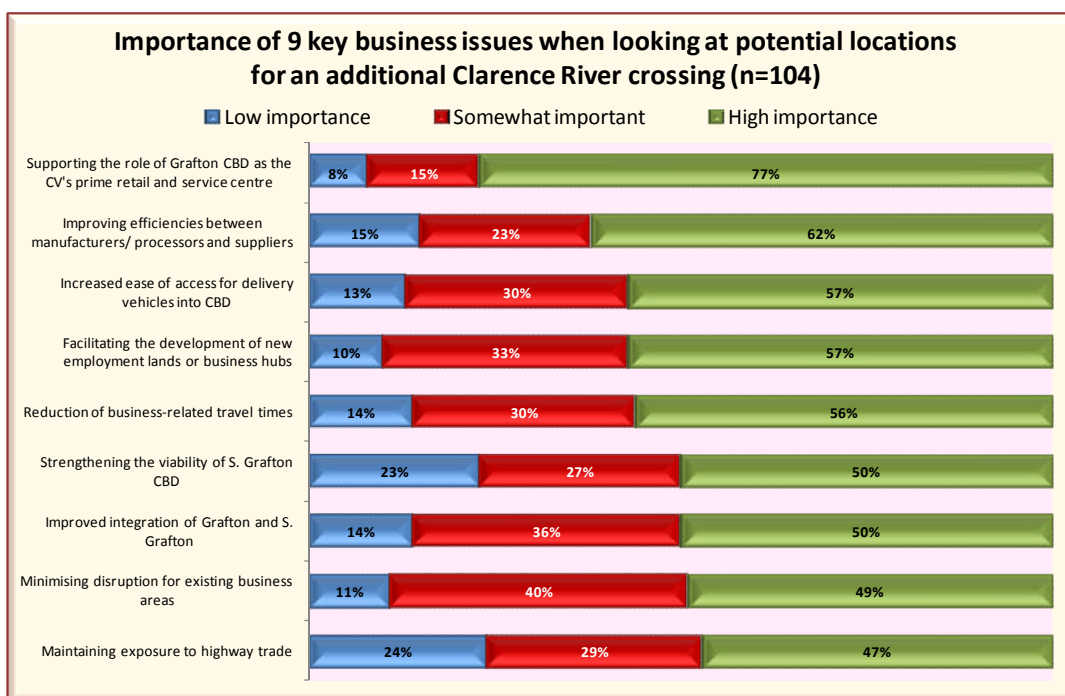
These results are very similar to those shown in Graph 2.3.1. “Ensuring the safety of all road users” remained the top-rated issue, with a mean score of 9.21 and 62 per cent of respondents scoring this as a ten. Next most important were “catering for additional commuter and heavy vehicle traffic in the future” (8.75 mean, 50 per cent) and “resolving traffic congestion currently being experienced” (8.85 mean, 54 per cent). Other issues with a mean of 8 or more were “minimising flood impacts” (8.73 mean, 46 per cent) and “providing a bypass of Grafton for trucks using the Summerland Way” (8.20 mean, 51 per cent)

At the lower end of the importance scale were “keeping a new bridge close to the existing rail corridor to minimise the overall impact of the project (4.60 mean, 10 per cent), “protecting the appearance of the existing bridge by not placing any new crossing too close to it” (4.99 mean, 14 per cent) “protecting sensitive Indigenous areas” (5.10 mean, 8 per cent), “protecting sensitive environmental areas” (5.94 mean, 12 per cent), and “protecting sensitive heritage areas and buildings” (6.37 mean, 14 per cent).

Of interest was the high standard deviation (i.e. variance) for four of the issues: “maintaining the feel of Grafton as a quiet country town”, “protecting sensitive Indigenous heritage areas”, “protecting the appearance of the existing bridge by not placing any new bridge too close to it” and “keeping a new bridge close to the existing rail corridor”. This indicates that some respondents felt far more strongly about these issues than others.

The survey then addressed more specific business issues (Question 11), using the same format as above. The results are shown in Graph 2.3.2: again the proportion of respondents scoring an issue 1-4 is classed as “low importance”, 5-7 as “somewhat important” and those scoring it 8-10 rated as “high importance”.

Graph 2.3.2: There are also a range of specific business issues to consider when looking at route options for an additional Clarence River crossing at Grafton. Please rate how important each issue is to your business on a scale of 1-10, where 1 is not at all important and 10 is critical.



The results indicate that “supporting the role of Grafton CBD as the Clarence Valley’s prime retail and service centre” was deemed the most important issue, with 77 per cent scoring this as an 8, 9 or 10 out of 10. This was followed by “improving efficiencies between manufacturers/processors and their suppliers” (62 per cent), “increased ease of access for delivery vehicles into the CBD”, and “facilitating the development of new employment lands or business hubs” (both 57 per cent).

These priorities are broadly replicated in Table 2.3.2, below, which shows the means, standard deviations and proportion of respondents scoring each statement as a “10/10”.

Table 2.3.2: Means, standard deviation, 10/10 analysis

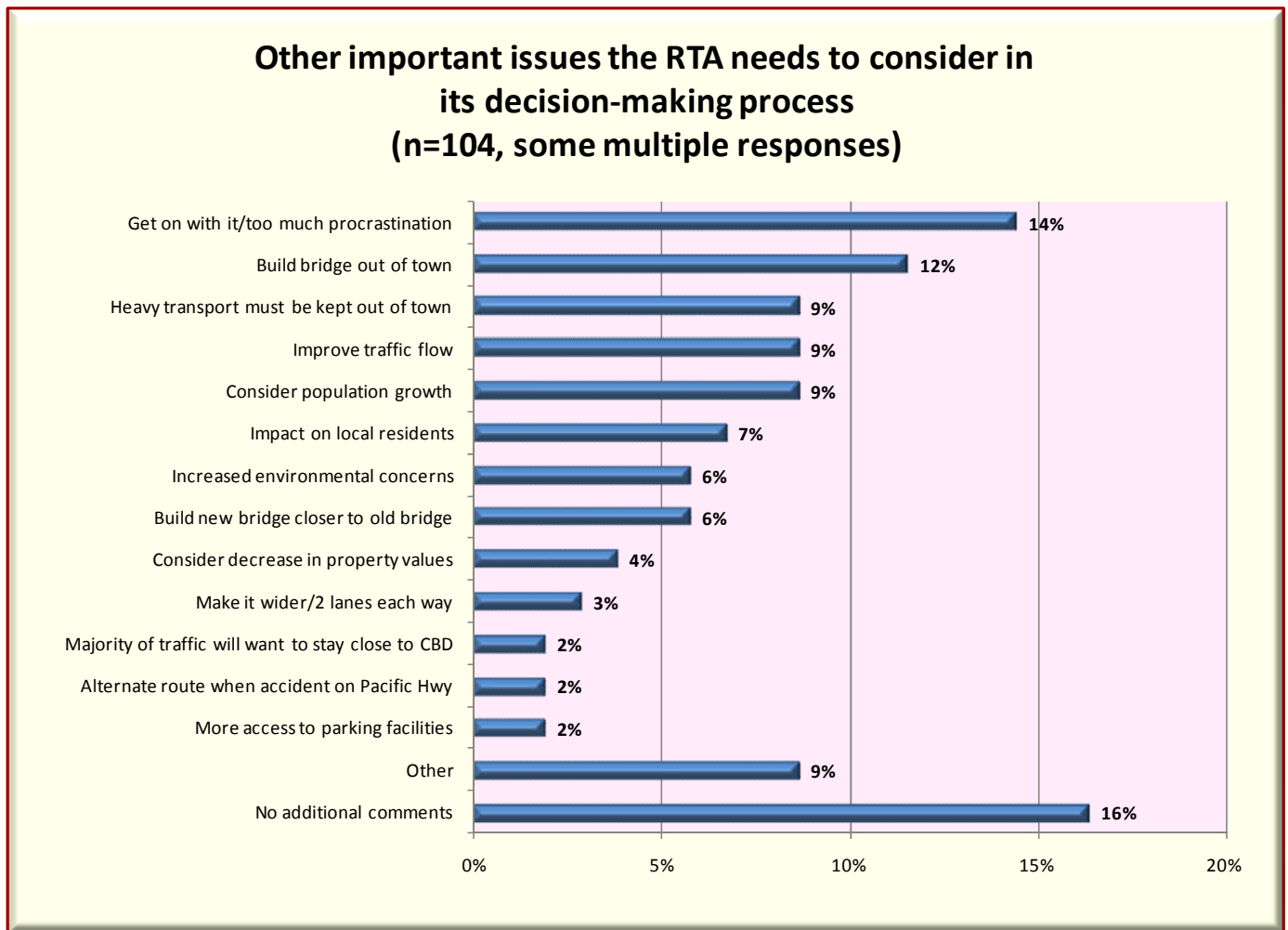
Issue	Mean	Standard Deviation	10/10
Supporting the role of Grafton CBD as the Clarence Valley's prime retail and service centre	8.09	2.26	31%
Facilitating the development of new employment lands or business hubs	7.58	2.34	24%
Improving efficiencies between manufacturers/processors and suppliers	7.36	2.51	22%
Minimising disruption for existing business areas	7.21	2.13	13%
Increased ease of access for delivery vehicles into CBD	7.16	2.27	13%
Reduction of business-related travel times	7.14	2.54	18%
Improved integration of Grafton and South Grafton	6.95	2.58	15%
Strengthening the viability of South Grafton CBD	6.59	2.64	12%
Maintaining exposure to highway trade	6.53	2.91	22%

This indicates that there was considerable consistency between the relative importance of business-related issues, with means for all statements in a tight range of 6.53 to 8.09 and little difference in standard deviations between the different statements.

