

Public Transport Matters

Welcome to Public Transport Matters

Welcome to the second edition of our newsletter **Public Transport Matters**.

RAIL Back On Track will be publishing every couple of months an online newsletter to highlight public transport users opinions, experiences, suggestions for improvement of the public transport network. It is not intended to be an 'expert' level publication but reflective of actual non-expert public transport users viewpoints.

Articles suitable for publication are welcome.

Please email admin@backontrack.org with your contributions.

Articles may be edited, with author's permission prior to publication.

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RAIL Back On Track backontrack.org is a web based community group that advocates for sustainable transport solutions mainly rail and advocates strongly for rail commuters, and at times other public transport commuters e.g.. bus and ferry.

We are also concerned with the interface of other modes of public transport with rail.

Robert Dow

Administration



Some mural art work at Darra Railway station

Volume 1 issue 2

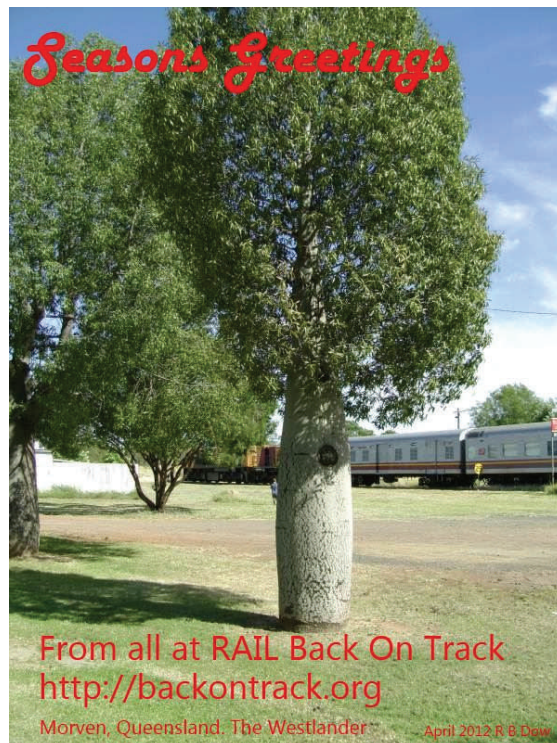
24th December 2012

Inside this issue:

Paying for roads 2

2012 Public transport Passenger Survey 4

Gallery 17



Paying for roads: a level playing field for transport?

Roads, railways, canals, air routes, all ways that people and things can be moved from one place to another. But there are so many different types of movement: for people there's commuting to and from work and schools, shopping, entertainment, etc, as well as longer distance travel between towns and cities and countries. For goods there's local delivery at one end and international carriage of bulk and container loads at the other.

Over the centuries the relative cost of different modes, and their very existence, has changed. From carts rattling along rutted tracks up until the mid 18th century to turnpikes where a monopoly has been granted by the monarch to someone who has to maintain the road and charge a toll (sound familiar?), then canals, another monopoly grant, railways, ditto, and then government provided highways becoming the major mode in the early 20th century, industrialized countries have created new ways to move things around. Within towns and cities the laneways and streets became a municipal responsibility in Victorian England, and have been so in most of the developed world ever since.

But notice something?

The railways, canals and airports are supplied to users at a price that is supposed to cover their cost. But the roads, with rare exceptions, have been free to use, paid for by a complicated mixture of taxes, with charges on inputs such as fuel providing a small percentage of the total. This has resulted in a number of unfortunate consequences.

The first is that road space is usually over-used relative to space on other modes such as rail. Users cause roads and other users costs: wear and tear keeps road maintenance a profitable business for private and some public enterprises; over-utilization means demand for new roads is insatiable; and in cities, congestion is the result, so each user imposes a cost on every other user. This last is probably the most important road user cost, \$bn/year for each of Australia's metropolitan cities in time lost by each of us directly and indirectly as well as excess fuel usage by congested vehicles uselessly idling.

The second is that investment in roads diverts funds from more socially and economically worthwhile uses. The most obvious misallocation is between roads and rail: too

much is spent making roads cope with excessive demands. Peak hours in cities cost us not only the road space on our land – something over a third of Brisbane City Council's land area is alienated to roads – but also costs us the other uses that the land could have had and used to have. Housing and other activities are thrown off land as roads are built, and these people and activities have to find other places, some way out in greenfield suburbs where people then have to use even more roads and all people then have to use even more roads and all the other infrastructure to carry on with their lives.

