

**Response by Leeton Shire Council
Questions on Notice contained in Transcript
Inquiry Into Regional Aviation Services**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON STATE DEVELOPMENT
INQUIRY INTO REGIONAL AVIATION SERVICES**

Questions on Notice contained in Transcript: Leeton Shire Council

Answers are to be returned to the Committee secretariat by Friday 11 July 2014.

Question 1 (Page 42 of Transcript – Has an assessment of who is flying on this route in general terms been undertaken):

Leeton Shire Council Response

Council researched its document management system and was unable to find any official assessment in relation to the above.

Attached to this response is a copy of Griffith City Council's "Griffith to Melbourne Air Survey 2006" which has detailed information on reasons why air service users were wanting to travel to Melbourne. This would be in general fairly reflective of the reasons and usages applicable at Leeton/Narrandera Airport.

Question 2 (Page 43 of Transcript – What tourism numbers do you get through the Airport?):

Leeton Shire Council Response

Council has no formal record of exact tourist numbers compared to other users of the air service such as business and recreational users.

Question 3 (Page 46 of Transcript – Do you have any views about what criteria should be put around an en route subsidy rebate if it was to be introduced?):

Leeton Shire Council Response

Leeton Shire Council believes the en route subsidy should not be based on aircraft weight, but should be based on distance from major capital cities such as Melbourne or Sydney.

**Duncan McWhirter
Director of Corporate Services
Leeton Shire Council**



Griffith - MELBOURNE

AIR SURVEY



APRIL - MAY

2006



REPORT



GRIFFITH CITY COUNCIL **REPORT**

REPORT TO: Regional Express Airlines and Griffith Chamber of Commerce

DATE OF REPORT: 1 June 2006

FROM: Duncan McWhirter, A/Aerodrome Manager

SUBJECT: **MELBOURNE TO GRIFFITH AIR SERVICE SURVEY**

1. SUMMARY

The Western Riverina community (both business and leisure) have continued to voice their desire for a regular passenger air service to be established between Griffith and Melbourne. As a result of this a working party was formed between the Griffith City Council, the Griffith Chamber of Commerce and Regional Express Airlines to investigate the feasibility of establishing a regular air service between Melbourne and Griffith.

A survey of both leisure and business markets was conducted and the results of this survey form the basis of this report.

2. BACKGROUND

Following increasing interest from the Western Riverina community for a regular air service to be established between Melbourne and Griffith a working party was formed between Griffith City Council, Griffith Chamber of Commerce and Regional Express Airlines.

This working party met on the 8 March 2006 to put in place a process for determining the feasibility of such an air service. The minutes of that meeting are attached to this report.

At that meeting the main following points were agreed to:

- 1) Griffith City Council and the Griffith Chamber of Commerce would undertake a survey of the Western Riverina Community to ascertain what demand existed for such a service.
- 2) Two separate surveys would be undertaken. A leisure survey aimed at those people wishing to travel to Melbourne for non business travel e.g. health, family, holiday reasons. The business survey would focus on those businesses and organizations needing to travel to Melbourne for commercial purposes.

- 3) The leisure survey would be placed in local media (newspapers as well as coverage on both local radio and television) as well as being able to be completed via Council's website. Media releases accompanying the survey were placed in the following newspapers
 - Area News (Griffith)
 - Riverina Times (Griffith)
 - The Irrigator (Leeton)
 - The Argus (Narrandera)
 - The Hillston Spectator
 - West Wyalong Advocate
 - Hay Grazier
- 4) Council's Economic Development Team would undertake the business survey with the assistance of the Griffith Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber of Commerce also distributed surveys at local travel agents in Griffith.
- 5) The surveys were also distributed to neighboring Councils who had drop off boxes located at their main Council buildings. These were at:
 - Griffith
 - Hay
 - Murrumbidgee (Darlington Point and Coleambally)
 - Carrathool (Goolgowi and Hillston)
 - Bland (West Wyalong)
 - Leeton
 - Narrandera
- 6) "Lead On" a community capacity building organisation consisting of young people in Griffith also conducted surveys during La Festa on Easter Saturday.

The survey period officially commenced on the 24 April 2006 and finished on Friday 19 May 2006.

Key Statistics

The following key statistics were obtained from the survey.

Leisure Survey

Leisure Surveys Completed = 1402

The surveys were returned from the following areas:

Griffith = 946
Leeton = 176
Narrandera = 35
Murrumbidgee = 70
Carathool = 94
Bland (West Wyalong) = 9
Coolamon = 2
Other = 50

Out of the 1402 leisure surveys completed 398 people indicated that the main reason that they attended Melbourne was for business reasons. In the leisure survey people traveling to Melbourne stayed for 2 nights possibly indicating that you need to drive to Melbourne on one day, attend meetings/appointments the next and travel home the day after. The air service would eliminate this need and enable those people to travel down and back in the one day.

Business Surveys

Business Surveys Completed = 148

Griffith = 110

Leeton = 20

Narrandera = 1

Carathool = 6

Other = 8

3. CONCLUSION

The number of surveys returned was outstanding and exceeded Council's initial estimates by well over 200%.

The final results of the survey are to be forwarded to Regional Express at a meeting convened in Wagga on the 22 June 2006.

REX have indicated that they will take approximately three to six months to make a business decision on whether or not to commence an air service fro Griffith to Melbourne. The survey along with a number of other relevant business tools that REX has will form the basis of their decision on the viability of establishing a regular Griffith to Melbourne air service.

4. ATTACHMENTS

- a. Graphs and Statistical Data for Leisure and Business Survey
- b. Copy of blank leisure survey
- c. Copy of blank business survey
- d. Minutes of meeting held 8 March 2006 between Griffith City Council, Griffith Chamber of Commerce and Regional Express Airlines
- e. Articles from the Area news in relation to the Air Survey during the survey period.
- f. Griffith Visitors Centre report on visitors to Griffith for 2005



BUSINESS SURVEY



Griffith Chamber of Commerce

MELBOURNE – GRIFFITH SURVEY

Griffith City Council in conjunction with the Griffith Chamber of Commerce and Regional Express is surveying market demand for direct flights between Griffith and Melbourne. The proposed service would involve a return service each morning and evening five days per week (Monday to Friday) and a Saturday service returning on Sunday.

Business Name: _____

Location of Business: _____

Number of Staff: _____

Position of Person
Completing Survey: _____

1) Is your organisation interested in direct flights being established between Griffith and Melbourne?

- Not interested
- Somewhat interested
- Very interested

2) Do you believe your organisation could utilise an air service between Griffith and Melbourne:

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Quarterly
- Annually
- Other

3) In the last 12 months please estimate how many times have staff travelled to Melbourne (number of staff x number of visits)?

- 0
- 1-10
- 11-20
- 21-50
- 51-100
- 101 – 500
- Greater than 500

4) What is the main purpose of your visit to Melbourne?

- Visit wholesalers / suppliers ₁
- Training ₂
- Meeting with clients ₃
- Meeting with government agencies ₄
- Meeting with related business (eg Head office / other related company) ₅
- Other ₆

5) On average how many nights does your staff spend in Melbourne when they visit?

- 0 ₃
- 1 ₂
- 2 ₃
- 3-5 ₄
- Greater than 5 nights ₅

6) If you could fly to and from Melbourne for a day's business, would that entice you to use the service more regularly?

- Yes ₁
- No ₂

7) On average, how much is spent per person per visit (inclusive of travel time wages, fuel, meals, accommodation etc) for the duration of your visit to Melbourne?

- Less than \$100 ₁
- \$101 - \$200 ₂
- \$201 - \$500 ₃
- \$501 - \$1000 ₄
- \$1001 - \$5000 ₅
- Greater than \$5000 ₆

NOTE: Do not include the wages of staff when they are actually in Melbourne. Include the wage cost of staff whilst travelling to and from Melbourne.

8) Does your business have dealings with businesses/head office / reps etc that currently travel from Melbourne to Griffith?

- Yes (if yes go to 9 & 10) ₁
- No (go to question 11) ₂

9) Do you believe these people would utilise an air service from Melbourne to Griffith?

- Yes ₁
- No ₂

10) If yes, what is the estimated number of visits they would make to Griffith on a yearly basis (number of staff x number of visits)?

- 0
- 1-10
- 11-20
- 21-50
- 51 -100
- 101 – 500
- Greater than 500

11) Taking into consideration what it currently costs to visit Melbourne (per question 7) what do you believe is an acceptable one way fare between Griffith and Melbourne for an air service as proposed by REX?

- \$100
- \$125
- \$150
- \$200
- \$250

12) Would your company be interested in an air link being established between Griffith and Adelaide?

- Not interested
- Somewhat interested
- Very interested

13) What Council area do you live in?

- Griffith City
- Leeton Shire
- Narrandera Shire
- Murrumbidgee Shire
- Carrathool Shire
- Bland Shire
- Coolamon Shire
- Other

Please complete and return survey by Friday 19 May 2006.

Please Note: The results of this survey including your name will be forwarded to Griffith City Council and REX. This will then be utilised to determine whether there is a business case for REX commencing air services between Griffith and Melbourne. Please note Griffith City Council and REX have agreed to keep all information confidential and utilised only for the purpose of determining the feasibility of the proposed service. Only consolidated and non personal data will be published as a result of the study

Griffith City Council, Griffith Chamber of Commerce and Regional Express wish to thank you for taking your valuable time to complete this survey.

**Please return survey to: Griffith City Council, PO Box 485 Griffith 2680
or fax 02 6964 4368**



BUSINESS SUMMARY

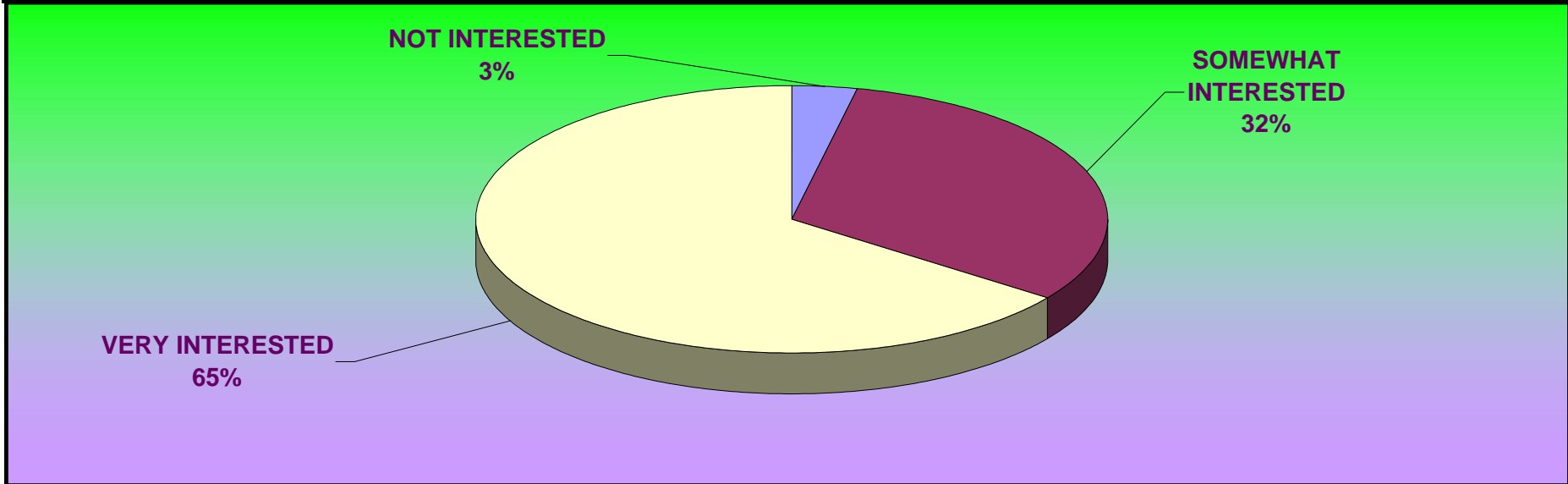


GRIFFITH - MELBOURNE AIR SURVEY

APRIL - MAY 2006

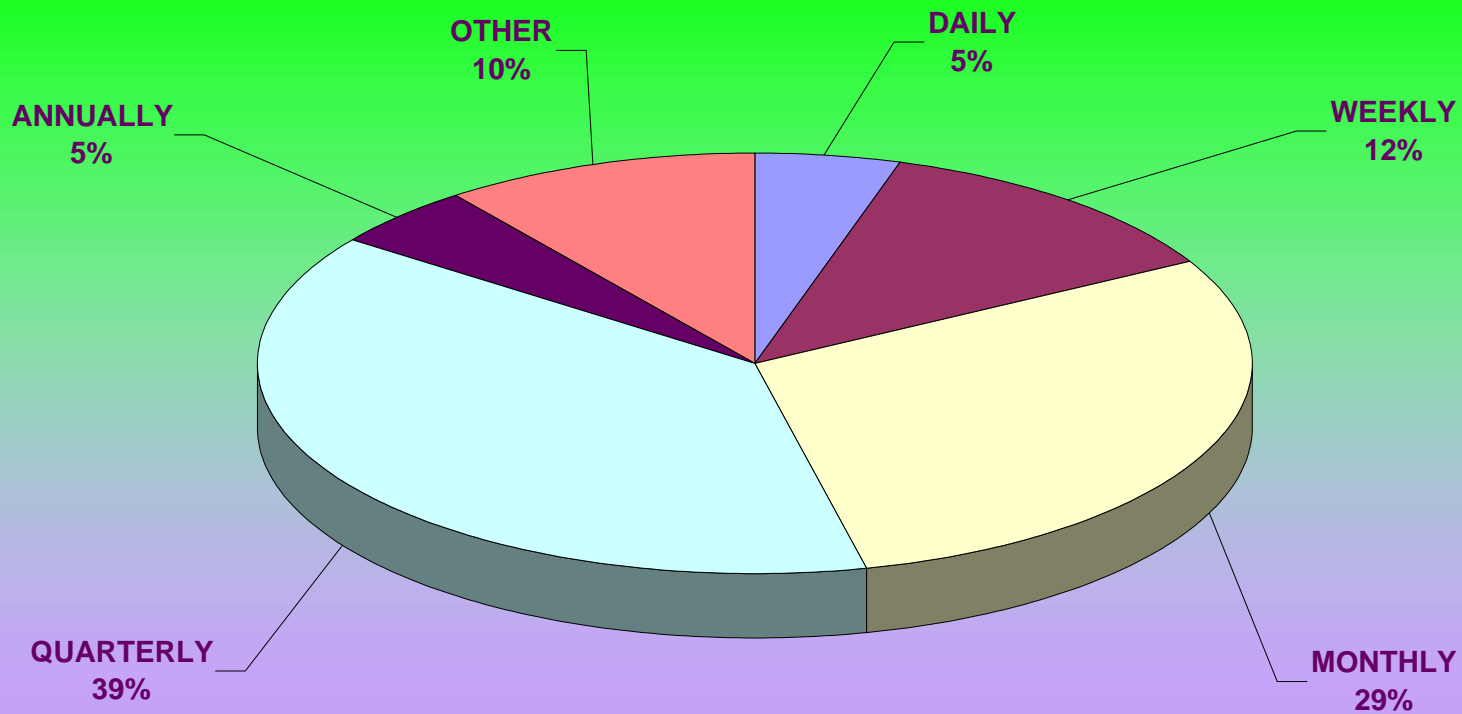
ARE YOU INTERESTED IN DIRECT FLIGHTS BEING ESTABLISHED BETWEEN GRIFFITH AND MELBOURNE?