This implies that all nine issues are of importance to Grafton and South Grafton-based businesses.

We also asked, in an open-ended question, (Question 12, Appendix A) whether there were any additional issues the respondents felt the RTA needed to consider in its decision-making process. These responses have been coded (i.e. themed) and the results shown in Graph 2.3.3, below:

Graph 2.3.3: Are there any other issues you feel the RTA needs to consider in its decision-making process for an additional crossing of the Clarence River?



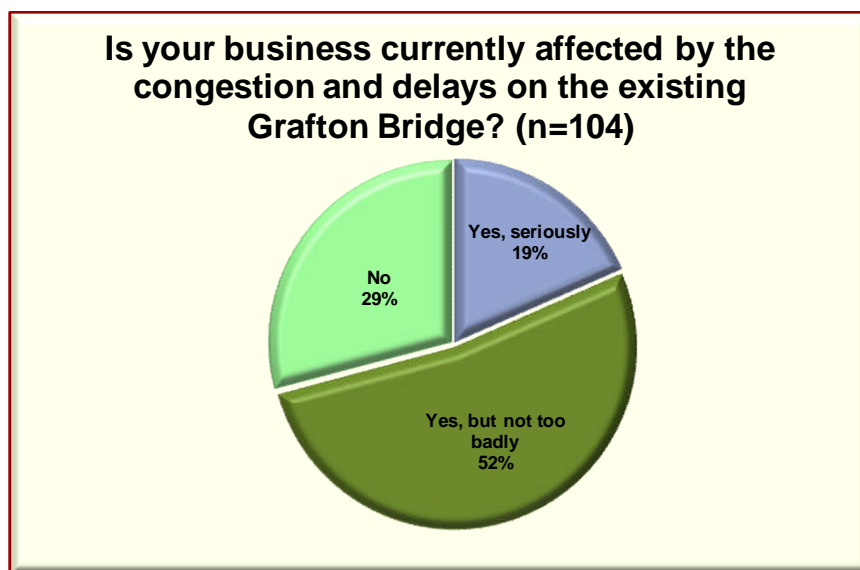
The two key comments made were a desire for the RTA to “just get on with it” (14 per cent of all respondents), and to build the bridge away from the existing Grafton CBD (12 per cent). Other popular themes included: keeping heavy vehicles out of the CBD, improving traffic flow and considering future population growth (at 9 per cent each); and considering the impact of a new crossing on local residents (7 per cent).

Contrary to the above views, 6 per cent of respondents commented that an additional crossing should be built near the existing bridge. (This question is explored further in section 2.6.)

2.4: Effects on business of current Grafton Bridge

At this point respondents were asked a series of questions about how the existing Grafton Bridge impacts their business. The first such question involved the effects of congestion (Question 13, Appendix A):

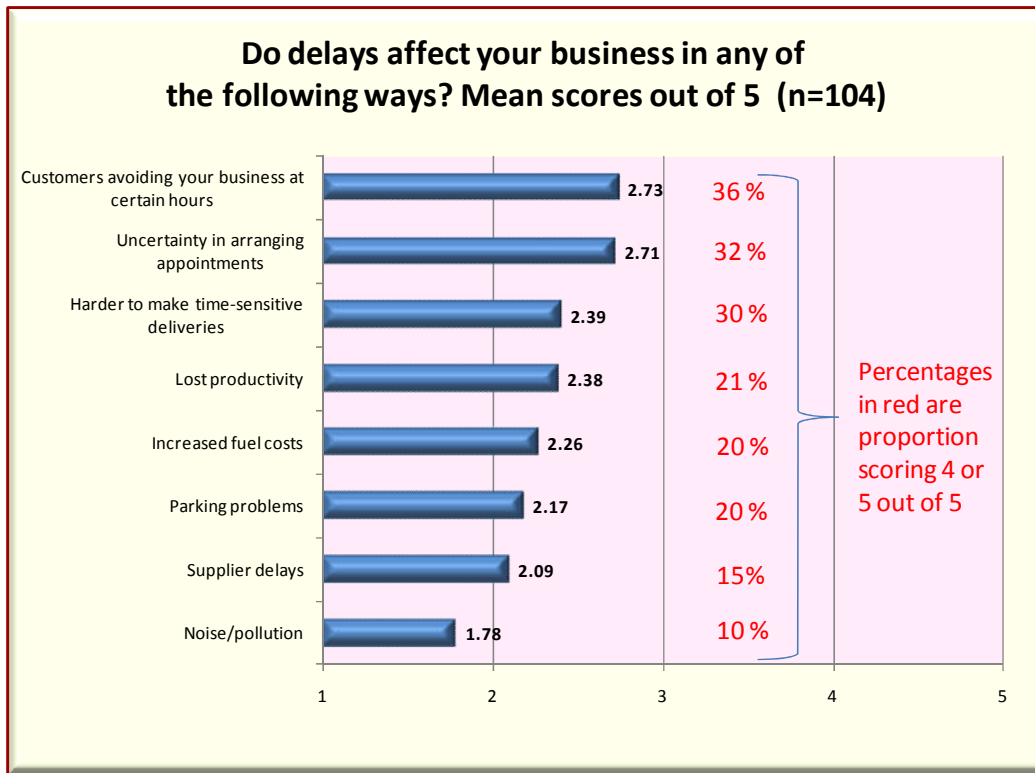
Graph 2.4.1: Is your business currently affected by the congestion and delays on the existing Grafton Bridge?



This suggested that almost one in five respondents (19 per cent) were seriously affected by the current congestion and delays, with a further 52 per cent of respondents partly affected. The balance (29 per cent) claimed not to be affected at all.

Respondents were then asked to rate how badly they were affected on eight different measures, using a 1-5 scale (where 1 = does not affect our business and 5 = major effect on your business). The mean scores are shown in Graph 2.4.2, below, along with the percentage of respondents scoring that measure as a 4 or 5 out of 5:

Graph 2.4.2: Do delays on the current bridge affect your business in any of the following ways?

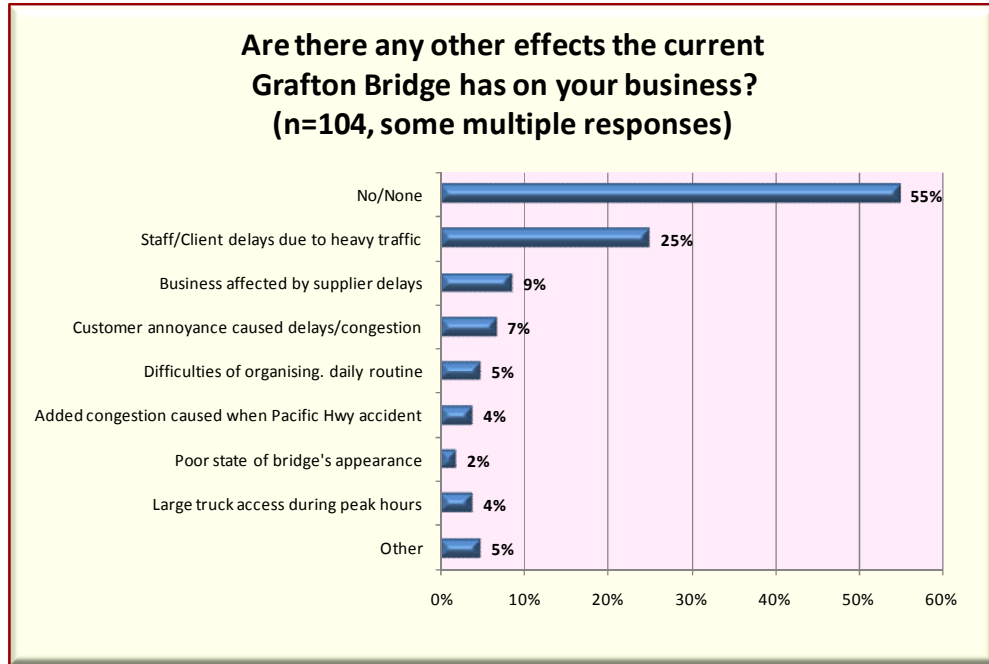


This shows that the most noted of the eight effects was customers avoiding respondents’ businesses at certain hours, with a mean of 2.73 (on the 5-point scale) and 36 per cent of those surveyed scoring this as a four or five (i.e. saying it had some or major effect). This was followed by “uncertainty in arranging appointments” (2.71 mean, 32 per cent) and “harder to make time-sensitive deliveries” (2.39 mean, 30 per cent).