A related third consequence is the overbuilding caused by peak loading: out of peak hours, there is a huge over-supply of road space that cannot be used for other purposes out of peak hour. Some economic activities can easily change capacity during a day, activities that have little need for investment in capital to add to other inputs. Where labour is the major input peak demand simply means employing more people at those times of day.

Other activities can store their output so production

“ ... overbuilding caused by peak loading: out of peak hours “

Paying for roads: a level playing field for transport? (continued)

is at a constant rate but used on a daily, weekly or seasonal rate that varies. But some of our most important industries cannot store their outputs and require heavy capital investment: most infrastructure services such as electricity, gas, water, and virtually all transport services, shipping, air rail and road all fall into this category. That's why we have so much empty road space for 20 or so hours a day.

For all these reasons we should be trying to price transport services so that choice of mode becomes more efficient. Instead of roads being, in a sense, free to use per km per hour, they should be charged for on a per km per hour basis, just like rail, shipping and air.

The closer we come to the 'level playing field', the less the need for too much unused road space, the more investment there will be in more efficient and productive capital goods and services, the less the cost of wasted time, fuel and environmental damage from overuse of road space.

How we might approach this is the subject of my article in the next newsletter.

John Nightingale,
Senior Lecturer in Economics (Rtd), UNE.



**Ipswich Highway at Goodna.
Sound investment at \$250 million per kilometre?**

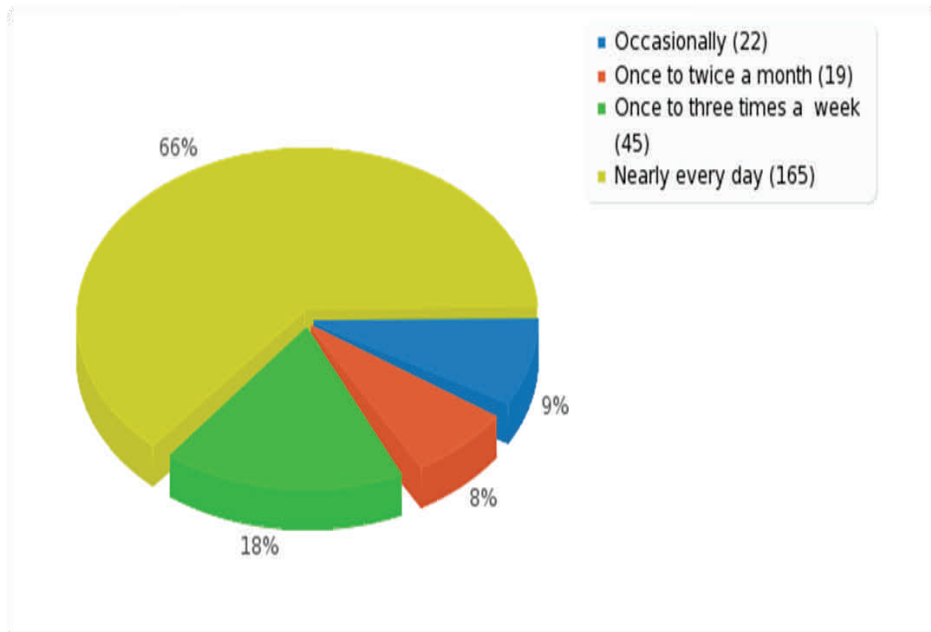
2012 Public Transport Passenger Survey - Results



Each full bus removes 50 cars off the roads.

How often do you use public transport?