NOT INTERESTED	SOMEWHAT INTERESTED	VERY INTERESTED
5	47	96



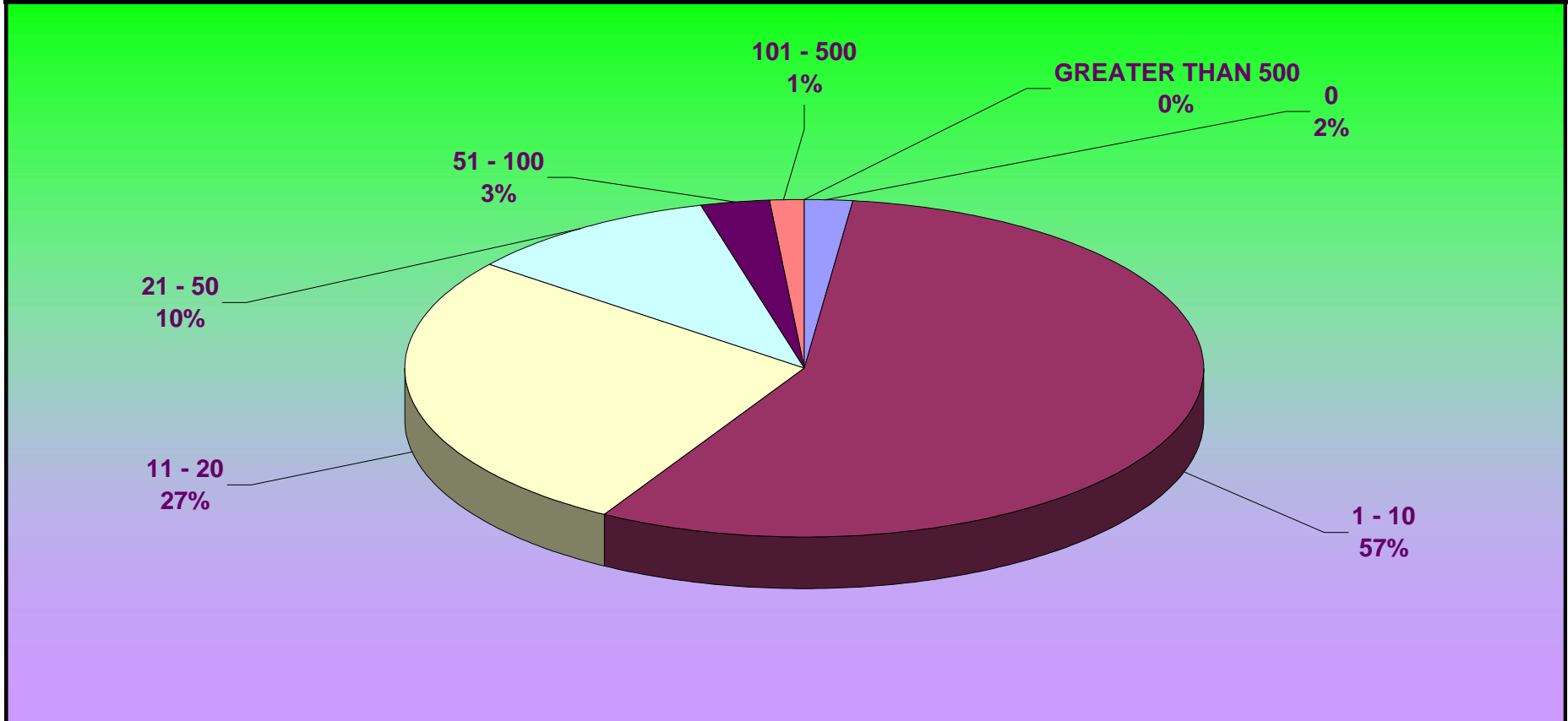
DO YOU BELIEVE YOUR ORGANISATION COULD UTILISE AN AIR SERVICE BETWEEN GRIFFITH AND MELBOURNE?

DAILY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY	QUARTERLY	ANNUALLY	OTHER
7	18	43	57	7	15



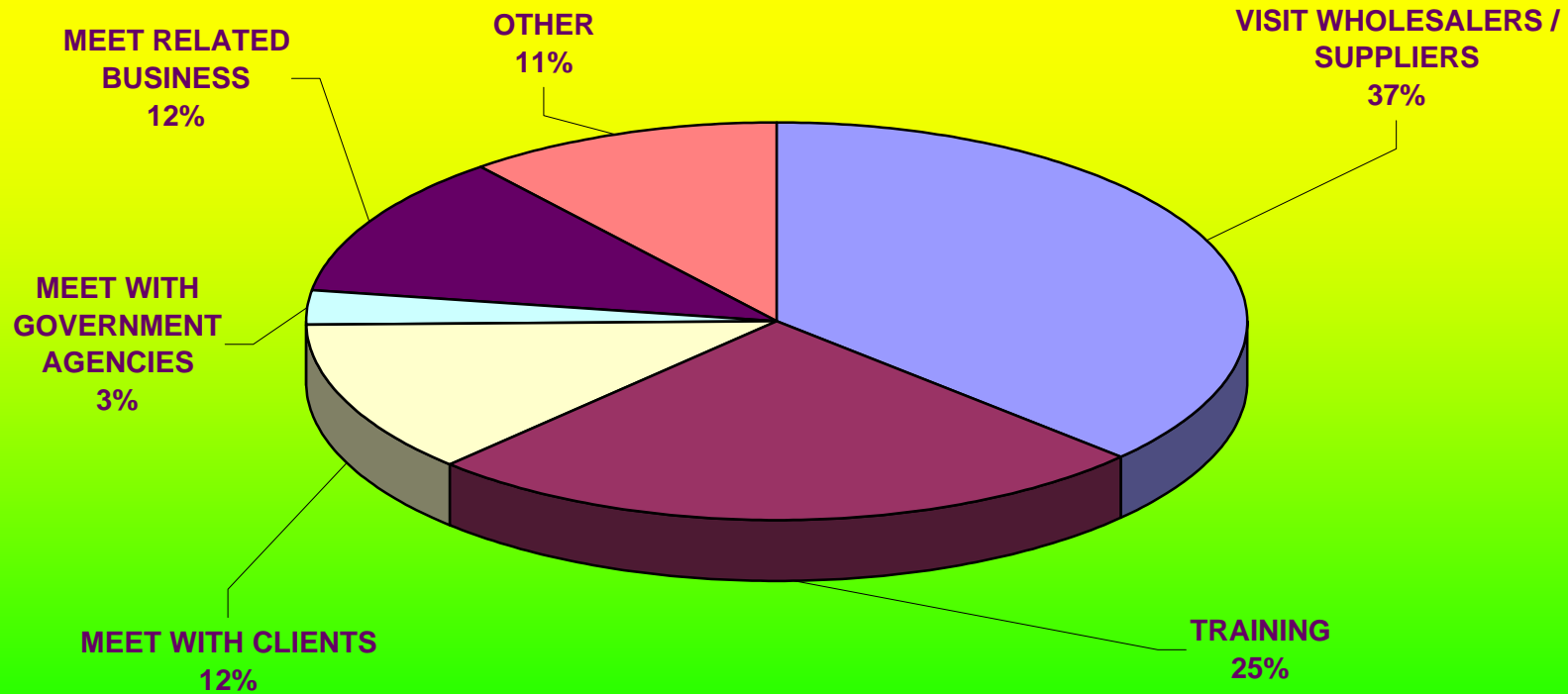
IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS PLEASE ESTIMATE HOW MANY TIMES HAVE STAFF TRAVELLED TO MELBOURNE?

0	1 - 10	11 - 20	21 - 50	51 - 100	101 - 500	GREATER THAN 500
3	82	40	15	4	2	0



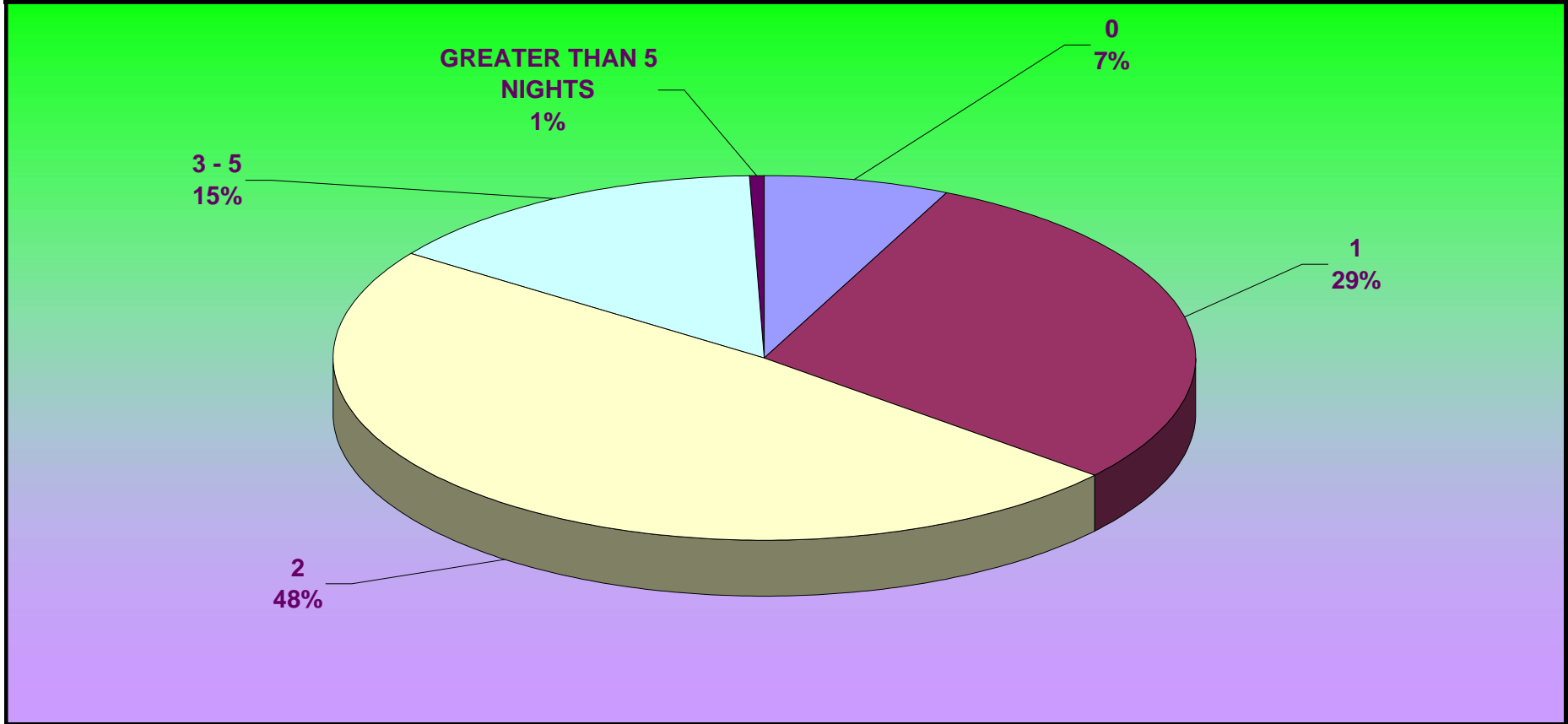
WHAT WAS THE MAIN PURPOSE OF YOUR TRAVEL TO MELBOURNE?

VISIT WHOLESALERS / SUPPLIERS	TRAINING	MEET CLIENTS	MEET GOVERNMENT AGENCIES	MEET RELATED BUSINESS	OTHER
54	37	18	4	17	16



ON AVERAGE HOW MANY NIGHTS DOES YOUR STAFF SPEND IN MELBOURNE WHEN THEY VISIT?

0	1	2	3 - 5	GREATER THAN 5 NIGHTS
10	42	70	21	1



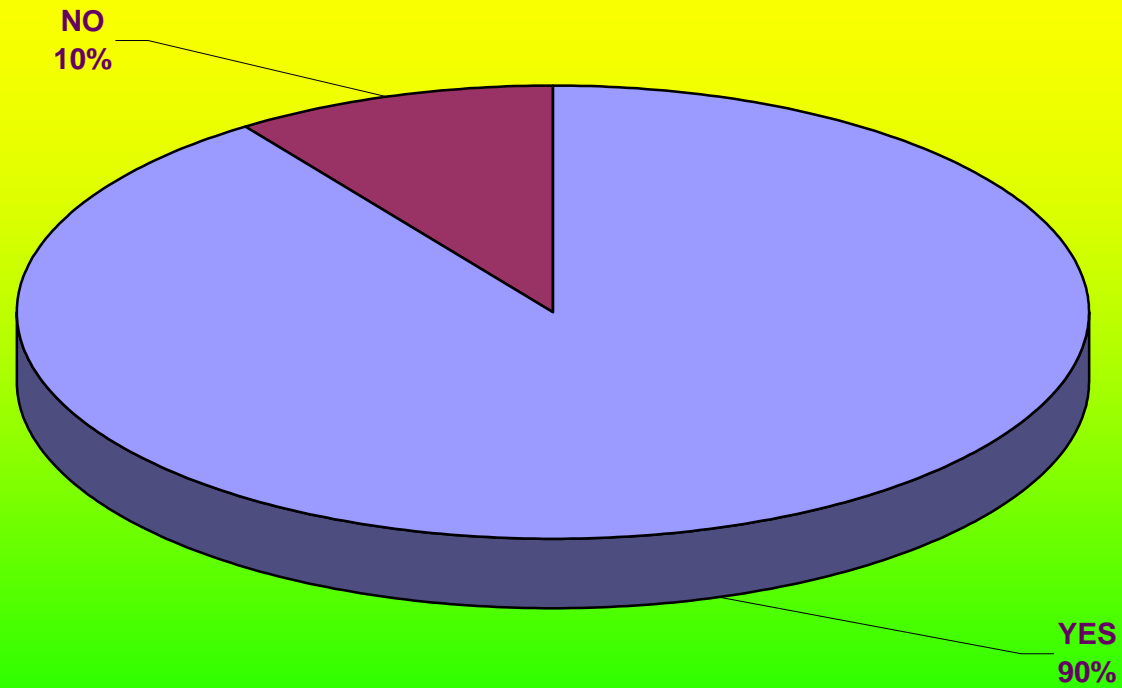
IF YOU COULD FLY TO AND FROM MELBOURNE FOR A DAY'S BUSINESS, WOULD THAT ENTICE YOU TO USE THE SERVICE MORE REGULARLY?

YES

NO

129

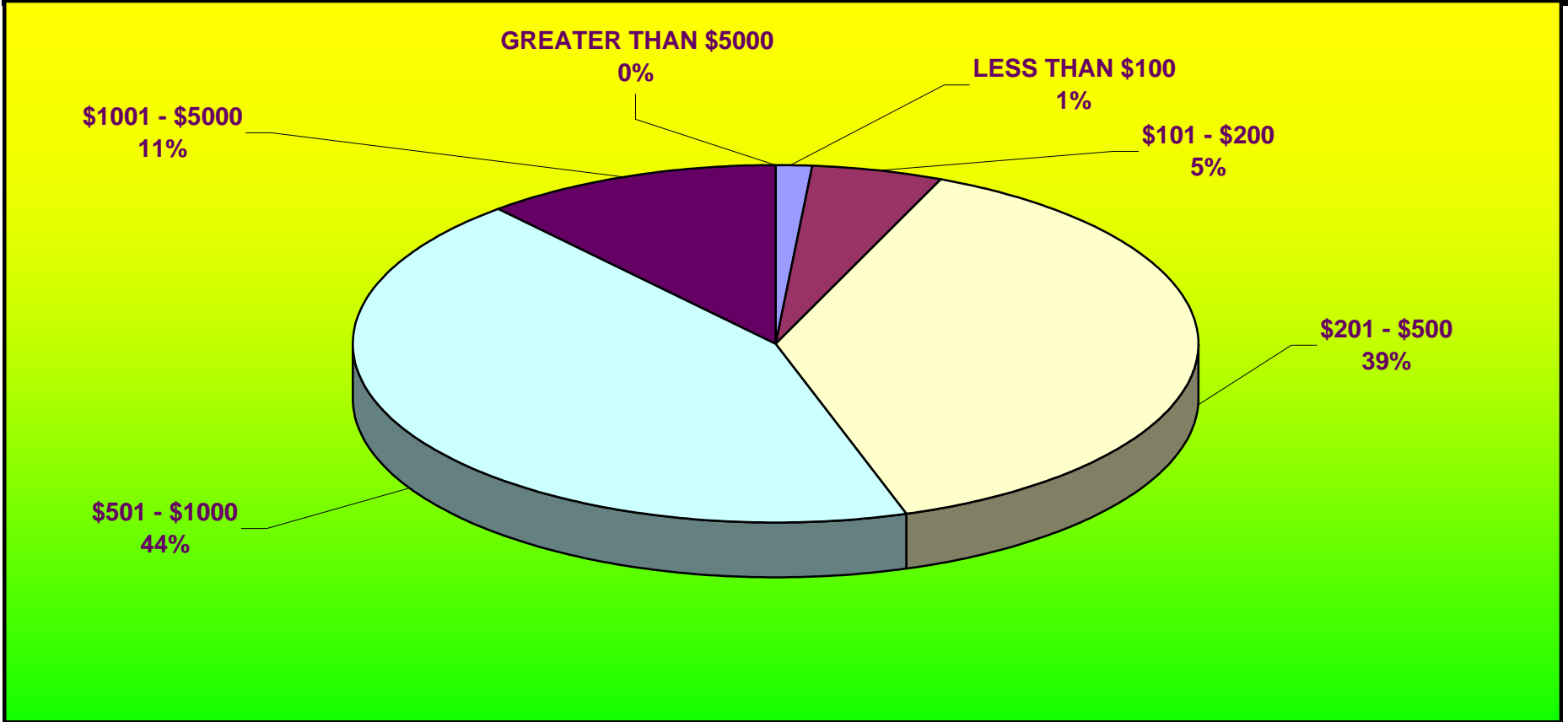
14





ON AVERAGE, HOW MUCH IS SPENT PER PERSON PER VISIT FOR THE DURATION OF YOUR VISIT TO MELBOURNE?