However it should be noted that none of the eight effects registered a mean of three or more. This suggests that these issues are either (a) only affecting a minority of businesses; and/or (b) not considered of high priority by the business community as a whole.

In a follow-up (unprompted) question asking whether there were any other effects that the existing Grafton Bridge had on their businesses, the following (coded i.e. themed) responses were noted:

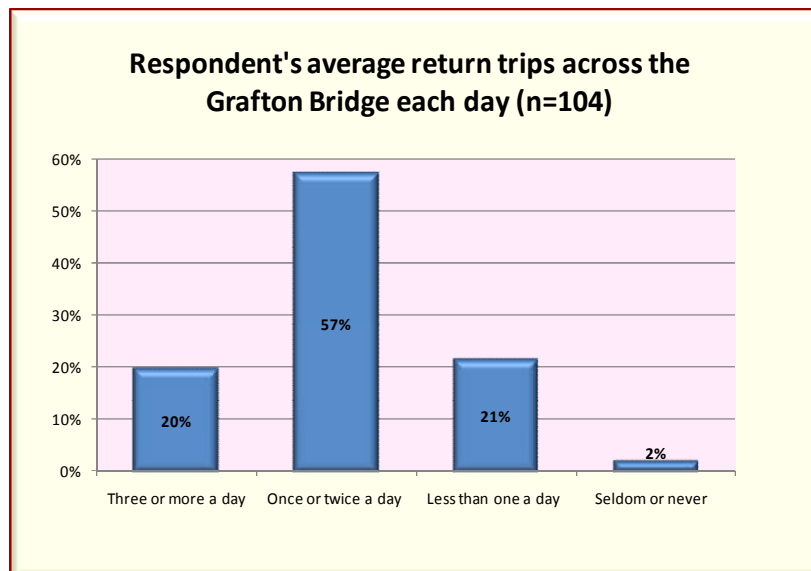
Graph 2.4.3: Are there any other effects the current Grafton Bridge has on your business?



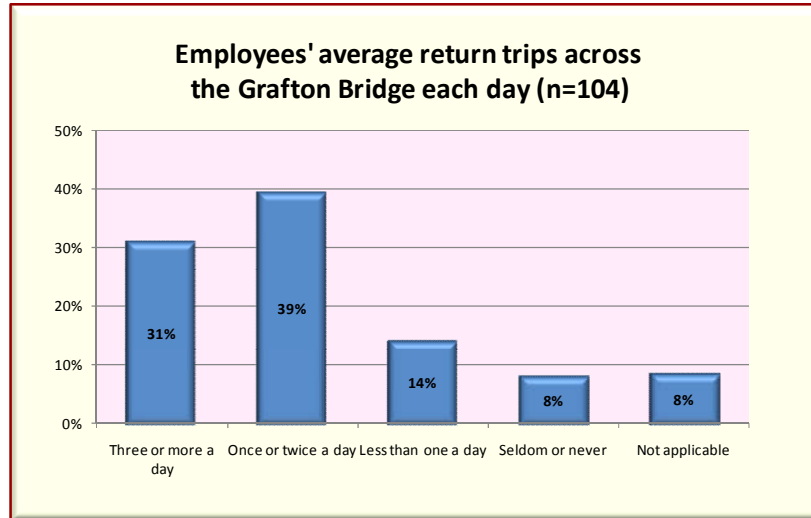
The major point raised was of staff or client delays due to heavy traffic, raised by a quarter of those surveyed. Other unprompted responses included: supplier delays, customer annoyance, difficulties in keeping to a daily routine, and the added congestion caused when the Pacific Highway is blocked.

Respondents were then asked how many return business trips they and their “on-the-road” employees (salespeople, couriers etc) would make across the Grafton Bridge on an average day (Questions 16):

Graph 2.4.4: Excluding travel to and from home, on average how many return trips would you make across the Grafton Bridge each day?



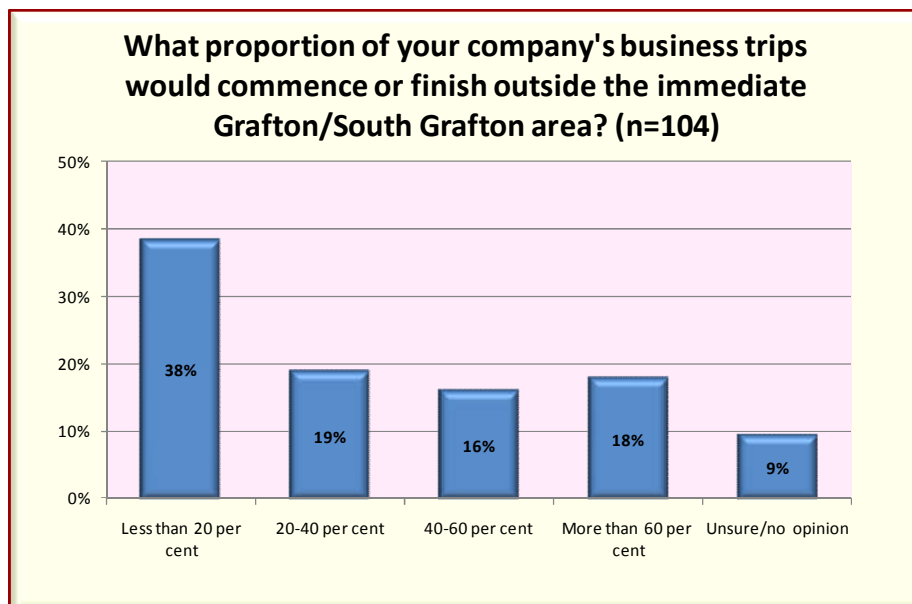
Graph 2.4.5: Excluding travel to and from home, on average how many return trips would those employees who travel as part of their business (salespeople, couriers etc) make across the Grafton Bridge each day?



Both Graphs 2.4.4 and 2.4.5 suggest high levels of business usage across the Grafton Bridge, with 20 per cent of respondents and 31 per cent of their employees (salespeople, couriers etc.) making three or more trips across the bridge on an average day (excluding travel to or from home).

This led to a question asking what proportion of those business trips would commence or end outside the immediate Grafton/South Grafton area. These results are shown in Graph 2.4.6, below:

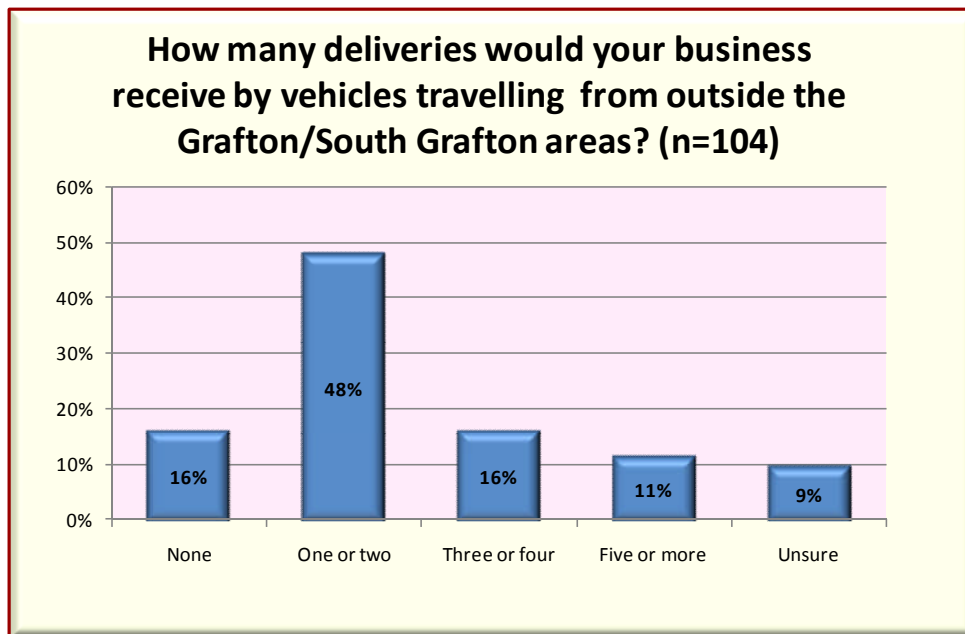
Graph 2.4.6: Approximately what proportion of your company or organisation's business trips (again excluding trips to and from home) would commence or finish outside the immediate Grafton/South Grafton area?