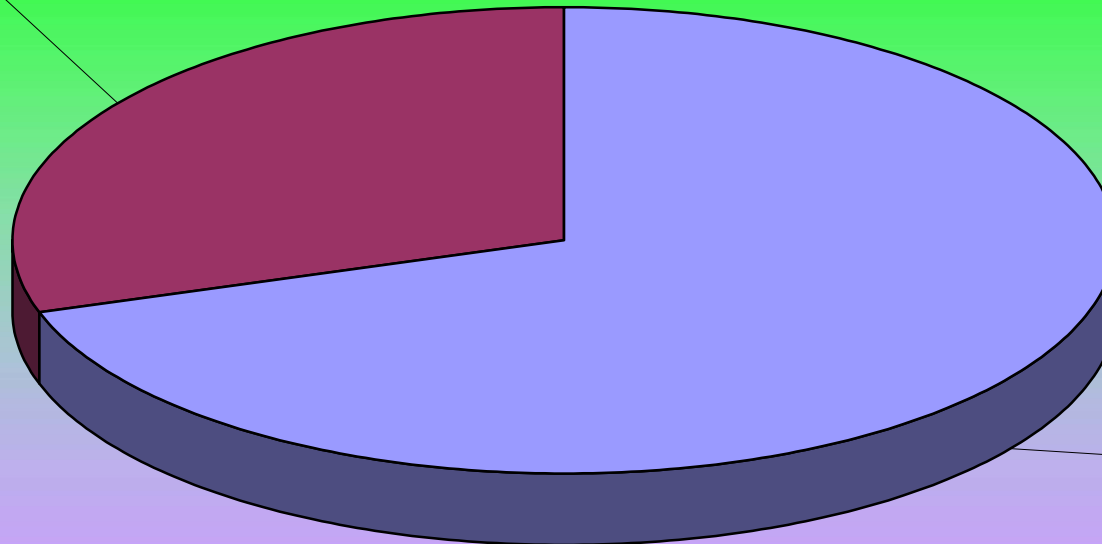
LESS THAN \$100	\$101 - \$200	\$201 - \$500	\$501 - \$1000	\$1001 - \$5000	GREATER THAN \$5000
2	7	55	62	16	0



DOES YOUR BUSINESS HAVE DEALINGS WITH BUSINESS / HEAD OFFICE / REPS ETC THAT CURRENTLY TRAVEL FROM MELBOURNE TO GRIFFITH?

YES	NO
98	42

NO
30%



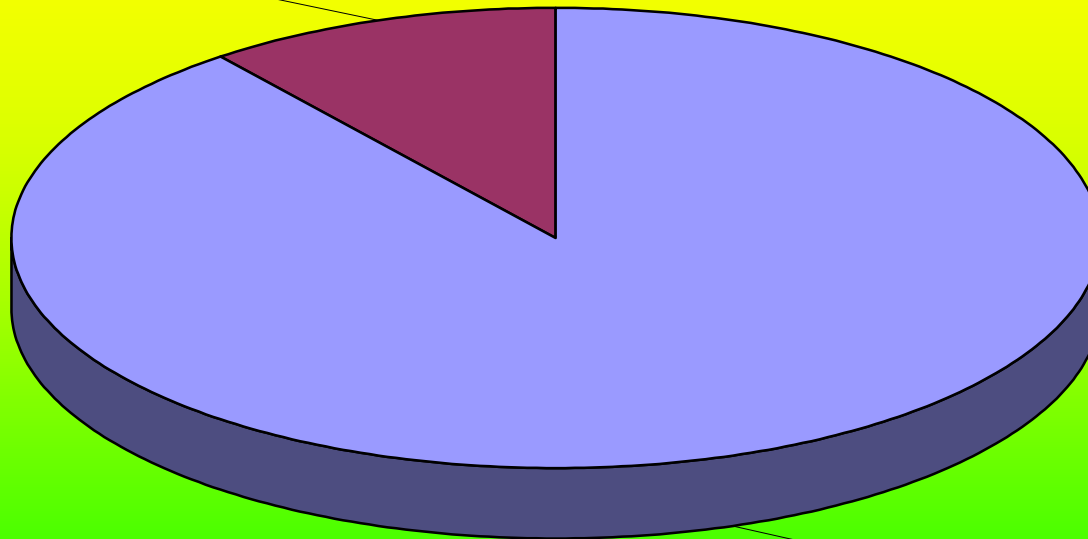
YES
70%



DO YOU BELIEVE THESE PEOPLE WOULD UTILISE AN AIR SERVICE FROM MELBOURNE TO GRIFFITH?

YES	NO
93	11

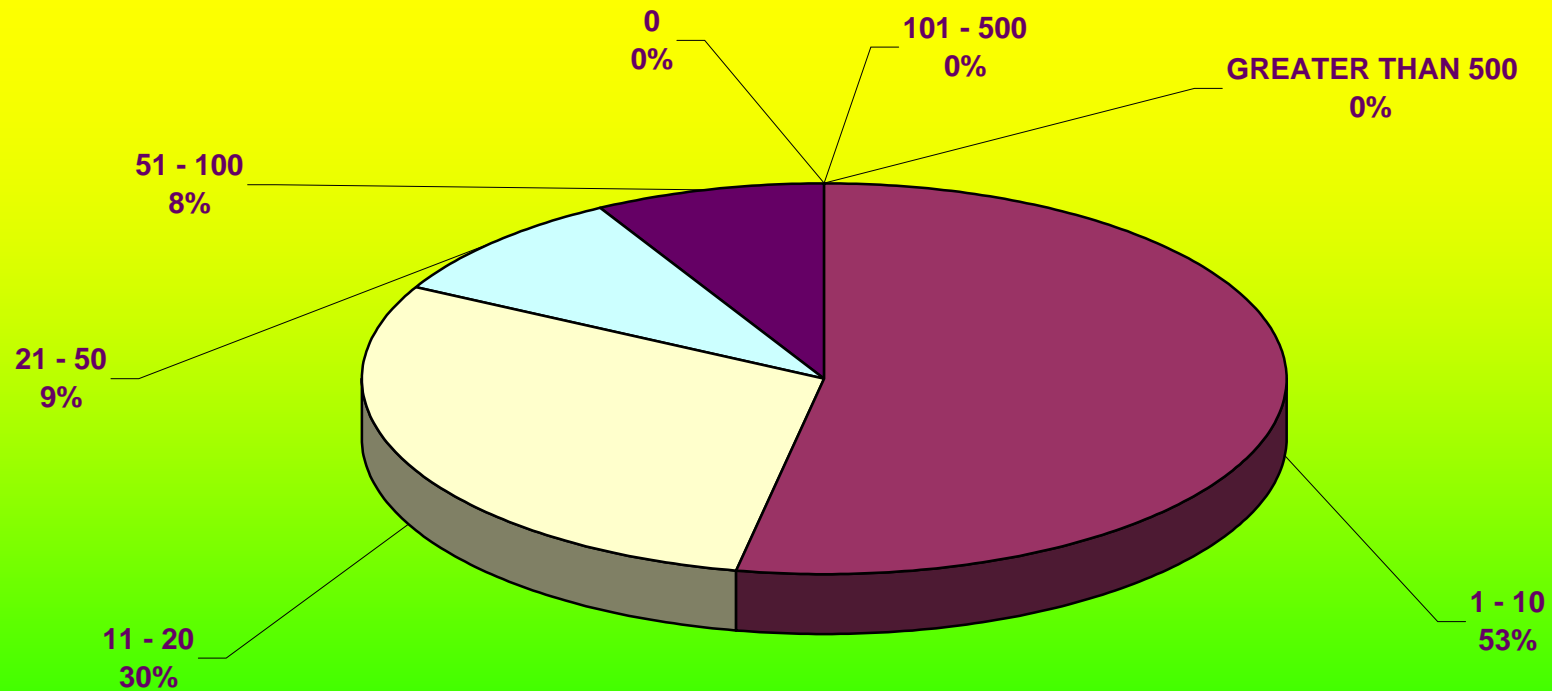
NO
11%



YES
89%

IF YES, WHAT IS THE ESTIMATED NUMBER OF VISITS THEY WOULD MAKE TO GRIFFITH ON A YEARLY BASIS?

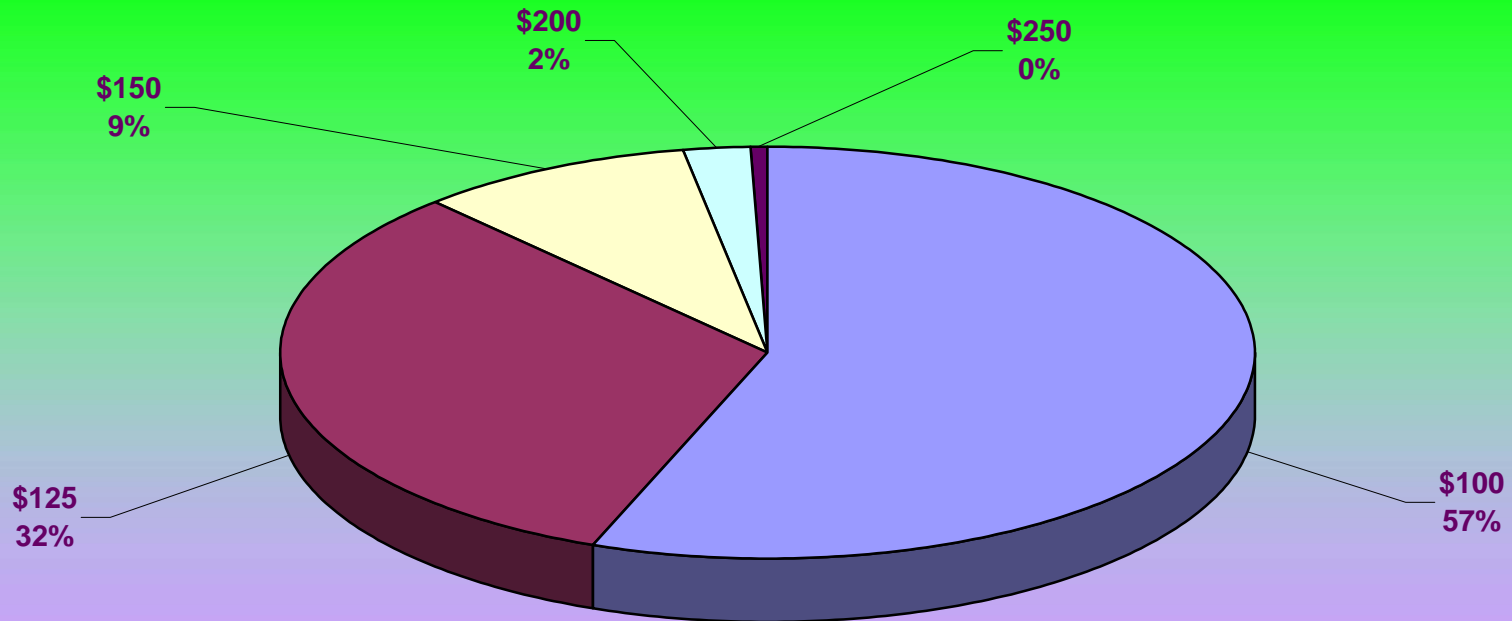
0	1 - 10	11 - 20	21 - 50	51 - 100	101 - 500	GREATER THAN 500
0	52	29	9	8	0	0





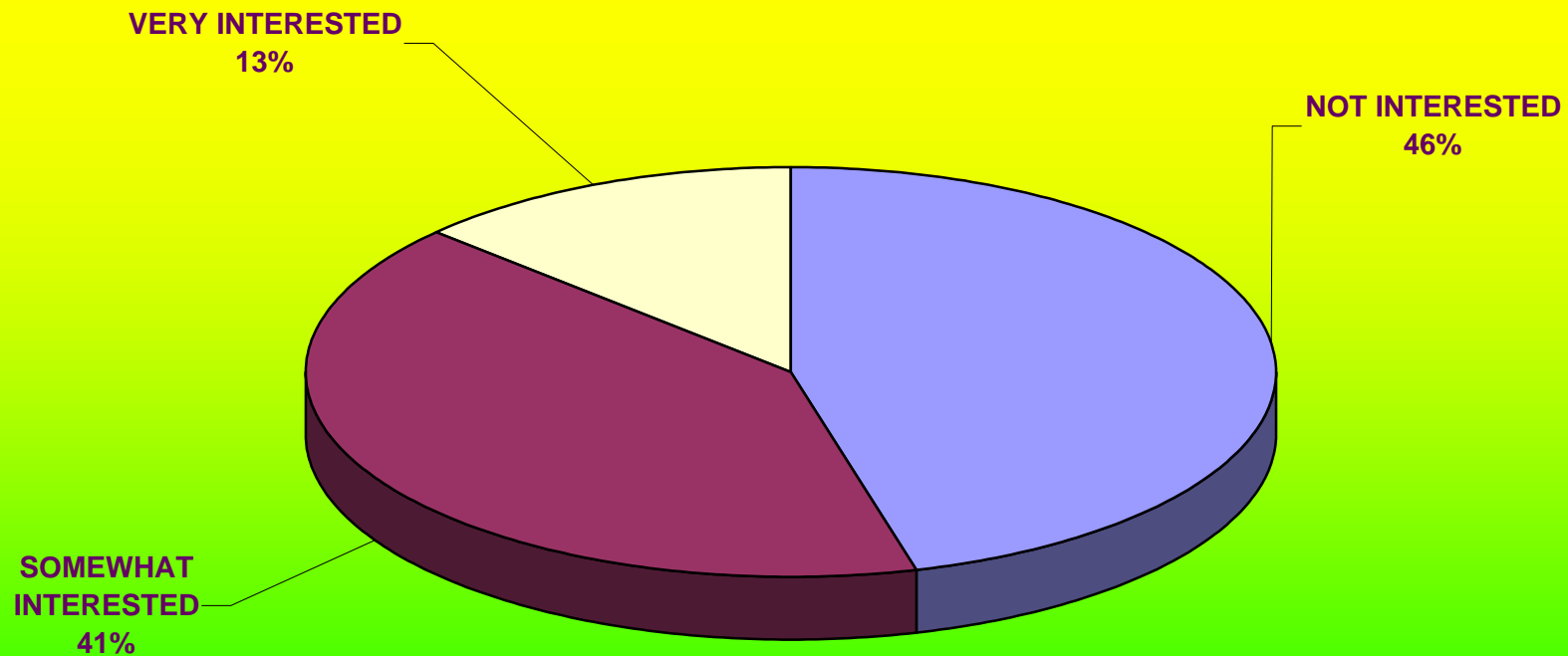
TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION WHAT IT CURRENTLY COSTS TO VISIT MELBOURNE WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE IS AN ACCEPTABLE ONE WAY FARE BETWEEN GRIFFITH AND MELBOURNE FOR AN AIR SERVICE AS PROPOSED BY REX

\$100	\$125	\$150	\$200	\$250
59	55	27	3	1



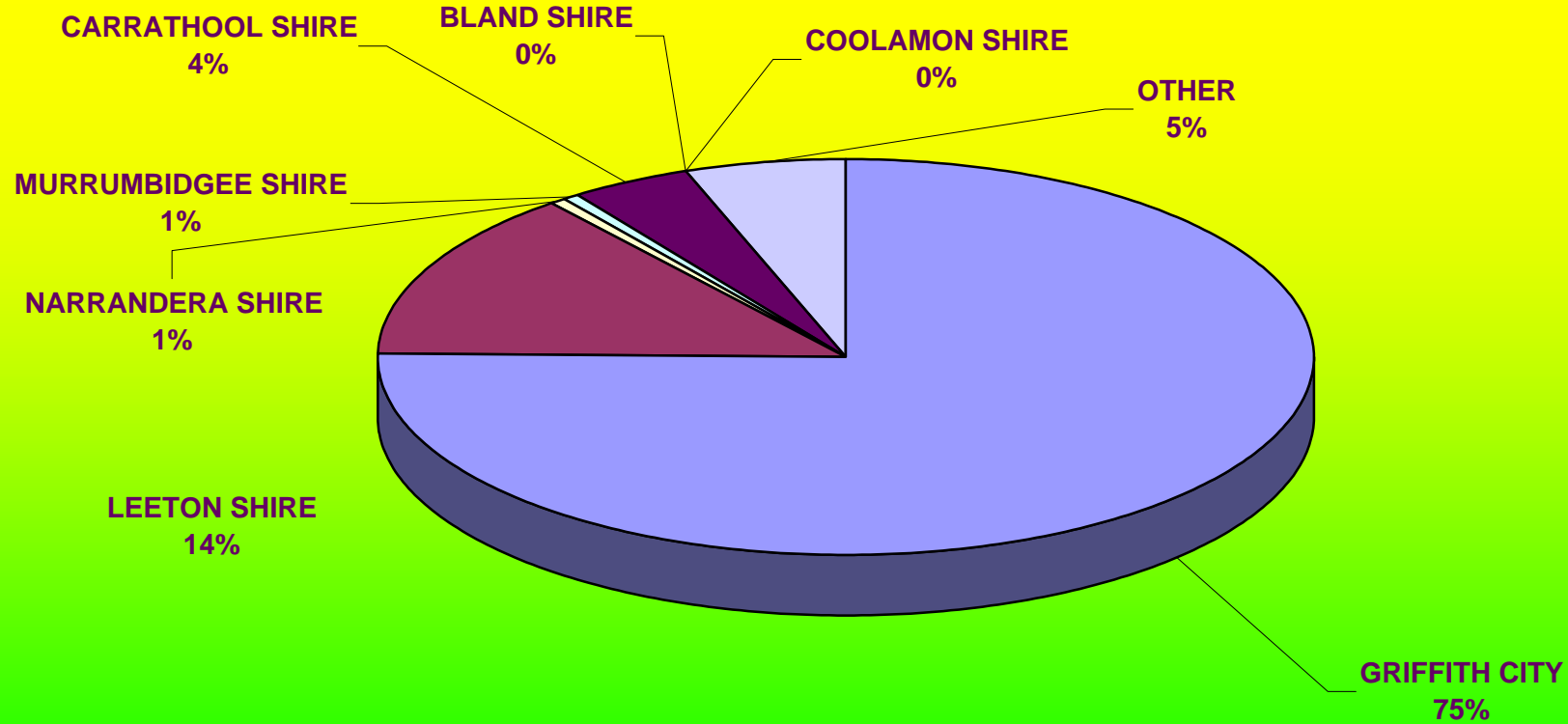
WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN AN AIR LINK BEING ESTABLISHED BETWEEN GRIFFITH AND ADELAIDE?