This suggests that while the bulk of business trips begin and end in the Grafton and/or South Grafton areas, there is also considerable business travel occurring to or from outside the region.

The final graph in this section shows the extent of business deliveries arriving from outside the Grafton/South Grafton regions:

Graph 2.4.7: On a typical day, how many deliveries would your business receive by vehicles travelling from outside the Grafton or South Grafton areas?

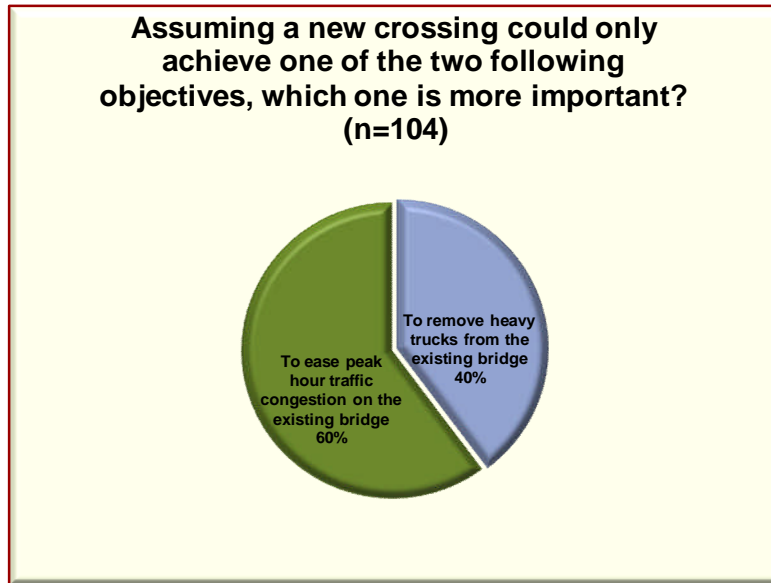


Three-quarters of respondents claimed their business receives, on average, at least one delivery from outside the Grafton/South Grafton area each working day. This suggests that while the majority of traffic is probably contained within the Grafton/South Grafton area, there are also substantial amounts of business-related trips originating outside the region.

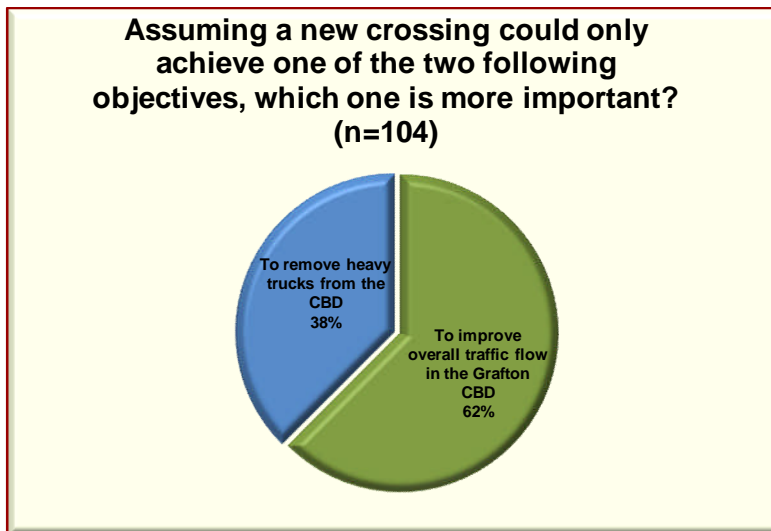
2.5: Competing objectives

Respondents were then asked four hypothetical questions to establish which they felt were the most important outcomes for an additional crossing. Each question was framed as: “**Assuming a new crossing could only achieve one of the following two objectives, which would you see as the more important?**” (These equate to questions 20-23 in the attached survey.)

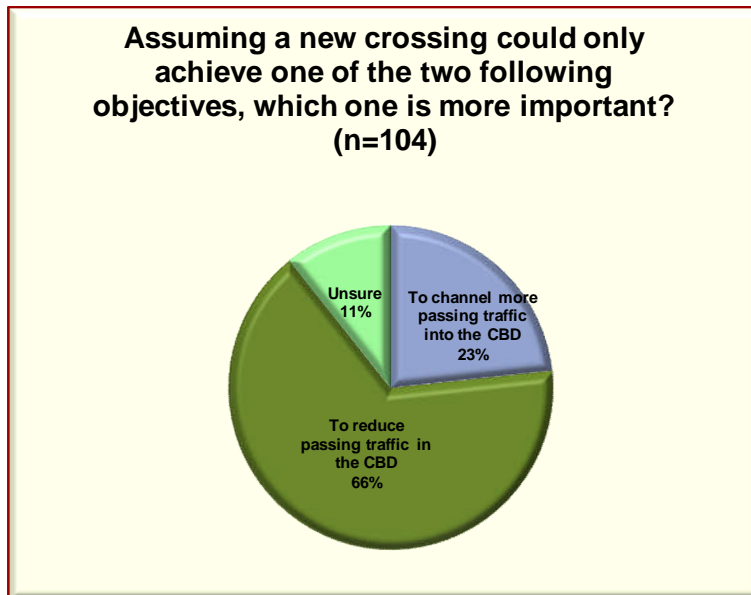
Graph 2.5.1: Removing heavy trucks or easing peak hour traffic congestion



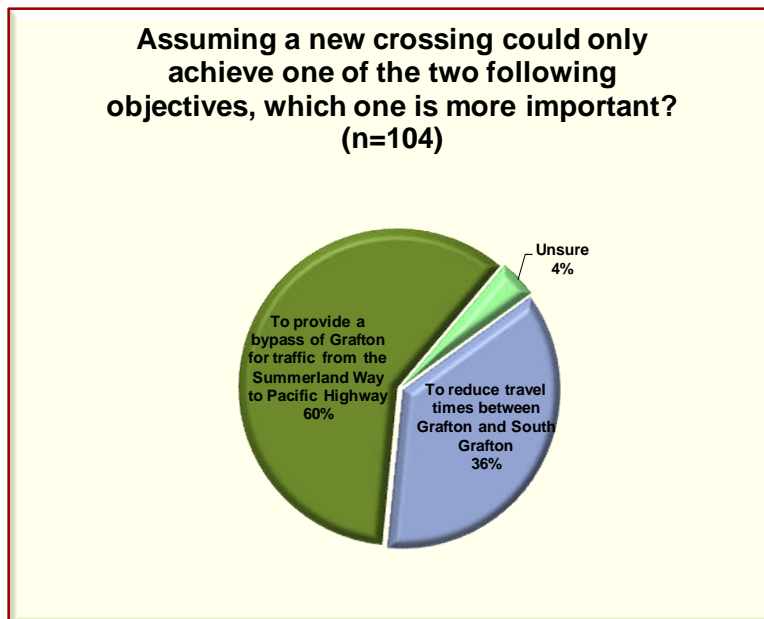
Graph 2.5.2: Improving overall traffic flow in the Grafton CBD or removing heavy vehicles from the Grafton CBD



Graph 2.5.3: Channeling more passing traffic into the Grafton CBD or reducing passing traffic in the CBD



Graph 2.5.4: Reducing travel times between Grafton and South Grafton, or providing a bypass of Grafton for traffic from the Summerland Way to Pacific Highway (and vice versa)



Collectively, the responses to these four questions indicate that the majority of businesses prioritise:

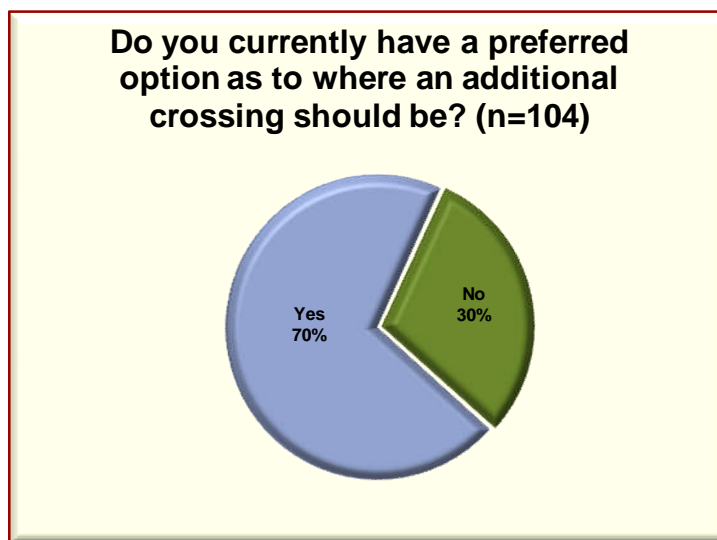
- Easing peak hour congestion on the existing bridge over removing heavy trucks from the existing bridge;
- Improving overall traffic flow in the Grafton CBD over removing heavy trucks from the CBD;
- Reducing passing traffic in the CBD over channeling more passing traffic into the CBD; and
- Providing a bypass of Grafton for traffic from the Summerland Way to the Pacific Highway over reducing travel times between Grafton and South Grafton.

While the results of each question are hopefully self-explanatory, the combination of some responses may be perceived as somewhat contradictory. In particular Graph 2.5.1 - which indicates that easing peak hour congestion is deemed more important than removing heavy vehicles from the existing bridge - appears at odds with Graph 2.5.4, which suggests that providing a bypass of Grafton for traffic from the Summerland Way to the Pacific Highway is more important than reducing travel times between Grafton and South Grafton (noting that this question does not relate specifically to trucks, but also includes other transiting traffic).

2.6: Preferred location

At this point respondents were asked whether they had a preferred option as to where an additional crossing should be located and, if so, what that preference was. Those who did have a preference could note that either by: (a) identifying one of five corridors suggested by the RTA; (b) nominating one of the 13 options from the RTA’s 2010 community update; or (c) describing a route in their own words.

Graph 2.6.1: Do you currently have a preferred option as to where an additional crossing should be?



Thirty per cent of respondents did not currently have a preferred location for an additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton.

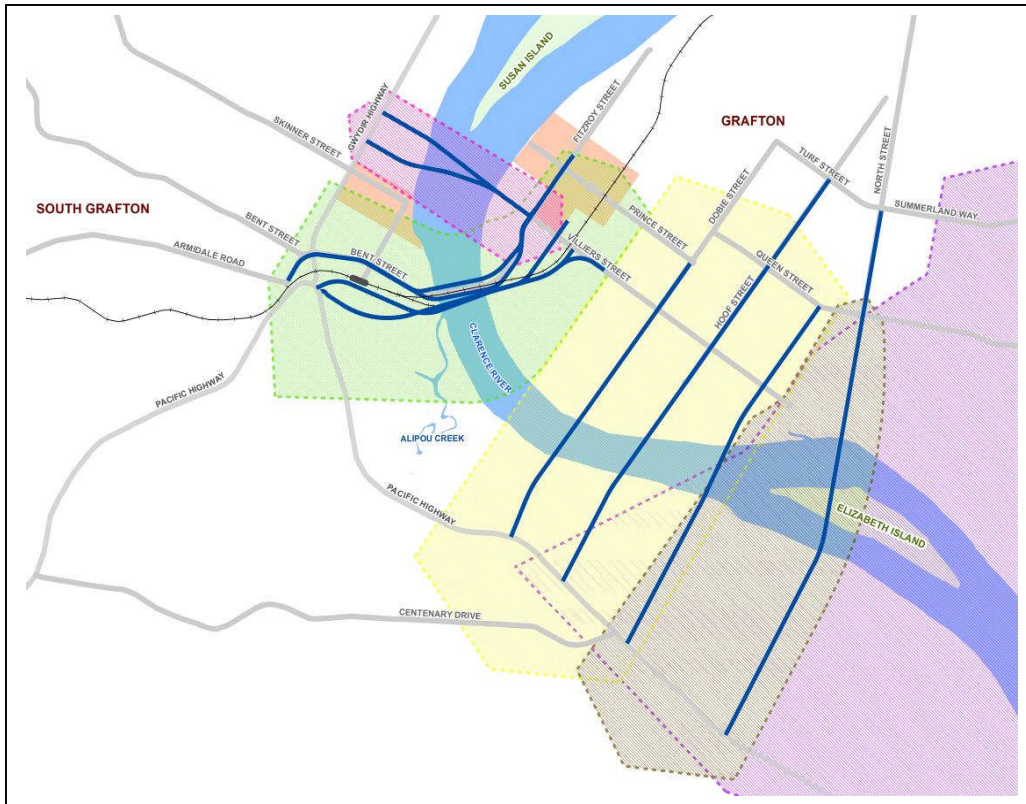
Those respondents who did have a preferred location were then asked to describe that preferred location, in one of three ways:

- One of the 13 options (A-M) from the RTA’s December 2010 community update (see Appendix 3);
- Ticking one of five potential route corridors (see below); or
- Describing their preferred route in “other”.

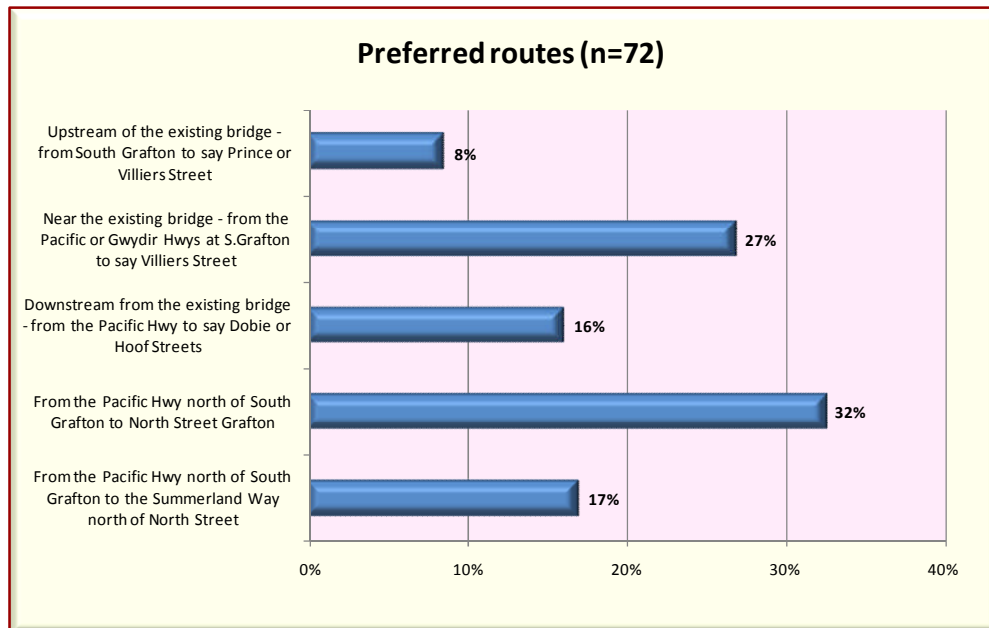
Below are the five corridors provided by the RTA and nominated in the survey, and their equivalent options from the December 2010 RTA community update:

Corridor	Equivalent options from 2010 update
Upstream of the existing bridge - from the Gwydir Hwy at South Grafton to say Prince or Villiers St	E & F
Near the existing bridge - from the Pacific or Gwydir Hwys at South Grafton to say Villiers St	A, B, C,D, G, H, I
Downstream from the existing bridge - from the Pacific Hwy to say Dobie or Hoof Sts	J, K, L
From the Pacific Hwy north of South Grafton to North St Grafton	M
From the Pacific Hwy north of South Grafton to the Summerland Way north of North St	None of above

Figure 2.6.1: Visual representation of five corridors



Graph 2.6.2: Preferred option for an additional crossing



(N.B. Graph 2.6.2 excludes one "unsure")

Of those who did have a preference, two corridors dominated. The first was from the Pacific Highway north of South Grafton to North Street (32 per cent), with the second near the existing bridge (27 per cent). The Summerland Way corridor north of North Street was the third preference at 17 per cent, just ahead of the Dobie or Hoof Street corridor at 16 per cent.