NOT INTERESTED	SOMEWHAT INTERESTED	VERY INTERESTED
66	59	19



WHAT COUNCIL AREA DO YOU RESIDE IN?

GRIFFITH	LEETON	NARRANDERA	MURRUMBIDGEE	CARRATHOOL	BLAND	COOLAMON	OTHER
110	20	1	0	6	0	0	8





LEISURE SURVEY



Griffith Chamber of Commerce

MELBOURNE – GRIFFITH SURVEY

Griffith City Council in conjunction with the Griffith Chamber of Commerce and Regional Express (REX) is surveying market demand for direct flights between Griffith and Melbourne. The proposed service would involve a return service each morning and evening five days per week (Monday to Friday) and a Saturday service returning on Sunday.

5) **Are you interested in direct flights being established between Griffith and Melbourne?**

- Yes ₁
- No ₂

6) **Do you currently travel more frequently to Melbourne or Sydney?**

- Melbourne ₁
- Sydney ₂

7) **In the last 12 months how many times have you travelled to Melbourne?**

- None ₁
- Once ₂
- Two – Four ₃
- Five – Ten ₄
- Greater than 10 trips ₅

8) **What is the main purpose of your travel to Melbourne?**

- Business (please answer questions 5 and 6) ₁
- Health (visiting health professionals – eg hospital, doctors) ₂
- Family (visiting family members) ₃
- Education (school / university / college) ₄
- Sport (watching or playing sport) ₅
- Other Leisure Activity (Theatre, Holiday etc) ₆
- Other Reason ₇

} Go to
Q 7

9) **If business what is the purpose of your visit to Melbourne?**

- Visit wholesalers / suppliers ₁
- Training ₂
- Meeting with clients ₃
- Meeting with government agencies ₄
- Meeting with related business (eg Head office / other related company) ₅

6) In relation to business travel only, how many visits to Melbourne are undertaken by you and your staff per annum? (Number of staff x individual visits)

- 1-5 ₁
- 6-10 ₂
- 11-20 ₃
- 21-50 ₄
- 51-100 ₅
- 101-500 ₆
- Greater than 500 ₇

7) On average how many nights do you spend in Melbourne when you visit?

- 0 ₁
- 1 ₂
- 2 ₃
- 3-5 ₄
- Greater than 5 nights ₅

8) If you could fly to and from Melbourne for a day's activities, would that entice you to use the service more regularly?

- Yes ₁
- No ₂

9) On average, how much do you spend per trip (fuel, meals, accommodation etc) for the duration of your visit to Melbourne?

- Less than \$100 ₁
- \$101 - \$200 ₂
- \$201 - \$500 ₃
- \$501 - \$1000 ₄
- \$1001 - \$5000 ₅
- Greater than \$5000 ₆

10) Taking into consideration what it currently costs to visit Melbourne (per question 9) what do you believe is an acceptable one way fare between Griffith and Melbourne for an air service as proposed by REX?

- \$100 ₁
- \$125 ₂
- \$150 ₃
- \$200 ₄
- \$250 ₅

11) Would you be interested in an air link being established between Griffith and Adelaide?

- Not Interested ₁
- Somewhat interested ₂
- Very interested

12) **What Council area do you live in?**

- Griffith City ¹
- Leeton Shire ²
- Narrandera Shire ³
- Murrumbidgee Shire ⁴
- Carrathool Shire ⁵
- Bland Shire ⁶
- Coolamon Shire ⁷
- Other ⁸

Please complete and return survey by Friday 19 May 2006.

Please Note: The results of this survey will be forwarded to Griffith City Council and REX. This will then be utilised to determine whether there is a business case for REX commencing air services between Griffith and Melbourne. Please note Griffith City Council and REX have agreed to keep all information confidential and utilised only for the purpose of determining the feasibility of the proposed service. Only consolidated and non personal data will be published as a result of the study.

Griffith City Council, Griffith Chamber of Commerce and Regional Express wish to thank you for taking your valuable time to complete this survey.

Please return to Griffith City Council by

Mail: P.O Box 485
GRIFFITH NSW 2680

Fax: 02 6964 4368

Survey can be completed on line on Council's website:
www.griffith.nsw.gov.au and click on Web Poll.



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▶ **Griffith City Council, Griffith Chamber of Commerce and Regional Express (REX) Griffith to Melbourne Survey**

Printer Friendly

▶ **Griffith City Council in conjunction with the Griffith Chamber of Commerce and Regional Express (REX) is surveying market demand for direct flights between Griffith and Melbourne. The proposed service would involve a return service each morning and evening five days per week (Monday to Friday) and a Saturday service returning on Sunday.**

Please Note:

The results of this survey will be forwarded to Griffith City Council and REX. This will then be utilised to determine whether there is a business case for REX commencing air services between Griffith and Melbourne. Please note Griffith City Council and REX have agreed to keep all information confidential and utilised only for the purpose of determining the feasibility of the proposed service. Only consolidated and non personal data will be published as a result of the study.

Griffith City Council, Griffith Chamber of Commerce and Regional Express (REX) wish to thank you for taking your valuable time to complete this survey.

Page Last Updated:
Monday, 10 April 2006



Links

Form Links

- [Griffith to Melbourne Survey](#)

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Griffith City Council
PO Box 485
Griffith NSW 2680
Telephone: 02 6962 8100
Fax: 02 6962 7161

Griffith - Melbourne Survey

To: Aerodrome Manager

Are you interested in direct flights being established between Griffith and Melbourne?

- 1) Not interested Somewhat interested Very interested

Do you currently travel more frequently to Melbourne or Sydney?

- 2) Melbourne Sydney

In the last 12 months how many times have you travelled to Melbourne?

- 3) None Once Two - Four Five - Ten Greater than 10 trips

What is the main purpose of your travel to Melbourne?

- 4) Business (please answer questions 5 and 6) Health (visiting health professionals - eg hospital / doctors) - Go to Q 7
- Family (visiting family members) - Go to Q 7 Education (school / university / college) - Go to Q 7 Sport (watching or playing sport) - Go to Q 7 Other leisure activity (theatre / holiday etc) - Go to Q 7 Other reason - Go to Q 7

If business what is the purpose of your visit to Melbourne?

- 5) Visit wholesalers / suppliers Training Meeting with clients Meeting with government agencies Meeting with related business (eg head office / other related company)

In relation to business travel only, how many visits to Melbourne are undertaken by you and your staff per annum?

- 6) - Number of staff by individual visits 1 - 5 6 - 10 11 - 20 21 - 50 51 - 100 101 - 500 Greater than 500

On average how many nights do you spend in Melbourne when you visit?

- 7) 0 1 2 3 - 5 Greater than 5 nights

If you could fly to and from Melbourne for a day's activities, would that entice you to use the service more regularly?

- 8) Yes No

On average, how much do you spend per trip (fuel, meals, accommodation etc.) for the duration of your visit to Melbourne?

- 9) Less than \$100 \$101 - \$200 \$201 - \$500 \$501 - \$1000 \$1001 - \$5000 Greater than \$5000

Taking into consideration what it currently costs to visit Melbourne (per question 9) what do you believe is an acceptable one way fare between Griffith and Melbourne for an air service as proposed by REX?

- 10) \$100 \$125 \$150 \$200 \$250

11) **Would you be interested in an air link being established between Griffith and Adelaide?**

Not interested Somewhat interested Very interested

12) **What Council area do you live in?**

Griffith City Leeton Shire Narrandera Shire Murrumbidgee Shire Carrathool Shire Bland Shire
 Coolamon Shire Other



LEISURE SUMMARY

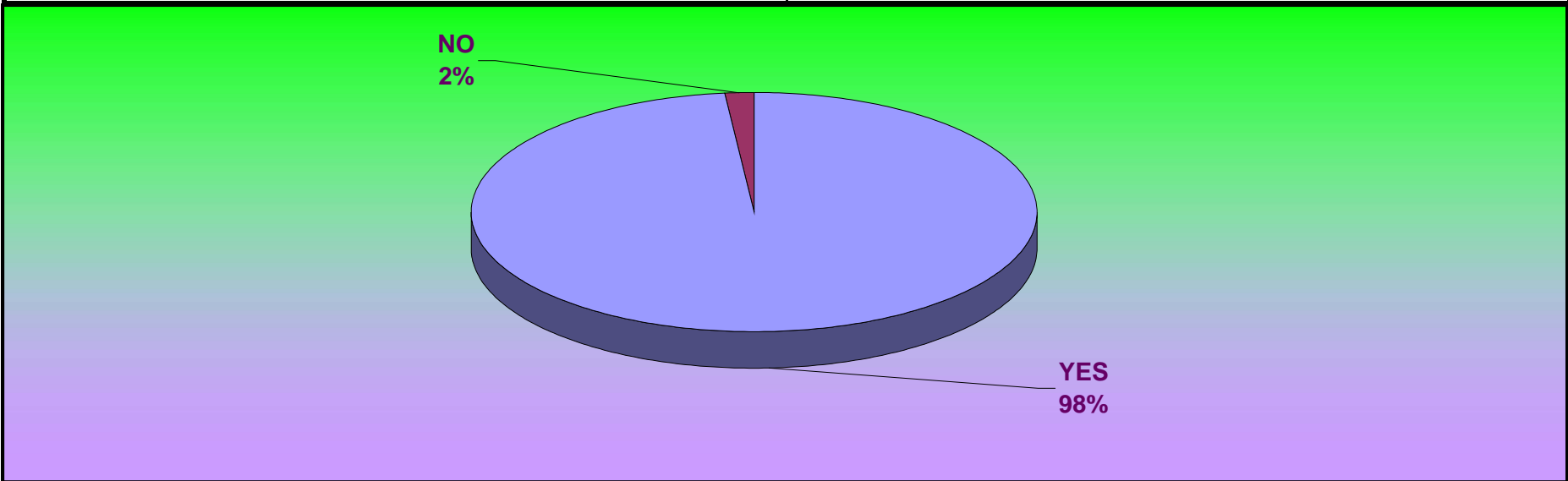


GRIFFITH - MELBOURNE AIR SURVEY

APRIL - MAY 2006

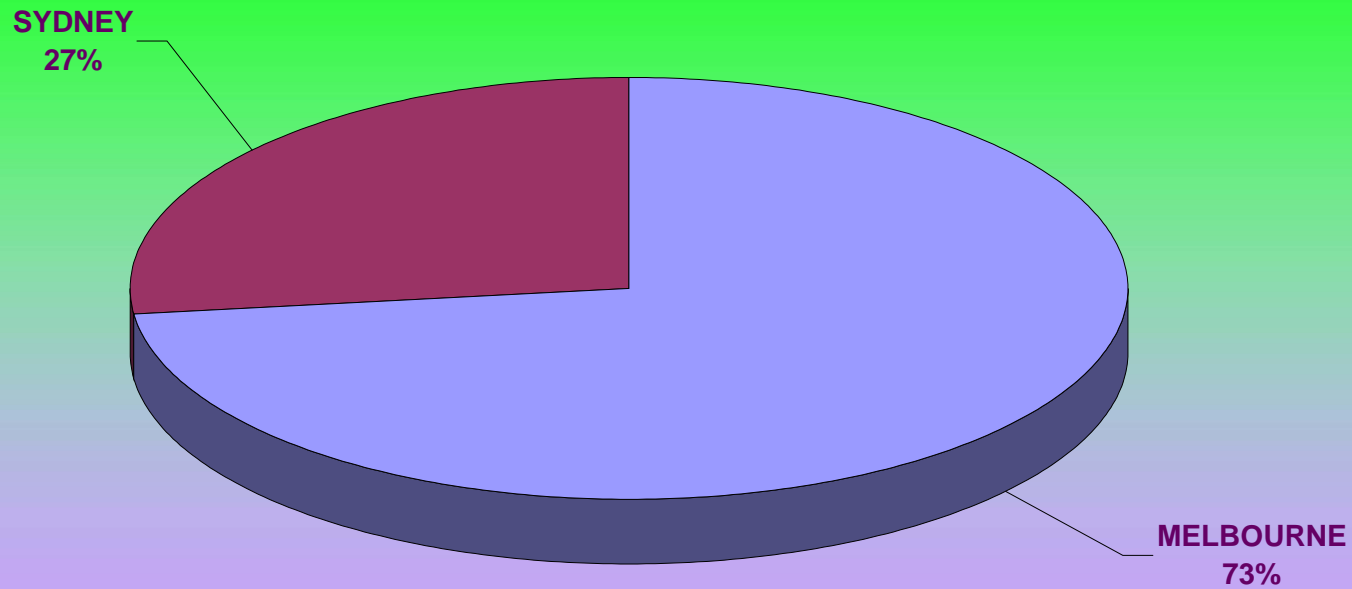
ARE YOU INTERESTED IN DIRECT FLIGHTS BEING ESTABLISHED BETWEEN GRIFFITH AND MELBOURNE?

YES	NO
1378	24



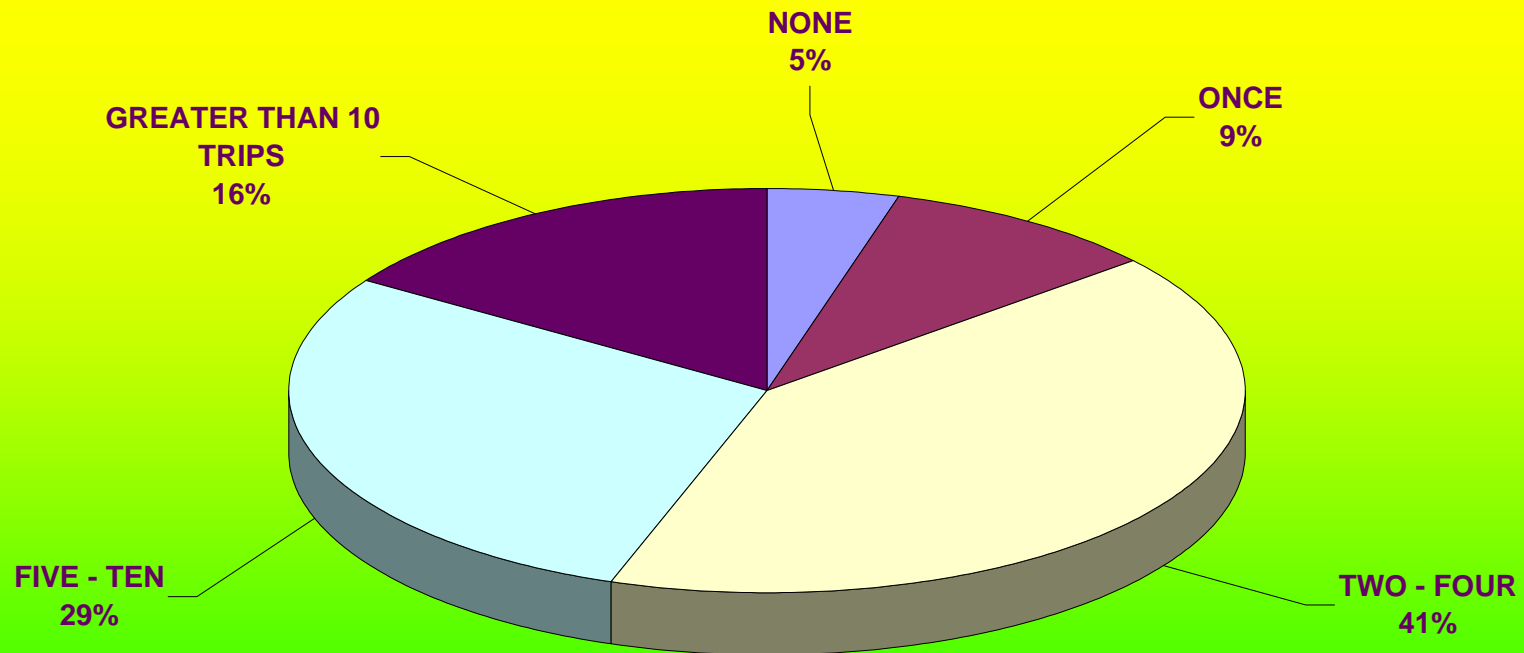
DO YOU CURRENTLY TRAVEL MORE FREQUENTLY TO MELBOURNE OR SYDNEY?