Table 2.6.2: Comparison of preferred route by whether that respondent sought to channel more or less traffic into the Grafton CBD

Preferred Corridor	Assuming a new crossing could only achieve one of the two following objectives, which would you see as the more important?			Total
	To channel more passing traffic into the CBD	To reduce passing traffic in the CBD	Unsure	
Upstream of the existing bridge - from South Grafton to say Prince or Villiers Street	2 15.4%	4 7.7%	0 0.0%	6 8.3%
Near the existing bridge - from the Pacific or Gwydir Hwys at S.Grafton to say Villiers Street	9 69.2%	7 13.5%	3 42.9%	19 26.4%
Downstream from the existing bridge - from the Pacific Hwy to say Dobie or Hoof Streets	1 7.7%	9 17.3%	1 14.3%	11 15.3%
From the Pacific Hwy north of South Grafton to North Street Grafton	1 7.7%	20 38.5%	2 28.6%	23 31.9%
From the Pacific Hwy north of South Grafton to the Summerland Way north of North Street	0 0.0%	12 23.1%	0 0.0%	12 16.7%
Unsure/No preference	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 14.3%	1 1.4%
Total	13 100.0%	52 100.0%	7 100.0%	72 100.0%

Of those wanting a new crossing to channel traffic into the CBD (see Graph 2.5.3), 85 per cent opted for the two upstream corridors⁶. This was significantly different to those wanting a new bridge to reduce traffic in the CBD, with 62 per cent of these respondents opting for the two furthest downstream corridors⁷.

Results for this question should be carefully considered given the small sample size of 72 respondents.

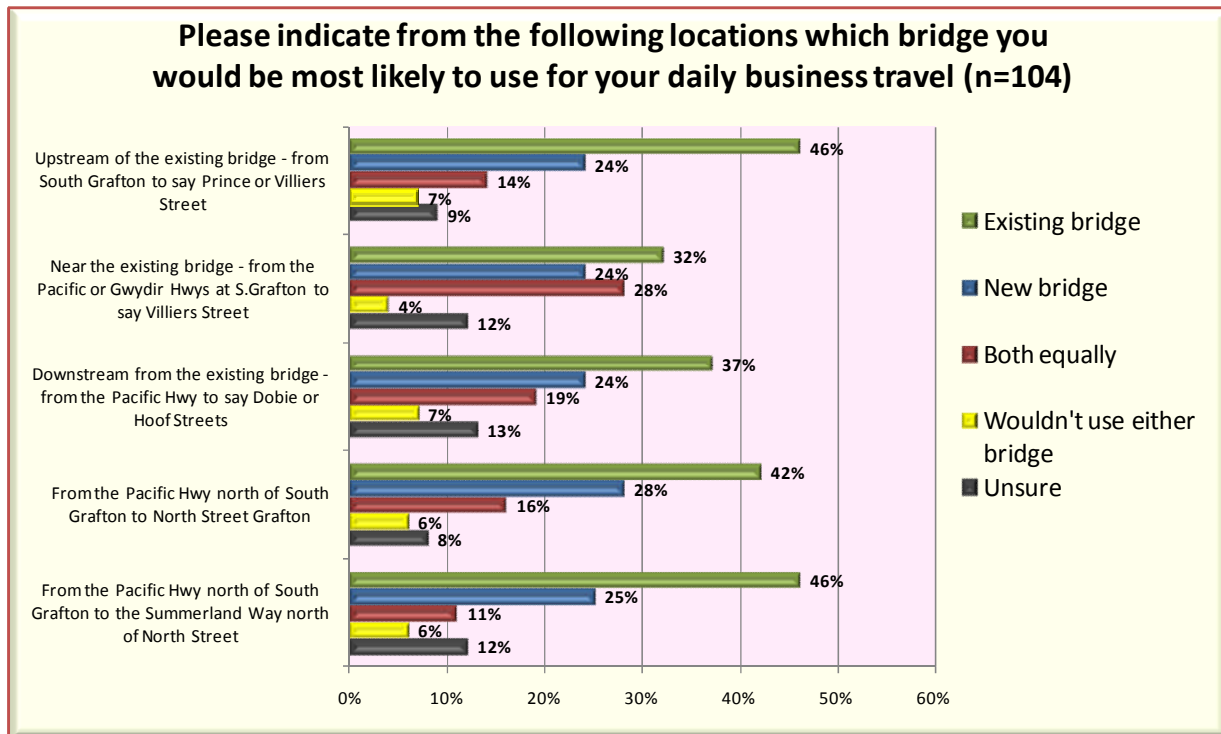
⁶ i.e. Total of two furthest upstream corridors, as shown in red circle.

⁷ i.e. Total of two furthest downstream corridors, as shown in blue circle.

2.7: Likely usage and effects of a new bridge

After noting their preferred option for an additional crossing, respondents were asked which bridge they would be most likely to use for their day-to-day business travel, and the overall affect each bridge option might have on their business. (See questions 26 and 27 in the attached survey.)

Graph 2.7.1: Please indicate which bridge you would be most likely to use for your day-to-day business travel



Graph 2.7.1 suggests that the existing Grafton Bridge would continue to carry the bulk of business traffic in four of the five nominated corridors. The exception is “near the existing bridge – from the Pacific or Gwydir Highways at South Grafton to say Villiers Street”, where it appears business-related traffic would be shared approximately equally between the two bridges.

Predominant use of any new crossing was consistent between the five routes (i.e. varying only from 24 to 28 per cent).

This was followed by the “overall effect” question:

Graph 2.7.2: If an additional bridge was to be built within the following corridors, what overall effect would this have on your business?

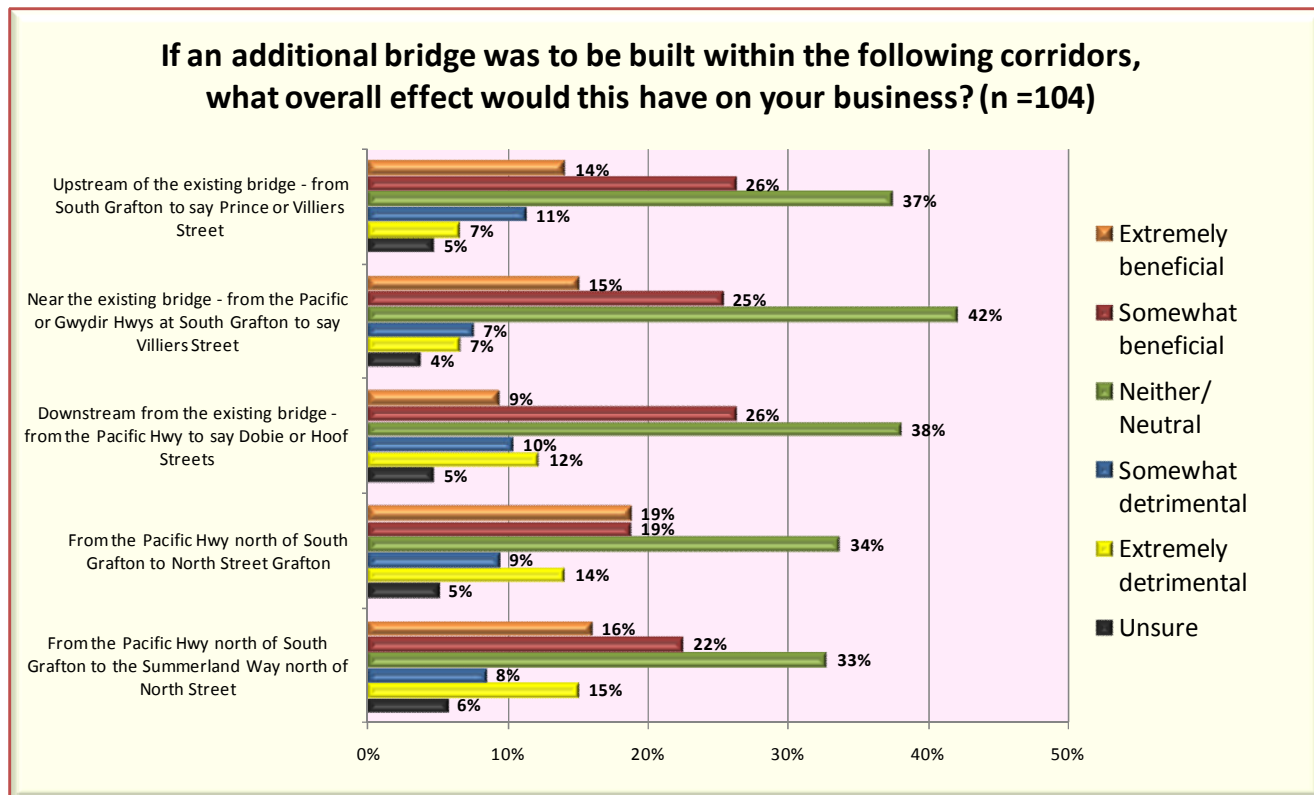


Table 2.7.1: Summary of beneficial vs. detrimental

Corridor	Beneficial	Detrimental
Upstream of the existing bridge - from South Grafton to say Prince or Villiers Street	40%	18%
Near the existing bridge - from the Pacific or Gwydir Hwys at South Grafton to say Villiers Street	40%	14%
Downstream from the existing bridge - from the Pacific Hwy to say Dobie or Hoof Streets	35%	22%
From the Pacific Hwy north of South Grafton to North Street Grafton	38%	23%
From the Pacific Hwy north of South Grafton to the Summerland Way north of North Street	38%	23%

As shown in Graph 2.7.2, and the summary Table 2.7.1, all five corridors received a higher proportion of respondents saying it would be beneficial to their business than those believing it would be detrimental.