MELBOURNE	SYDNEY
1001	371



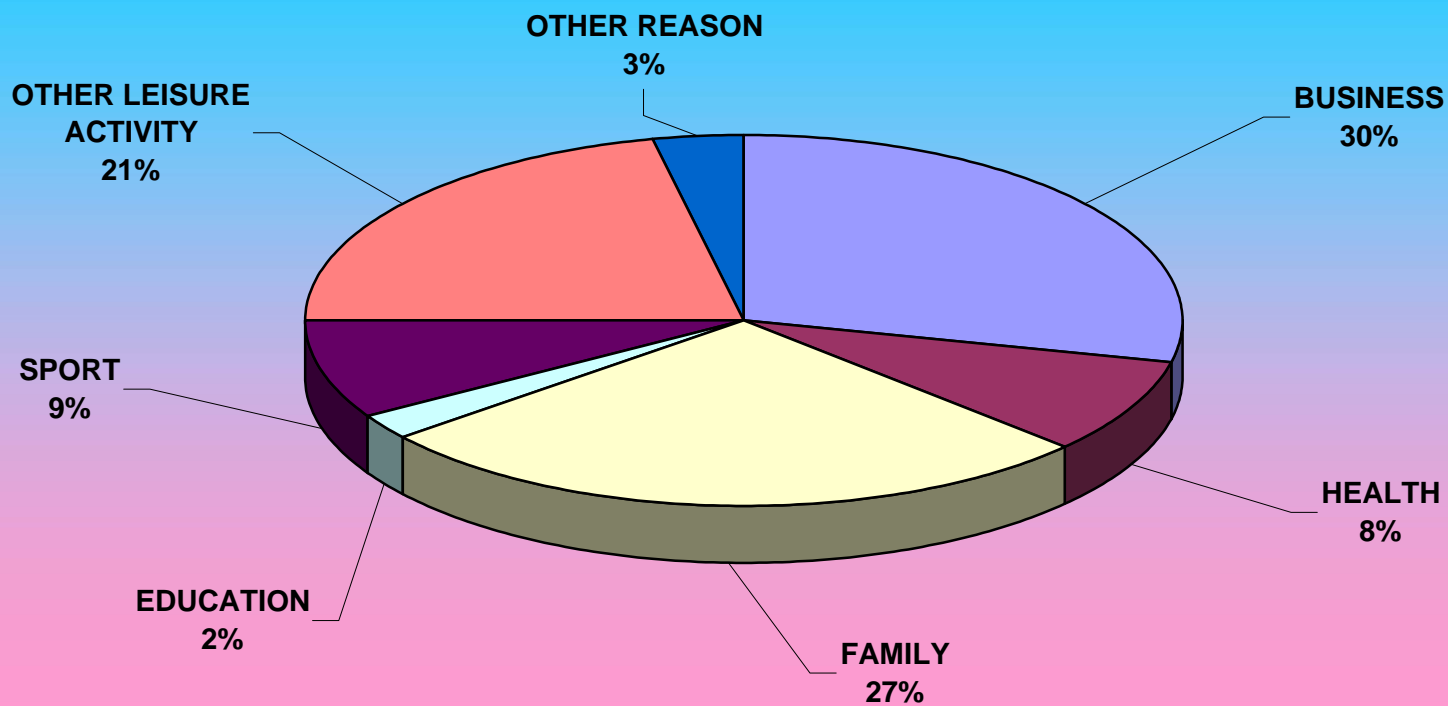
IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU TRAVELLED TO MELBOURNE?

NONE	ONCE	TWO - FOUR	FIVE - TEN	GREATER THAN 10 TRIPS
64	129	579	405	222



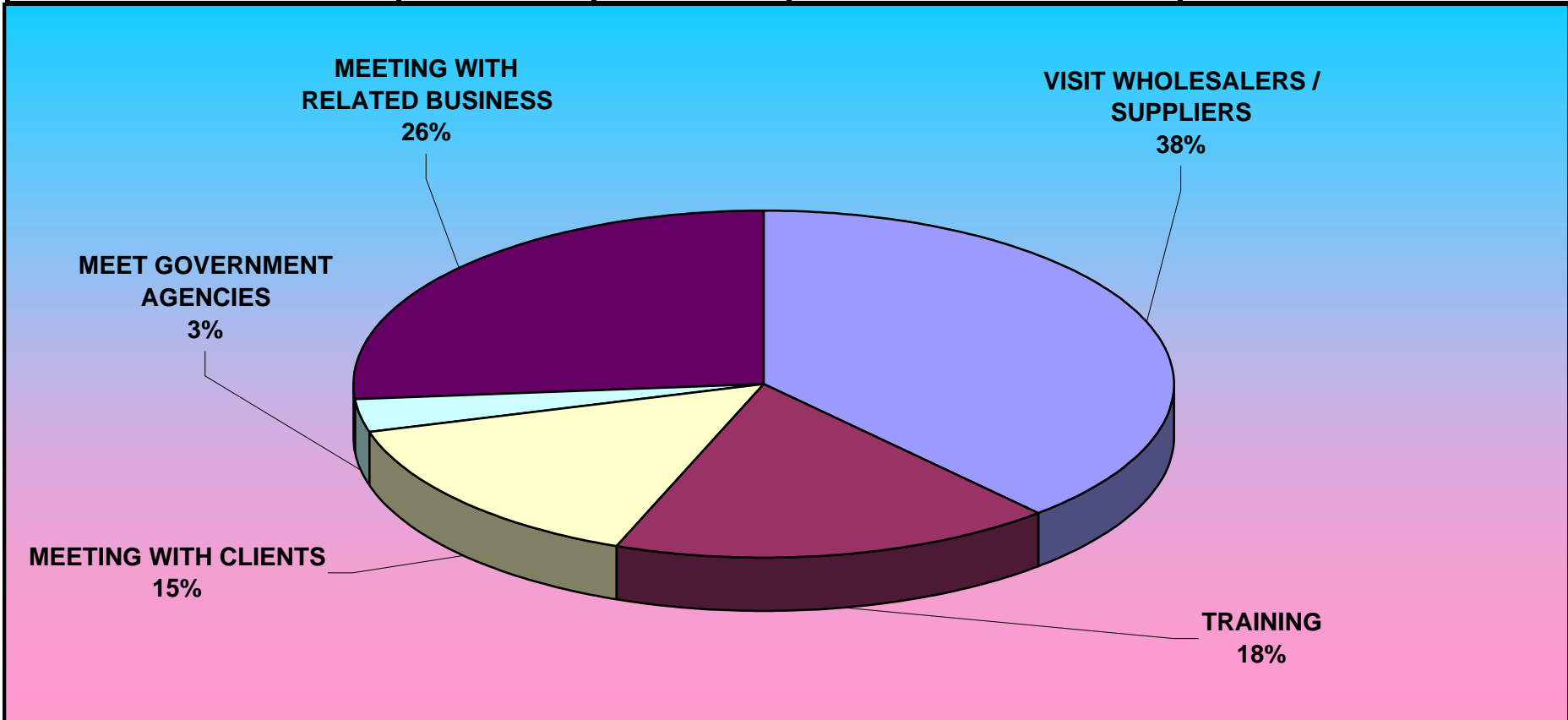
WHAT WAS THE MAIN PURPOSE OF YOUR TRAVEL TO MELBOURNE?

BUSINESS	HEALTH	FAMILY	EDUCATION	SPORT	OTHER LEISURE ACTIVITY	OTHER REASON
398	115	378	28	123	298	47



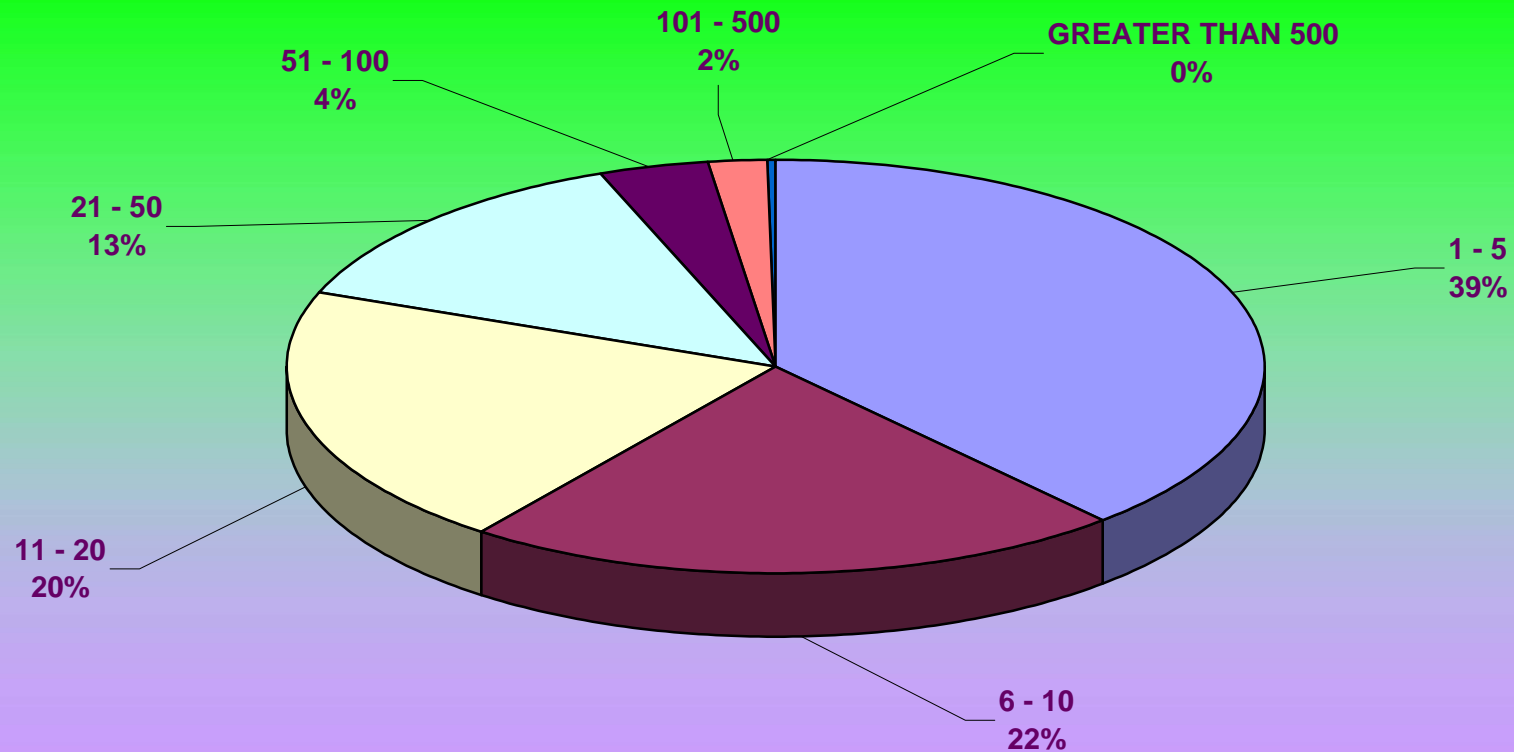
IF BUSINESS, WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF YOUR VISIT TO MELBOURNE?

VISIT WHOLESALERS / SUPPLIERS	TRAINING	MEETING WITH CLIENTS	MEET GOVERNMENT AGENCIES	MEETING WITH RELATED BUSINESS
165	76	64	13	114



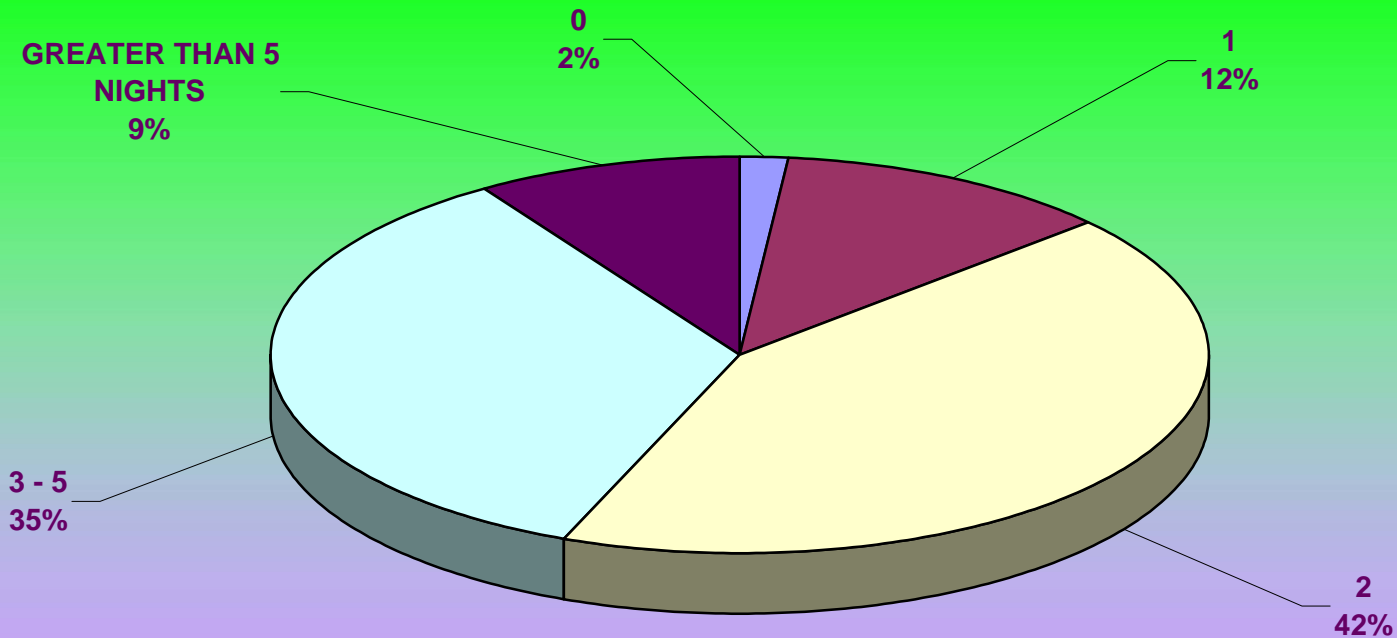
IN RELATION TO BUSINESS TRAVEL ONLY, HOW MANY VISITS TO MELBOURNE ARE UNDERTAKEN BY YOU AND YOUR STAFF PER ANNUM

1 - 5	6 - 10	11 - 20	21 - 50	51 - 100	101 - 500	GREATER THAN 500
165	94	88	58	16	8	1



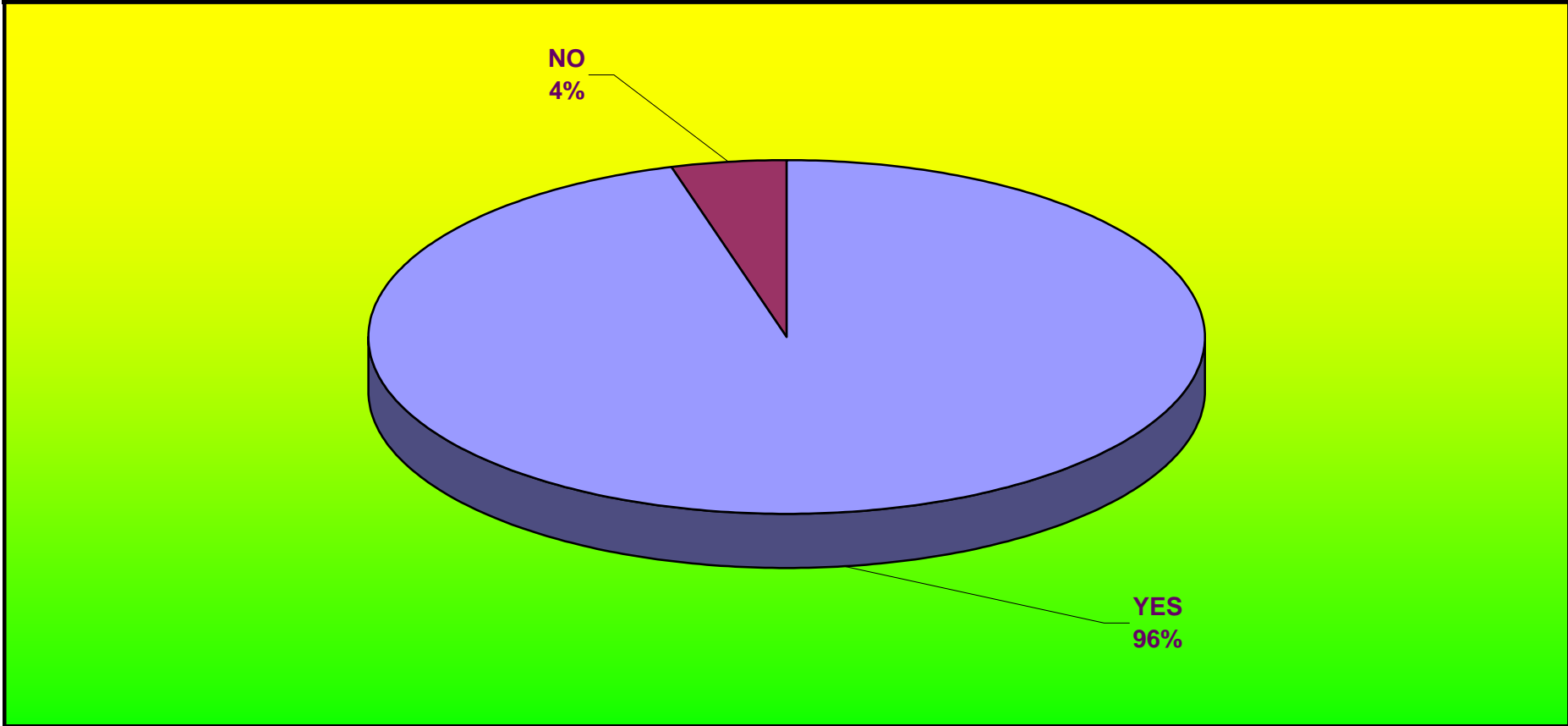
ON AVERAGE HOW MANY NIGHTS DO YOU SPEND IN MELBOURNE WHEN YOU VISIT?

0	1	2	3 - 5	GREATER THAN 5 NIGHTS
24	159	587	477	127



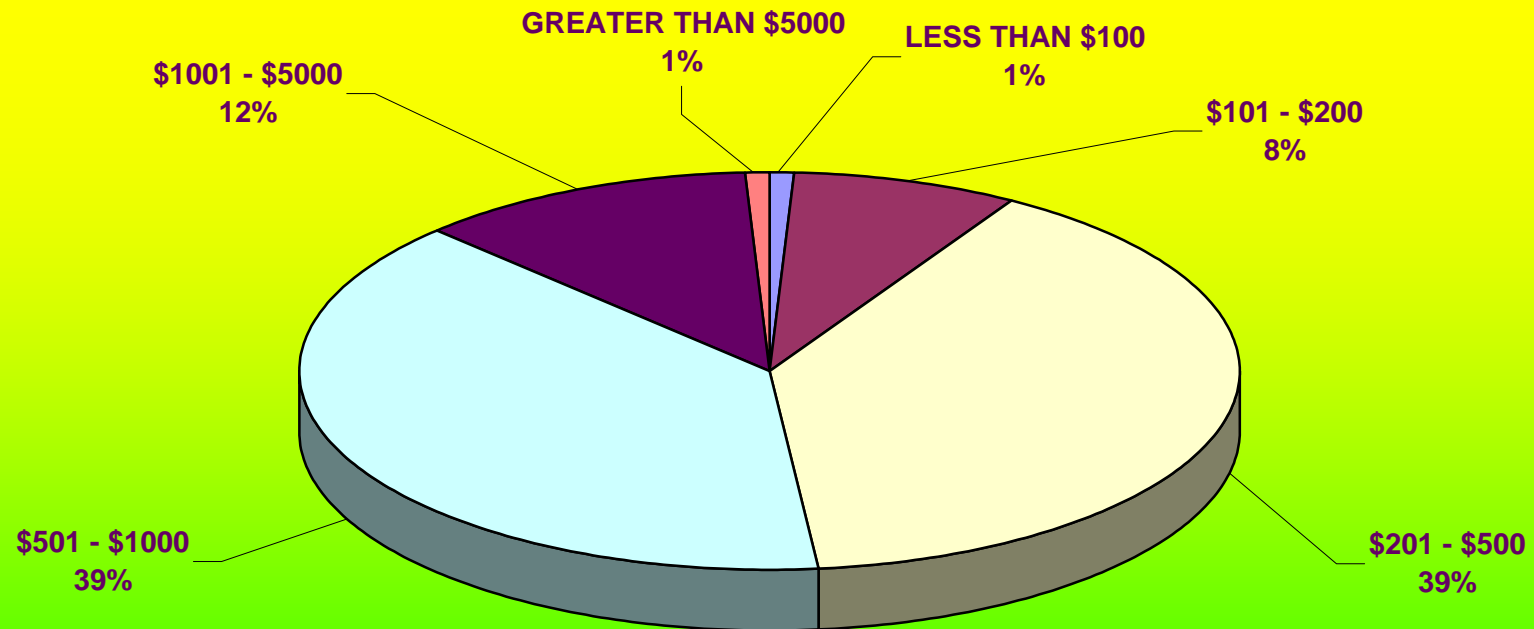
IF YOU COULD FLY TO AND FROM MELBOURNE FOR A DAY'S ACTIVITIES, WOULD THAT ENTICE YOU TO USE THE SERVICE MORE REGULARLY?

YES	NO
1312	61



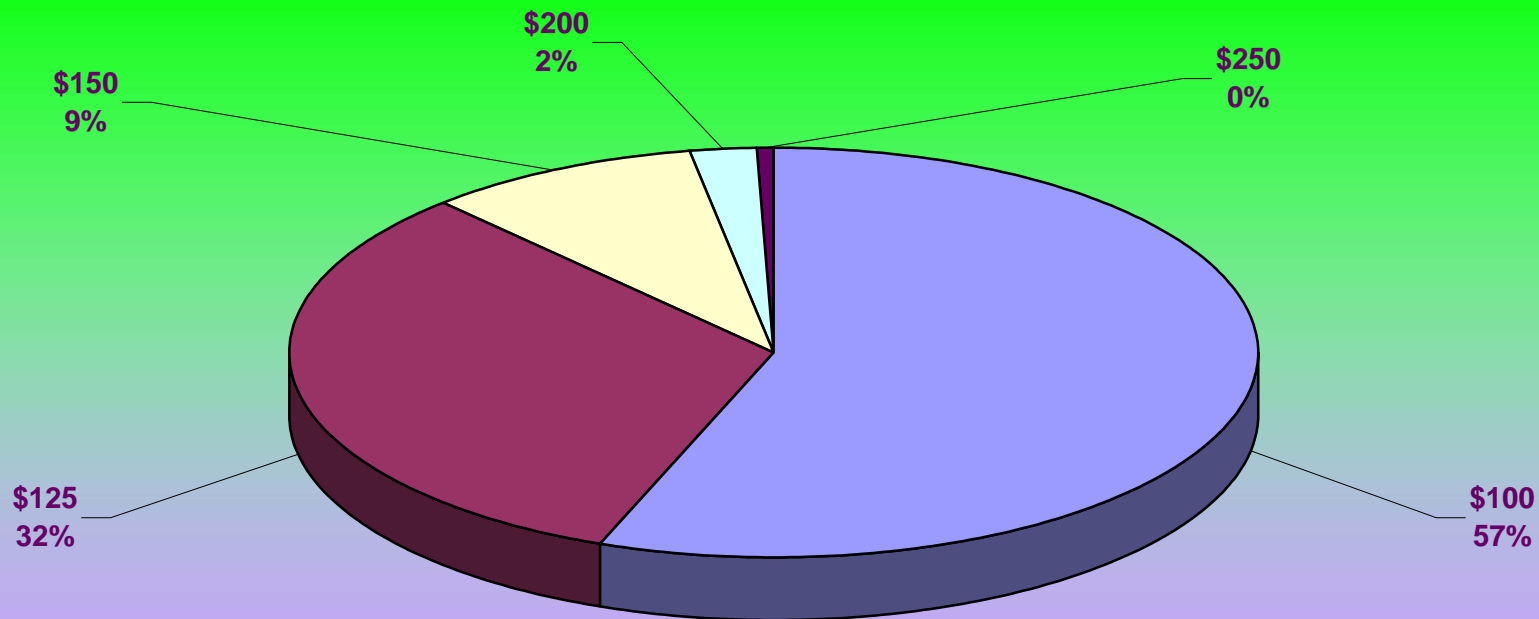
ON AVERAGE, HOW MUCH DO YOU SPEND PER TRIP FOR THE DURATION OF YOUR VISIT TO MELBOURNE?

LESS THAN \$100	\$101 - \$200	\$201 - \$500	\$501 - \$1000	\$1001 - \$5000	GREATER THAN \$5000
12	105	550	540	161	11



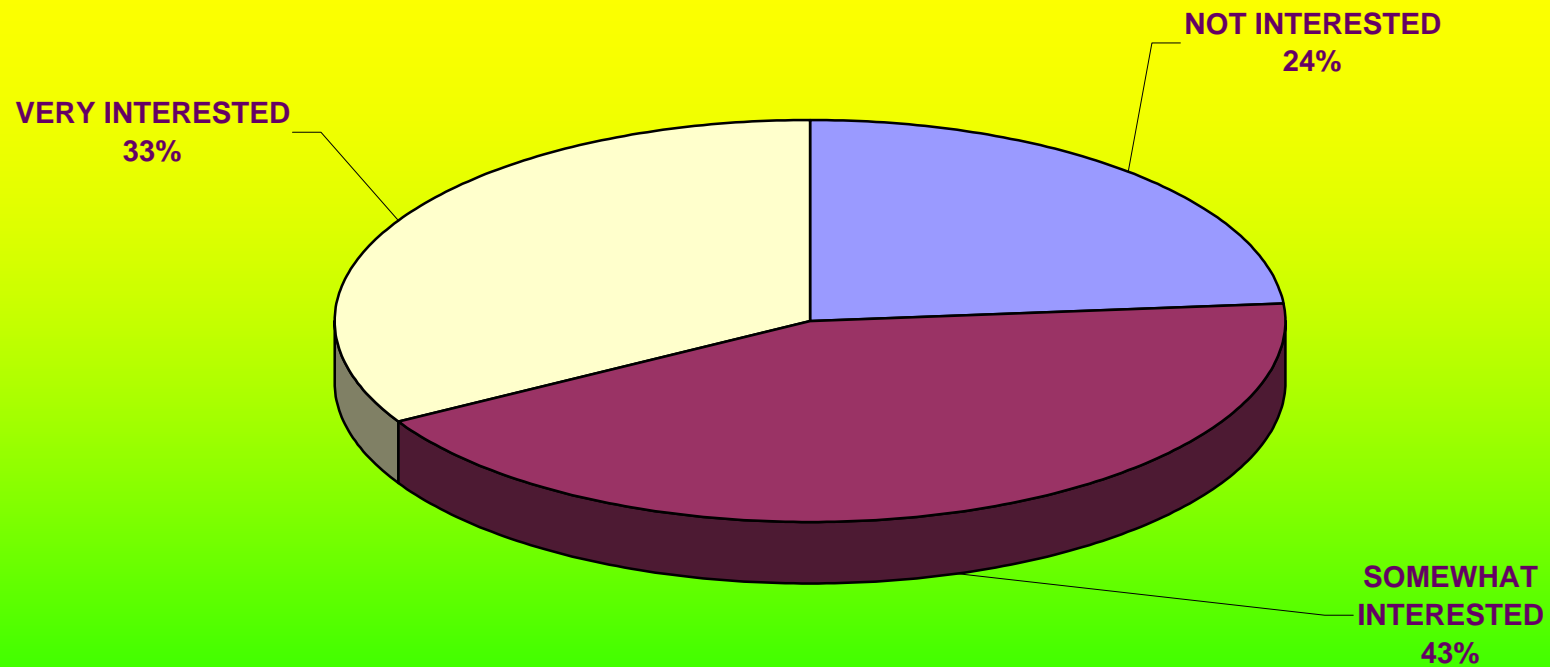
TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION WHAT IT CURRENTLY COSTS TO VISIT MELBOURNE WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE IS AN ACCEPTABLE ONE WAY FARE BETWEEN GRIFFITH AND MELBOURNE FOR AN AIR SERVICE AS PROPOSED BY REX

\$100	\$125	\$150	\$200	\$250
766	442	124	33	6



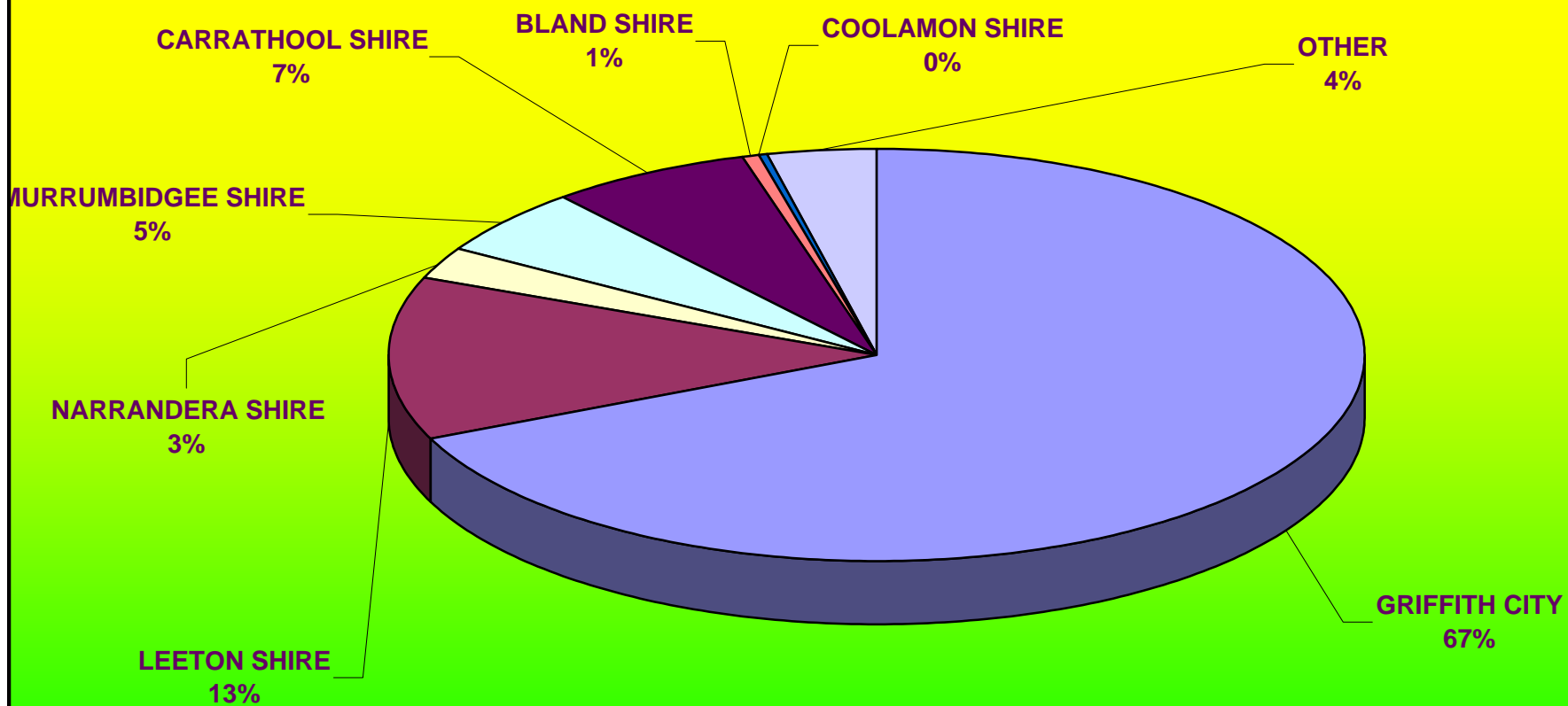
WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN AN AIR LINK BEING ESTABLISHED BETWEEN GRIFFITH AND ADELAIDE?

NOT INTERESTED	SOMEWHAT INTERESTED	VERY INTERESTED
326	599	460



WHAT COUNCIL AREA DO YOU RESIDE IN?

GRIFFITH	LEETON	NARRANDERA	MURRUMBIDGEE	CARRATHOOL	BLAND	COOLAMON	OTHER
946	176	35	70	94	9	2	50





MEDIA CLIPPINGS

27.2.2006 (A.N.)

Survey should have been done long ago

FINALLY there's some good news in the long-running Melbourne flights saga.

The key stakeholders involved in getting the new route up in the air are planning to sit down together next week to see if something positive can be done.

Council, the chamber of commerce, leading businesses and most importantly, Regional Express, are planning to find out once and for all if there's sufficient

The Area News

demand to justify Melbourne flights. They plan to conduct a survey asking the community what it thinks about the issue.

It's common sense and surely should have been done years ago.

Instead we've faced claim and counter-claim about the viability of the route based on nothing but hot air.