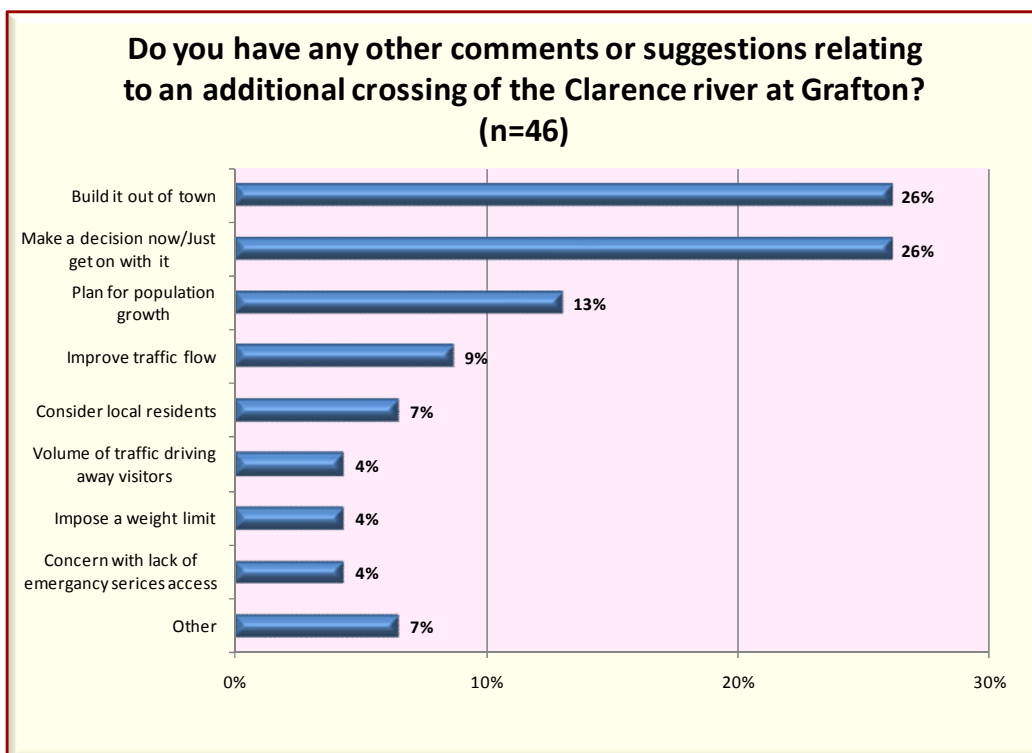
However, the proportion of businesses believing that a particular corridor would be “extremely detrimental” to their business varies from 19% for the corridor from the Pacific Highway north of South Grafton to North Street to 9% for the corridor downstream of the existing bridge.

Overall, the proportions of beneficial vs. detrimental are extremely consistent across all five routes (Table 2.7.1). While these figures would be derived from different combinations of respondents in each case, the results appear to indicate that any of the proposed corridors would deliver perceived net benefits to the Grafton and South Grafton business communities.

2.8: Comments and suggestions

The survey concluded by asking respondents an unprompted question, if they had any other comments or suggestions relating to an additional crossing of the Clarence River- see question 28 of survey.

Graph 2.8.1: Do you have any other comments or suggestions relating to an additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton?



Just under half the sample (46 in all) took the opportunity to offer comment. Of these, the key wishes were (a) to see an additional crossing built away from the Grafton CBD; and (b) to see a decision made and construction begin. Other themes are listed in Graph 2.8.1 and include the needs to plan for population growth, improve traffic flow, and consider local residents.

Appendix 1: Online Business Survey Questionnaire

Version 1 Grafton_online

FINAL VERSION

Q1. Dear Business owner or Manager,

As you may be aware, an RTA project team is currently investigating options for an additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton. As an important part of the ongoing community consultation to explore the various and sometimes competing issues surrounding an additional crossing, we are keen to canvass the views of the Grafton and South Grafton business communities.

The attached survey is confidential, and should take no longer than 10-12 minutes to complete. It is being conducted by an independent research company, Jetty Research, and no individual results will be seen by the project team or RTA.

The deadline for survey completion is 10pm on Tuesday, May 3rd. Please note that only one survey should be completed per company. To commence the survey, click NEXT.

Q2. Do you own or manage a business in the Grafton or South Grafton areas, or are you a member of the Grafton Chamber of Commerce and Industry?

Yes 1

No 2

Do not answer If Attribute "Yes" from Q2 is SELECTED

Q2

Q3. I'm sorry, but you must own or manage a business in the Grafton or South Grafton areas, or be a member of the Grafton Chamber of Commerce and Industry to participate in this survey. However thank you for your interest.

End

Q4. Are you a member of the RTA project team for the additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton, a member of parliament, a Clarence Valley Councillor or a member of Council's executive?

Yes 1

No 2

Do not answer If Attribute "No" from Q4 is SELECTED

Q4

Q5. I'm sorry but none of these are eligible to participate in this survey. Thank you for your time.

End

Q6. This survey forms one part of a larger and ongoing community consultation process. No decision has yet been taken on a preferred location for an additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton, and it will be some time before any such decision is taken. However this survey is an important part of the consultation process, and your feedback is greatly appreciated.

Q7. Firstly, do you believe there should be an additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton?

Yes	1	Go to Q10
No	2	

Q7

Q8. Does that mean you don't think there should be any additional crossing, or that it should be located well away from Grafton?

Don't think there should be an additional crossing	1	Go to Q10
Don't think the additional crossing should be at Grafton	2	

Q8

Q9. And where do you think that additional crossing should be located?

Q9

Q10. There are a range of different issues to consider when looking at potential locations for an additional Clarence River crossing at Grafton. Below are some issues that have arisen from previous community feedback and others which may be of specific interest to businesses. Firstly please rate how important each of the following issues is to you on a scale of 1-10, where 1 is not at all important and 10 is critical.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	No criti cal opin ion
Resolving traffic congestion currently being experienced; in particular around peak periods i.e. 8-9am and 3-6pm	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Q10_1
Minimising impact on existing residential areas (noise etc)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Q10_2
Removing traffic from the Grafton CBD to improve traffic flow	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Q10_3
Considering the location of key facilities including schools, hospitals, nursing homes and TAFE colleges	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Q10_4
Catering for additional commuter and heavy vehicle traffic in the future	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Q10_5
Providing a bypass of Grafton CBD for trucks using the Summerland Way	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Q10_6
Protecting the appearance of the existing bridge by not placing any new crossing too close to it	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Q10_7
Keeping a new bridge close to the existing rail corridor to minimise the overall impact of the project	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Q10_8
Protecting sensitive Indigenous heritage areas	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Q10_9
Protecting sensitive environmental areas	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Q10_10
Protecting sensitive heritage areas and buildings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Q10_11
Minimising flood impacts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Q10_12
Ensuring the safety of all road users	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Q10_13
Maintaining the feel of Grafton as a quiet country town	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Q10_14
Keeping the design and construction of the bridge affordable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Q10_15

Q11. There are also a range of specific business issues to consider when looking at route options for an additional Clarence River crossing at Grafton. Please rate how important each issue is to your business on a scale of 1-10, where 1 is not at all important and 10 is critical. There is also a button (far right) if you have no opinion on any particular issue.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	no criti cal opin ion	
Improved integration of Grafton and South Grafton	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Q11_1
Maintaining exposure to highway trade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Q11_2
Strengthening the viability of South Grafton CBD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Q11_3
Facilitating the development of new employment lands or business hubs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Q11_4
Minimising disruption (noise, pollution etc) for existing business areas	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Q11_5
Increased ease of access for delivery vehicles into the city centre	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Q11_6
Reduction of business-related travel times	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Q11_7
Supporting the role of Grafton CBD as the Clarence Valley's prime retail and service centre	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Q11_8
Improving efficiencies between manufactures/processors and their suppliers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Q11_9

Q12. Are there any other important issues you feel the RTA needs to consider in its decision-making process for an additional crossing of the Clarence River?

Q12

Q13. Is your business currently affected by congestion and delays on the existing Grafton Bridge?