Rex general manager Geoff Breust says the airline will only consider the proposal if the numbers stack up.

That's fair enough, as it will cost around \$3 million for the four new crews and a new aircraft which Rex says it will need to start up the service.

Business leaders, some in council and the rest of the community know the demand is there.

We are the ones who have to do the five-hour drive to

Melbourne on a regular basis, or fly via Sydney.

Hopefully, everyone will support this survey and take the opportunity to show Rex that Griffith is big enough to warrant the investment.

If Rex still drags its heels maybe another airline will then step into the breach.

Afterall, its exclusivity deal with the airport only extends to flights within NSW, not interstate.

HOT on the heels of the hugely successful trial match between the Eels and the Storm earlier this month comes tonight's Twenty20 cricket match.

These two premier events demonstrate Griffith is now leading the way against its rival regional centres in attracting the top stars.

It also proves Exies Oval is a first class sporting facility at which the best are more than happy to strut their stuff.

27-2-2006 (Ans)

United business front in bid to get Melbourne route up, up and away

Flight link survey on way

By JULIAN DRAPE

THE push for direct flights to Melbourne is gaining momentum, with an official survey to be conducted in March to gauge community support for the route.

Flights could be taking off sooner than expected after the chamber of commerce, council, leading businesses and Regional Express all vowed to work together on the project.

The parties will meet next Wednesday to finalise the exact questions to be included in the survey.

"A lot of people are saying there should be a service but we need the facts," council general manager Peter Brooks said.

"We need to know on what basis REX will make a decision and then find out what the situation is here in Griffith."

Mr Brooks said the push for a Melbourne link was part of council's airport strategy,

'Huge demand' for service

A LOCAL businessman believes Griffith has been capable of sustaining a Melbourne air route for years.

Country First Credit Union general manager

Denis Conroy said the issue was constantly being raised at business meetings and functions.

"There is a huge demand out there," Mr Conroy said.

"I do as much business in

Melbourne as I do in Sydney, possibly even more.

"I've raised the issue on numerous occasions with REX and would love to see it finally happen."

under which \$250,000 is being spent upgrading the aerodrome.

Regional Express managing director Geoff Breust said he was "very keen" to be involved.

"I'd encourage people to be as truthful as possible in terms of their usage level," Mr Breust said.

"There's no point in people saying it would be fantastic if they'd only use it

twice a year. We need the cold facts."

Mr Breust said there needed to be demand for flights in both directions, in the morning and evening, six days a week.

"It would be impossible to build a service with only one flight in the middle of the day," he said.

"The bottom line is we won't do it unless it's commercially viable."

Chamber of commerce chief Peter

Fussell said the community pressure applied on REX was working.

"It's great news they're coming down for the meeting," Mr Fussell said.

"It sounds like they are trying to do the right thing at last."

Mr Fussell said there was overwhelming support within the business community for a Melbourne link.

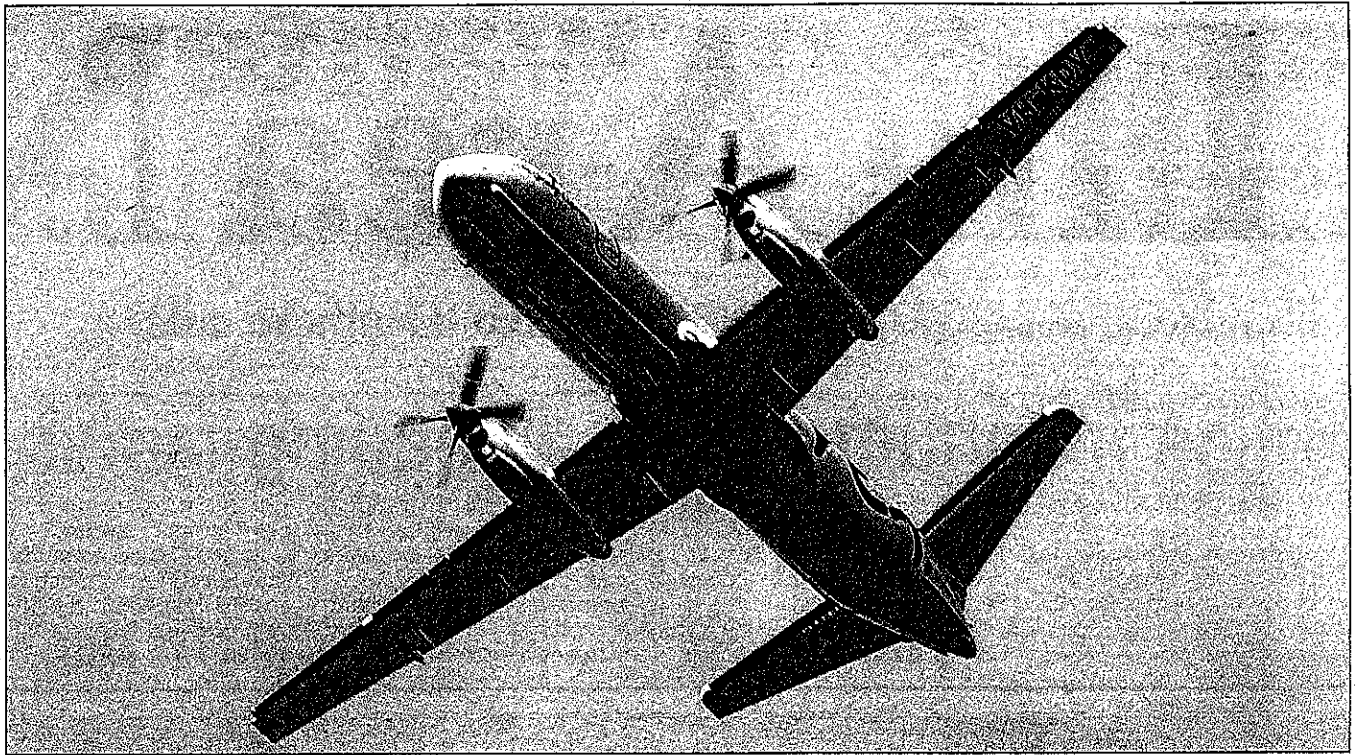
"With this survey we can go to REX and prove the demand is there," he said.

"And then if they are still not interested perhaps another operator will be."

Griffith Aerodrome Management Committee chair Cr Dino Zappacosta said recreational, as well as business travellers, should embrace the survey.

"The entire community has the opportunity to demonstrate to REX and council they want a Melbourne service," Cr Zappacosta said.

"Being complacent gets us nowhere."



A SURVEY will be launched to determine the viability of daily Rex flights from Griffith to Melbourne.

Parties unite for flight viability

10-3-2006
(A-N)

THE push for direct flights to Melbourne has now come to a shove.

Council, the chamber of commerce and Regional Express met on Wednesday to discuss the feasibility of establishing regular daily flights to Melbourne.

The parties agreed a survey of local businesses and residents was needed to determine the business and leisure demand for such a service.

Mayor John Dal Broi said there had been a lot of interest over a number of years regarding the route.

"A large number of local industry representatives regularly have the need to travel to Melbourne on business," Cr Dal Broi said.

"At present this can take up to two days due to the time involved to drive to Melbourne.

"A daily service would allow people to attend Melbourne, undertake business and be back in Griffith that evening."

Chamber president Peter Fussell said he was happy

United business front in bid to get Melbourne route up, up and away

Flight link survey on way

MELBOURNE DISPATCH

Push for direct flights to Melbourne is being supported, with an official survey conducted in March to gauge community support for the route.

The survey could be called off sooner than expected after the chamber of commerce, local business and Regional Express all agreed to work together on the project.

The survey will meet next Wednesday to set the exact questions to be included in the survey.

A lot of people are saying there should be a direct flight to Melbourne.

'Huge demand' for service

A LOCAL businessman believes Griffith has been capable of sustaining a Melbourne air route for years.

Country First Credit Union general manager Denis Conroy said the issue was constantly being raised at business meetings and functions.

"There is a huge demand out there," Mr Conroy said.

"It is as much business as it is a social issue."

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"There is a huge demand out there," Mr Conroy said.

"It is as much business as it is a social issue."

Fussell said the community pressure applied on REX was working.

"It is great to see them coming down in the morning," Mr Fussell said.

"I would like to see them trying to do it right from the start."

Mr Fussell said there was overwhelming support with the business community of Melbourne.

"With this survey we can go to REX and prove the demand is there," he said.

"We need to see if they are still not interested in another operator will be a good idea."

Griffith Aerodrome Management Committee chair Cr Peter Ferguson said

PAGE 5 of The Area News on February 27

Survey to gauge route interest

THE Area News will support the campaign to establish a Melbourne route by exclusively publishing the survey to gauge community support for the service.

Manager Lyn Urquhart said the paper was more than happy to lend its support. "I'd personally love to see a flight to Melbourne get off the ground," she said.

with Wednesday's meeting.

"When the idea of Melbourne flights was floated six months ago Rex was fairly hostile, but since then the relationship has

"If our readers can help council, the chamber and Regional Express determine the level of demand in the community, that's great."

Council general manager Peter Brooks said the survey would be ready in the next couple of weeks.

A separate business survey will be conducted at the same time.

improved dramatically," Mr Fussell said.

"Along with council we can't stress enough how important it is for not only the business community, but

also the wider community, to get behind the survey.

"It's the only way we'll see Melbourne flights introduced."

Rex was positive about the possibility of a service, but representatives outlined the large investment required to start the route and the lengthy period required to establish its viability.

Managing director Geoff Breust said he applauded council and the chamber's initiative in undertaking the survey.

"Rex has always enjoyed a good relationship with the Griffith community and we have a strong partnership with council," Mr Breust said.

The business case will examine the viability of a Saab 340 service - the same aircraft flying to Sydney - operating two return services weekdays, and a weekend service, on direct flights to Melbourne's Tullamarine Airport.

If the business case stacks up it could commence in around 12 months time.

12-4-2006 (A.N)

Melbourne flights survey hits streets

By JULIAN DRAPE

"DO YOU currently travel more frequently to Melbourne or Sydney?"

"What do you believe is an acceptable one-way fare between Griffith and Melbourne?"

These are some of the questions included in a just-released survey which could be the catalyst for Regional Express (Rex) to start direct Melbourne flights within 12 months.

The survey, being run by council in conjunction with the chamber of commerce and Rex, and with the support of

The Area News, comes after mounting calls for a Melbourne service.

Council general manager Peter Brooks said the survey information would allow Rex "to make a sound business decision regarding Melbourne flights".

Rex managing director Geoff Breust said while the airline knew how much it would cost to operate the new route, it desperately required figures on potential passenger numbers and fare levels.

"We believe there is a level of demand ... but need the travelling public to respond truthfully and accurately. Then we'll examine the data and if it's promis-

ing, take it to the next stage," he said.

The survey includes questions on how often people travel to Melbourne, how much they spend and whether they'd also be interested in an air-link to Adelaide.

A separate business survey of Griffith's main industries will be conducted on a face-to-face basis.

The community survey will be distributed this weekend at La Festa or can be filled out on-line at www.griffith.nsw.gov.au. It will also appear regularly in *The Area News* in coming weeks. The closing date for all responses is May 19.

Survey on Rex flights

THE Griffith City Council website has been swamped with support for a regular Griffith-Melbourne Rex flight even before the start of the official survey period.

Council received more than 200 on-line responses to its survey last week but expects hundreds more when the official survey is released this week.

The Area News and other newspapers in the region will run a survey for the next four weeks to gauge interest in the proposal.

The survey will ask if residents would use the flight service and why.

Griffith-Melb air survey closing

12.5.2006 (A.N)

POTENTIAL users of a Griffith to Melbourne air service are being encouraged to make sure their voice is heard, with a survey to gauge interest closing on May 19.

The survey is to gauge local interest in a daily Griffith to Melbourne flight and is being conducted by Griffith City Council, Regional Express (Rex) and Griffith Chamber of Commerce.

The survey period officially opened on April 14 and has attracted

enormous interest from throughout the region.

Survey forms have been printed in newspapers around the region, as well as on Griffith City Council's website at www.griffith.nsw.gov.au (click on web poll on the home page).

Griffith City Council's acting aerodrome manager, Duncan McWhirter, said the three organisations were very happy with the response to the survey so far.

■ Survey: Page 16

1250 respond to survey

31.5.2006
Pt.1

Support for flights to Melb

By **JULIAN DRAPE**

GRIFFITH is on the verge of getting direct flights to Melbourne after council was flooded with Regional Express (Rex) survey responses over the past month.

Council received more than 1100 leisure survey responses, while 150 businesses participated in a separate business-specific study.

Chamber of commerce president Peter Fussell said the response proved the community would support a Melbourne route.

"This result reflects what the community has been advocating for some time," Mr Fussell said.

"Rex said it needed an indication of numbers and this is a strong indication, so hopefully we'll be able to move forward."

Mr Fussell said the possibility of a Melbourne route starting up meant council had to upgrade the airport terminal "as soon as possible".

Aerodrome manager Duncan McWhirter said council was overwhelmed by the community's support of the survey, which was jointly conducted by council, the chamber of commerce and Rex.

Flying high as \$17m profit is revealed

REGIONAL Express (Rex) made \$17 million in before-tax profits in the nine months to March 31, according to figures released last week.

Managing director Geoff Breust said the results were promising with Rex looking at a Griffith to Melbourne route.

"Obviously if we're operating well we're in a better position to expand," Mr Breust said. "All the key statistics have improved on last year and put us on track to meet forecasts for the full year."

"We didn't really know what to expect but we would have been happy with 500.

"The response indicates there's real interest out there ... and expresses the hope and desire of the city to get this service."

The survey was published in *The Area News* and made available online at council's website.

"We'll collate the data this week and

■ Continued Page 2

31-5-06 Pt. 2

Support for Melb flights

■ From Front Page

then formally hand over the results to Rex at a meeting in Wagga," Mr McWhirter said.

"Then they'll need to do a business case to see whether the route is viable. We'll sit tight and hope for the best."

Rex managing director Geoff Breust said the number of respondents "must be considered a good result".

"It tends to indicate a degree of interest," Mr Breust said.

"The most significant information will come from the business survey because a service would be based around a busi-

ness relationship between the two cities. The leisure market is a secondary consideration."

Mr Breust said it would only take "a few weeks" to run a business case based on the survey data, but he wouldn't speculate on when flights could start if the numbers stack up.

But Rex has previously said flights could start within 12 months. A Melbourne route would involve a Saab 340 service operating two return services weekdays, and a weekend service, on direct flights to Melbourne's Tullamarine Airport.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



GRIFFITH CITY COUNCIL

"Progress With Pride"

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD BETWEEN GRIFFITH CITY COUNCIL, REX AIRLINES AND THE GRIFFITH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON WEDNESDAY, 8 MARCH 2006 AT 2-00PM

Present: Mayor J Dal Broi, Cr Zappacosta (Chairman Aerodrome Management Committee), General Manager Mr P Brooks, A/Aerodrome Manager Mr D McWhirter, Managing Director REX Airlines Mr G Breust, General Manager – Network Strategy REX Airlines Mr W Lodge, Griffith Chamber of Commerce Representative Mr J Hutton and Local Industry Representative Mr D Lindsay.

Item 1 Welcome

Mayor Dal Broi opened the meeting at 2-00pm and welcomed all attendees to the meeting.

Item 2 Apologies:

Mr Peter Fussell – President Griffith Chamber of Commerce.

Item 3 – Survey of business and residents regarding Melbourne Flights

Discussion took place concerning the opportunity for REX Airlines to establish regular passenger flights between Griffith and Melbourne.

Points Raised by REX

- REX Airlines seeks a clear picture of the possible demand (business and leisure), frequency of use, potential fares etc to enable the drawing up of business case to ascertain the potential of such a service.
- Large capital costs and ongoing operational costs are involved in establishing a new route – including investment in additional aircraft and flight crew
- REX has purchased a small airline "Airlink" operating out of Dubbo. The possibility of this airline linking Griffith to Albury for the Rex Albury – Melbourne service was discussed. It was agreed by all parties that a direct flight (Griffith – Melbourne) would be preferred.

- The SAAB 340 (current aircraft operating between Griffith and Sydney) would be the most likely type of aircraft utilised.
- Flights schedule (dependent on demand) but initial thoughts are that a preferred service would be day return flights morning and evening Monday to Friday with one flight to Melbourne on a Saturday returning on a Sunday.
- In line with experience an 18 month to 2 year time period would be required to establish the route.
- Initial estimates are that the 20,000 passengers per annum would be required to ensure the feasibility of the service. A 60% load factor would be the minimum required for long term viability.
- Flight time would be around 1 hour 10 minutes
- Business travel is seen as underpinning the potential success of the flights.
- Potential for underwriting by Council or other partner as has occurred in other areas, was suggested as a means of getting the service going

Points Raised by Griffith City Council

- Griffith City Council along with the Griffith Chamber of Commerce (representing local industry) are willing to undertake the survey to collect the information that will enable REX to make a business decision on the viability of the proposed route.
- The main areas the survey needs to focus on are:
 - * What is the relationship between the local business sector and Melbourne (what linkages are there)?
 - * Currently when local business travel to Melbourne what is the length of their stay?
 - * Frequency of visits to Melbourne
 - * Range of fares that would be acceptable to both business and leisure travel.
- The survey would be undertaken possibly by one on one interviews conducted by Council's Economic Development Team with local industry. Other surveys for the general public could be distributed through the local media.
- The draft survey will be put to REX for sign off prior to distribution.

The meeting concluded at 3-15pm.

**JOHN DAL BROI
MAYOR**

Distribution: REX Airlines, Griffith Chamber of Commerce, Council.

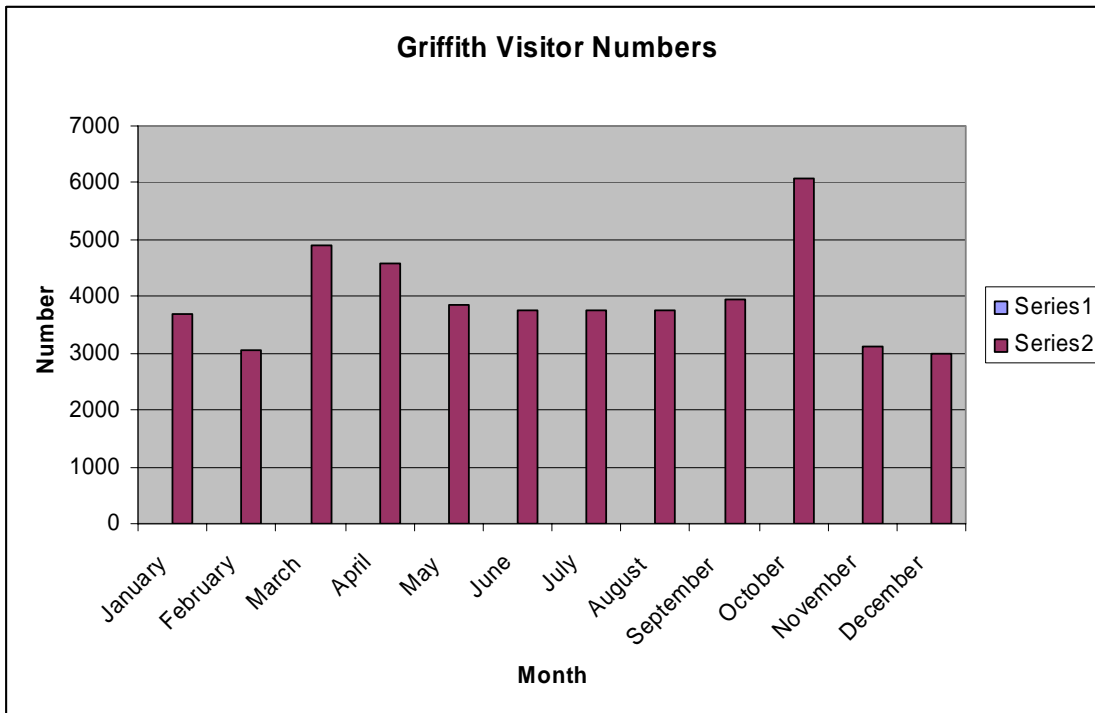
SUMMARY OF GRIFFITH VISITORS CENTRE

2005 ANNUAL STATISTICS



VISITATION

Throughout the year Griffith experienced sustained visitor numbers with the total for the year being 47,424 through the visitors centre door counter. Based on the Tourism NSW's 4:1 ratio Griffith has attracted approximately 189,696 visitors to the region. The 4:1 ratio is based on return travellers may not use the visitors centres services twice, that business travellers and those visiting friends & relatives may not always seek information.



(2005, monthly visitor arrivals – Griffith Visitors Centre door counter)

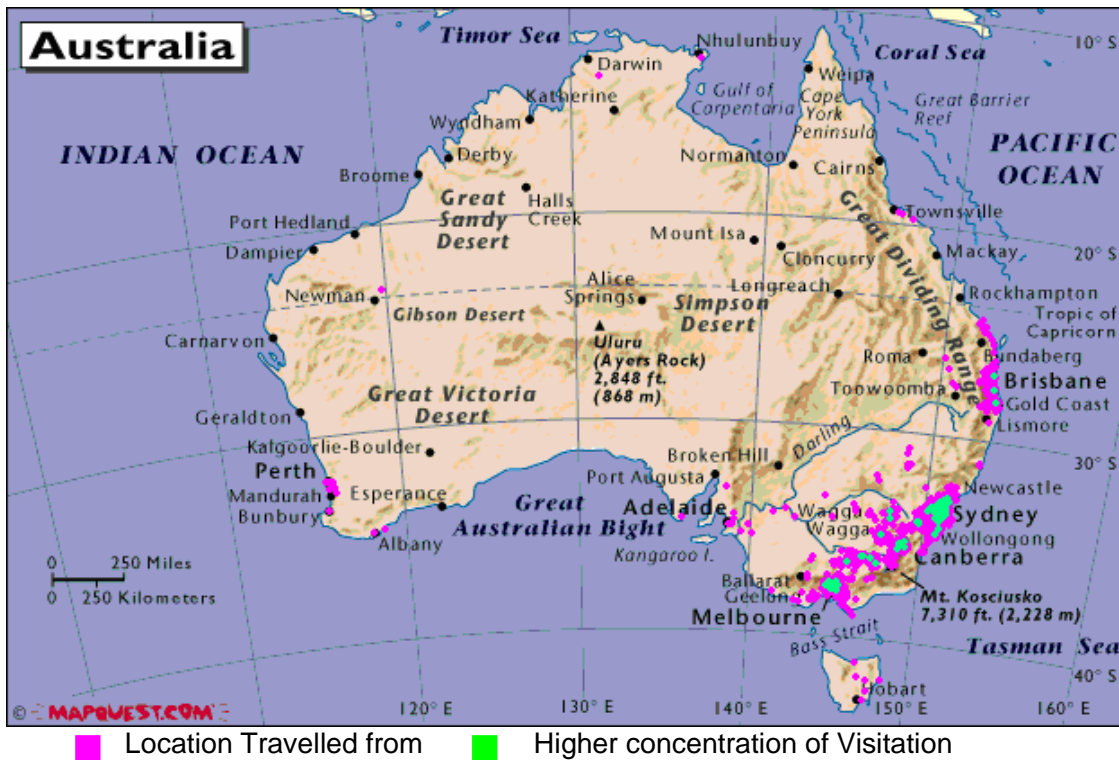
The highest periods for visitation reflect the two major events held in Griffith being La Festa at Easter and the Festival of Gardens in October. Events play an important role in encouraging visitation to our region and increase tourism spending throughout the region.

Visitation to Griffith has remained constant with a slight increase of 1.6% on the previous year, this can be partly contributed to the drought, cheaper airfares domestically, increased costs in petrol and fewer major tourism campaigns such as the Year of the Outback.

Spending

Based on Tourism NSW's surveyed the daily expenditure of visitors to the Riverina is \$70 per person per day. This allowance is made for accommodation, meals, tours, petrol, services and retail shopping. Estimated that Griffith obtains approximately \$13,278,720 from tourism into the local economy.

Visitation



The past 12 months the staff have been collating details on travellers to Griffith, including their post codes. The above map details where the highest populations of visitors have originated from. The green areas are the highest population of visitors to Griffith.

Highest identified markets are : Sydney and surrounds, north coast of Sydney to Newcastle, south coast of Sydney to Nowra, Canberra and surrounds, central NSW, north east Victoria and Melbourne.

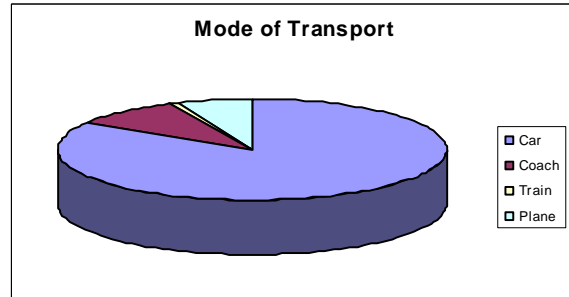
STATISTICS

Reason for Travel

Business	16%
Pleasure	84%

Mode of Transport

Car	84%
Coach	9%
Train	1%
Plane	6%



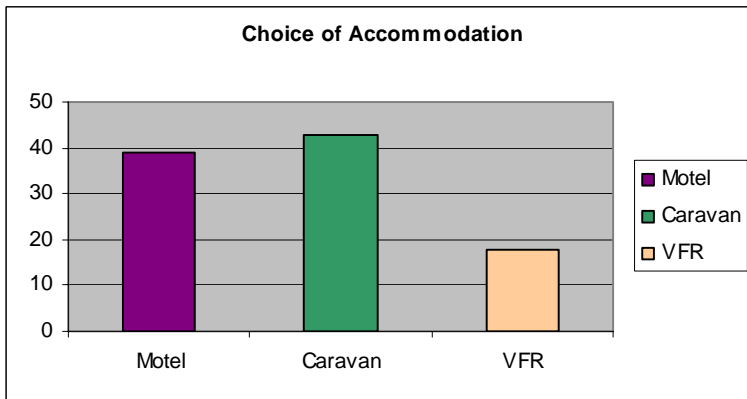
Type of Trip

Day Trip	23%
Overnight	77%

Average stay 3 nights

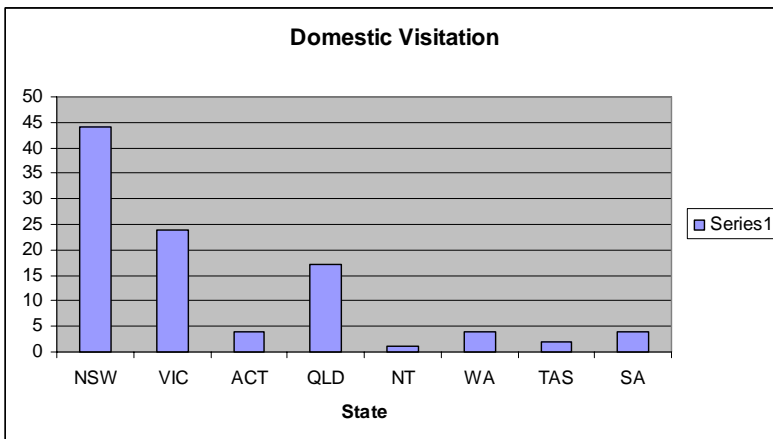
Choice of Accommodation

Motel/Hotel	39%
Caravan/Camping	43%
Visiting Friends & Relatives	18%



Visitor Origin

Domestic	89%
International	11%



Domestic Visitor by State

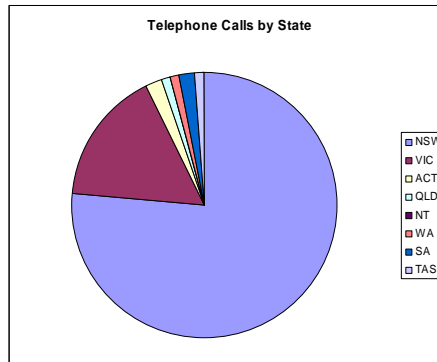
NSW	44%
VIC	24%
ACT	4%
QLD	17%
NT	1%
WA	4%
TAS	2%
SA	4%

TELEPHONE CALLS

All incoming telephone calls on the 1800 number are recorded as to the reason for the call, their post code and where they found the Griffith Visitors Centre telephone number. The Visitors Centre in 2005 took 6962 calls.

Calls came in very similar to each state as per visitation with:

NSW 74%
VIC 16%
ACT 2%
QLD 1%
NT 0%
WA 1%
SA 2%
TAS 1%



For more detailed information:

Griffith Visitors Centre
PO Box 126
Cnr Banna & Jondaryan Ave
GRIFFITH NSW 2680
Ph. 02 6962 4145
Fax. 02 6962 7319
Email: griffithvc@griffith.nsw.gov.au

CFG/ek

27 April 2006

The Manager
Griffith City Council
PO Box 585
GRIFFITH NSW 2680

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: Melbourne – Griffith Survey

I noticed the survey in the Griffith Airport during a recent visit and although it does not directly apply to our circumstances I would like to add my support for scheduled flights between Griffith and Melbourne.

We are from Adelaide and travel to Griffith several times a year to undertake work in connection with the wine industry and for us it is an extremely difficult place to get to. We can fly through Sydney but normally we need to stay overnight in Sydney or Griffith because of the connections, the alternative being to fly to Canberra and drive or occasionally when work coincides in Mildura and Griffith it is possible to fly to Nerrandera as I did recently.

We have quite good schedules between Adelaide and Melbourne and if flights went from Melbourne to Griffith I am sure we, and no doubt many others in the wine industry from SA, would support the service.

I hope your survey is successful in providing this additional service.

Yours faithfully,



COLIN F GAETJENS
Wine Industry Valuer
F.A.P.I (Val, P&M), R.E.I.V. (Aust), A.R.E.I., F.S.A.A.



**COLIN
GAETJENS**
& CO VALUERS

Valuers of
wine industry assets

- Wineries
- Vineyards
- Plant & equipment
- Wine stock

ABN 90 791 710 106

Colin F. Gaetjens

EAPI (Val, P&M)

REIV (Aust)

AREI FSA A

Registered Valuer

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AAPI

Certified Practising Valuer

2 Grenfell Street

Kent Town

South Australia 5067

Telephone (08) 8363 1050

Facsimile (08) 8362 6833

Email reception@cgvaluers.com.au

Postal Address:

PO Box 146

Kent Town SA 5071

Associated Companies:





"Peter & Allison Forbes"
<forbespa@bigpond.net.au>
>

13/04/2006 08:52 PM

To <Duncan.McWhirter@griffith.nsw.gov.au>

cc

bcc

Subject: Re: Web Survey - Melbourne to Griffith flights

Thanks Duncan for your reply.

This flight to Melbourne is really important to us as we frequently travel to the Royal Children's Hospital for Josh. With out the flight we have to both miss out on work, end up tired from car travel and costs us alot more as we have to have accommodation as well.

I have actually emailed REX a couple of months ago about our concerns. Hopefully alot of people are like us and require this flight to come to fruition.

Hope you enjoyed your break away at Parkes. Have to catch up soon.

From Allison Forbes

----- Original Message -----

From: Duncan.McWhirter@griffith.nsw.gov.au

To: forbespa@bigpond.net.au

Cc: Stephen.Joyce@griffith.nsw.gov.au

Sent: Wednesday, April 12, 2006 2:34 PM

Subject: Web Survey - Melbourne to Griffith flights

Dear Allison

The web page is: www.griffith.nsw.gov.au

On that page there is an icon down towards the bottom of the page called "Web poll"

When you click on this it will take you thru to the survey (which will be an attachment to the page you have opened)

Glad to here you are filling in one.

Call me on 0408292153 if you have any difficulties.

Regards

Duncan McWhirter
A/Aerodrome Manager
Griffith City Council
Ph: (02) 69625900
E-Mail: Duncan.McWhirter@griffith.nsw.gov.au

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This email was scanned and cleared by NETIQ MailMarshal & Norman AV



The Rice Food Experts

FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

FAX NO: 69 644368

DATE: 113 April 2005

PAGES: 4
(including this header)

REF:

PLEASE ADVISE IMMEDIATELY IF YOU DO NOT RECEIVE ALL PAGES

TO: Griffith City Council
Attention: John Neuss

FROM: Pam Belford

SUBJECT: Melbourne Griffith Survey

Please find the attached survey which has been completed from our travel records and with other management input

Ricegrowers Limited who trade as SunRice are extremely interested in a Griffith Melbourne air service.

We have a considerable number of staff who won't drive to Wagga airport, therefore are driving directly to Melbourne as apposed to flying. SunRice is currently averaging 100 plus sectors ex Wagga to Melbourne per annum.

We also have traveller's capital cities like Perth and Melbourne Perth has not been past option with link from Griffith Melbourne.

Recruitment ex Melbourne - we currently do through Wagga and car hire etc and would be much more suitable ex Griffith

Ian Greenwood is our REX Area Manager and very aware of our ongoing desire for a Melbourne Griffith service.

Please do not hesitate to contact me for further information.

Pam Belford
Procurement Manager- Leeton
Ricegrowers Limited trading as SunRice
Ph 0269530574
Fax 02695304733
Mobile 0428 243968

National Sales and Marketing Office
Level 32 BT Tower 1 Market Street Sydney | NSW 2000
PO Box Q166 QVB Post Shop | NSW 1230
T. +61 (0)2 9268 2000 | F. +61 (0)2 9264 3817

Registered Office
NIP 17 Yanco Avenue Leeton | NSW 2705
PO Box 561 Leeton | NSW 2705
T. +61 (0)2 6953 0411 | F. +61 (0)2 6953 4733

www.sunrice.com.au

Ricegrowers Limited
ABN 55 007 481 156
trading as SunRice