Yes, seriously	1
Yes, but not too badly	2
No	3
Unsure	666

Q13

Q14. Do delays on the current bridge affect your business in any of the following ways? (please choose 1-5, where 1=does not affect your business, and 5= major affect on your business)

	1 - Does not affect our business	2	3	4	5 - Major affect on our business
Lost productivity	1	2	3	4	5
Uncertainty in arranging appointments	1	2	3	4	5
Customers avoiding your business at certain hours	1	2	3	4	5
Parking problems	1	2	3	4	5
Supplier delays	1	2	3	4	5
Increased fuel costs	1	2	3	4	5
Harder to make time-sensitive deliveries	1	2	3	4	5
Noise/pollution	1	2	3	4	5

Q14_1

Q14_2

Q14_3

Q14_4

Q14_5

Q14_6

Q14_7

Q14_8

Q15. Are there any other effects the current Grafton Bridge has on your business?

Q15

Q16. Excluding travel to and from home, on average how many return trips would you make across the Grafton Bridge each day?

Three or more a day	1
Once or twice a day	2
Less than one a day	3
Seldom or never	4

Q16

Q17. And excluding travel to and from home, on average how many return trips would those employees who travel as a part of their business (salespeople, couriers etc.) make across the Grafton Bridge each day?

Three or more a day	1
Once or twice a day	2
Less than one a day	3
Seldom or never	4
Not applicable	555

Q17

Q18. Approximately what proportion of your company or organisation's business trips (again excluding trips to and from home) would commence or finish outside the immediate Grafton/South Grafton area?

Less than 20 per cent	1
20-40 per cent	2
40-60 per cent	3
More than 60 per cent	4
Unsure/no opinion	5

Q18

Q19. On a typical day, approximately how many deliveries would your business receive by vehicles travelling from OUTSIDE the Grafton or South Grafton areas?

None	1
One or two	2
Three or four	3
Five or more	4
Unsure	666

Q19

Q20. Assuming a new crossing could only achieve one of the two following objectives, which would you see as the more important?

To remove heavy trucks from the existing bridge	1
To ease peak hour traffic congestion on the existing bridge	2
Unsure	666

Q20

Q21. Assuming a new crossing could only achieve one of the two following objectives, which would you see as the more important?

To improve overall traffic flow in the Grafton CBD	1
To remove heavy trucks from the CBD	2
Unsure	666

Q21

Q22. Assuming a new crossing could only achieve one of the two following objectives, which would you see as the more important?

To channel more passing traffic into the CBD	1
To reduce passing traffic in the CBD	2
Unsure	666

Q22

Q23. Assuming a new crossing could only achieve one of the two following objectives, which would you see as the more important?

To reduce travel times between Grafton and South Grafton (and vice versa)	1
To provide a bypass of Grafton for traffic from the Summerland Way to Pacific Hwy (and vice versa), including heavy vehicles	2
Unsure	666

Q23

Q24. Do you currently have a preferred option as to where an additional crossing should be?

Yes	1
No	2

Go to Q26

Q24

Q25. Please choose from the following options. You can indicate a preferred option by: - Identifying one of the five corridor options below; or - Identifying options A-M from the RTA's December 2010 update in "other"; or - Describing in your own words in "other".

Upstream of the existing bridge - from the Gwydir Hwy at South Grafton to say Prince or Villiers St	1
Near the existing bridge - from the Pacific or Gwydir Hwys at South Grafton to say Villiers St	2
Downstream from the existing bridge - from the Pacific Hwy to say Dobie or Hoof Sts	3
From the Pacific Hwy north of South Grafton to North St Grafton	4
From the Pacific Hwy north of South Grafton to the Summerland Way north of North St	5
Unsure/No preference	14

Q25

Q26. The following are a number of possible locations for a new bridge. Please indicate which bridge you would be most likely to use for your day-to-day business travel.

	Existing bridge	New bridge	Both equally	Unsure	Wouldn't use either bridge
Upstream of the existing bridge from the Gwydir Highway at South Grafton to say Prince or Villiers St	1	2	3	666	5
Near the existing bridge from the Pacific or Gwydir Highways South Grafton to say Villiers Street	1	2	3	666	5
Downstream of the existing bridge from the Pacific Highway to say Dobie or Hoof Street	1	2	3	666	5
From the Pacific Highway north of South Grafton to North Street Grafton	1	2	3	666	5
From the Pacific Highway north of South Grafton to the Summerland Way north of North Street	1	2	3	666	5

Q26_1

Q26_2

Q26_3

Q26_4

Q26_5

Q27. If an additional bridge was to be built within the following corridors, what overall effect would this have on your business?

	Extremel y benefici al	Somewh at benefici al	Neither/ Neutral	Somewh at detrimen tal	Extremel y detrimen tal	Unsure
Upstream of the existing bridge - from the Gwydir Hwy at South Grafton to say Prince or Villiers Sts	1	2	3	4	5	666
Near the existing bridge - from the Pacific or Gwydir Hwys at South Grafton to say Villiers St	1	2	3	4	5	666
Downstream from the existing bridge - from the Pacific Hwy to say Dobie or Hoof Sts	1	2	3	4	5	666
From the Pacific Hwy north of South Grafton to North St Grafton	1	2	3	4	5	666
From the Pacific Hwy north of South Grafton to the Summerland Way north of North St	1	2	3	4	5	666

Q27_1

Q27_2

Q27_3

Q27_4

Q27_5

Q28. Do you have any other comments or suggestions relating to an additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton?

Q28

Q29. We also just have a few demographic questions. What is your gender please?

Male	1
Female	2
Declined	3

Q29

Q30. How long has your business been located at its current address?

Less than 2 years	1
2 - 5 years	2
5-10 years	3
11-20 years	4
More than 20 years	5
Unsure/Declined	6

Q30

Q31. In what part of Grafton or South Grafton is your business located? (If various, please nominate Grafton/South Grafton HQ)

Grafton CBD	1
Grafton north of CBD	2
Grafton west of CBD	3
Grafton east of CBD	4
South Grafton upstream of existing bridge	5
South Grafton downstream of existing bridge	6
Declined	7

Q31

Q32. Including yourself, how many employees (full-time equivalent) are employed in your company in the Grafton/South Grafton areas?

One	1
2-5	2
6-10	3
11-20	4
21-50	5
More than 50	6
Declined	7

Q32

Q33. Is your business home-based?

Yes	1
No	2

Q33

Q34. Which of the following industries most closely describes your business:

Retail	1
Hospitality	2
Manufacturing	3
Transport/wholesale	4
Agriculture/Forestry	5
Professional services	6
Automotive	7
Construction and Trades	8
Government services	9
Educational services (private)	10
Health services (private)	11
Declined	777

Q34

*Q35. Please include your name, position and company, along with (optional) a daytime contact number.

Please note this information is purely required to protect the integrity of the survey. Neither the RTA project team nor the Chamber will see any individual results, and identifying information will be separated from data prior to it being analysed by Jetty Research. Where multiple responses are received from the same company, Jetty Research reserves the right to analyse only one survey from that company, from what it deems the most senior Grafton or South Grafton-based employee. Unidentified surveys will not be analysed.

Your name	1	
Your position	2	
Your company	3	
(Optional) Daytime contact no:	4	

Q35_1_1
Q35_1_2
Q35_1_3
Q35_1_4

Q36. Would you like to be added to the RTA's contact data base for the Grafton Bridge project?

For privacy details go to <http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/aboutus/privacy/index.html?hlid=privacy>

Yes	1	
No	2	Go to Q39

Q36

Q37. In order to join the RTA's Grafton Bridge contact list, please supply your email address.

Q37

Q38. You are one click away from completing this survey. Thank you so much for your participation - the RTA greatly appreciates your feedback. A summary of results will be supplied to Chamber of Commerce and Industry members, and published on the RTA's Grafton Bridge homepage (rta.nsw.gov.au/Graftonbridge) Please click on the SUBMIT button below to complete this survey.

Appendix 2: newspaper advertisement



Transport
Roads & Traffic
Authority

Participate in the business survey for an additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton

The RTA is conducting a survey of businesses in the local area to help gauge their views regarding the additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton.

This is an online survey distributed by the Grafton Chamber of Commerce and Industry through their database of members.

The survey closes at **10pm, Tuesday 3 May 2011.**

Businesses not on the Chamber's database who wish to participate are invited to contact the project team before the closing date.

To obtain a copy of the survey please contact the RTA's project team on 1800 633 332 (toll free) or email graftonbridge@rta.nsw.gov.au.

For more information phone 1800 633 332 (toll free) or visit www.rta.nsw.gov.au/graftonbridge

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Appendix 3: Map displayed on question relating to preferred bridge location