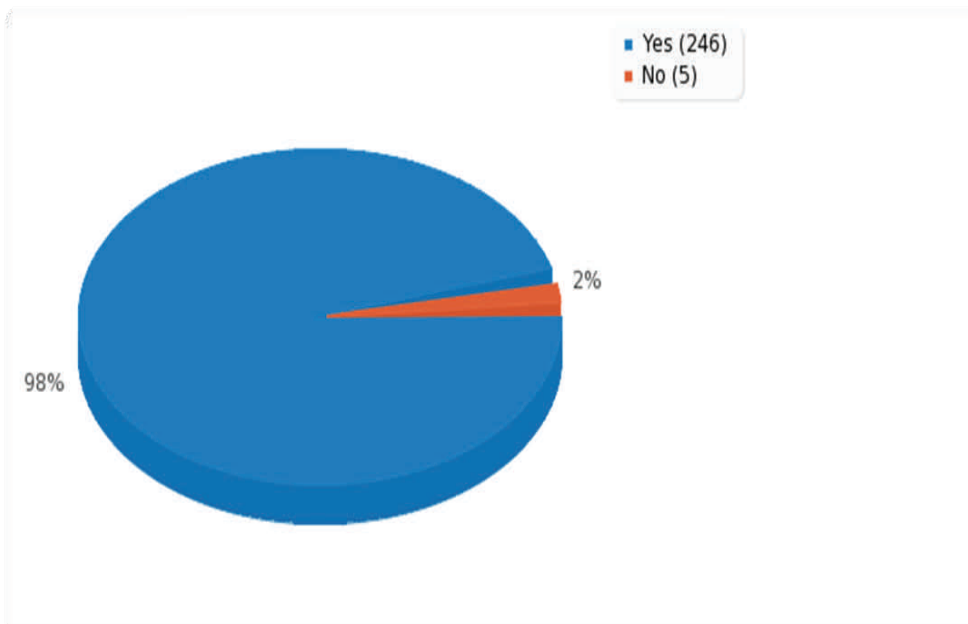
Answer	Count	Percentage
Occasionally (A1)	22	8.76%
Once to twice a month (A2)	19	7.57%
Once to three times a week (A3)	45	17.93%
Nearly every day (A4)	165	65.74%



Each full train removes 600 cars off the roads.

Do you normally use a go card?

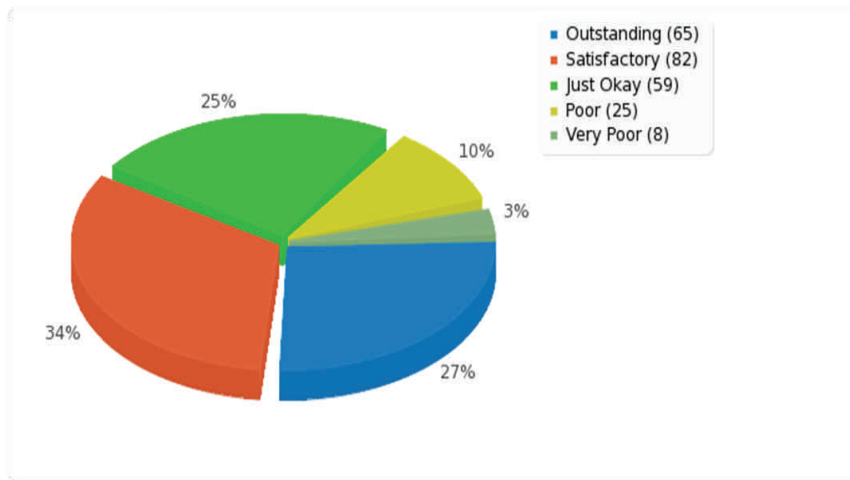
Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (A1)	246	98.01%
No (A2)	5	1.99%



2012 Public Transport Passenger Survey - Bus

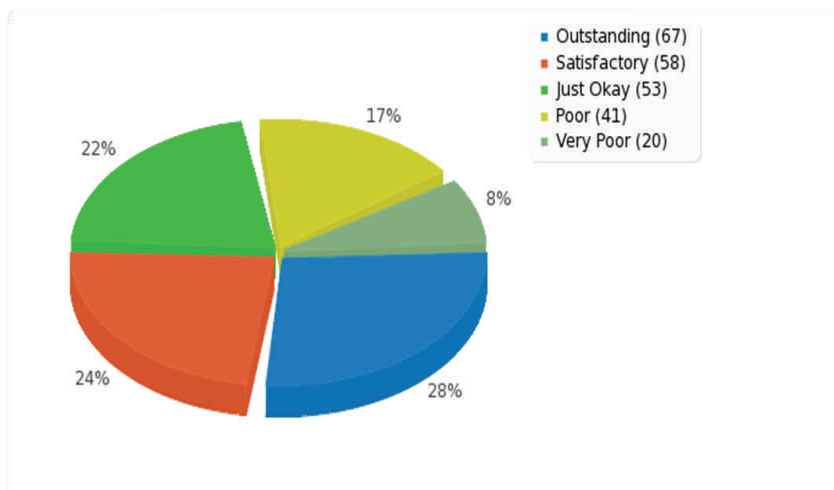
How would you rate bus overall?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Outstanding (A1)	65	27.20%
Satisfactory (A2)	82	34.31%
Just Okay (A3)	59	24.69%
Poor (A4)	25	10.46%
Very Poor (A5)	8	3.35%



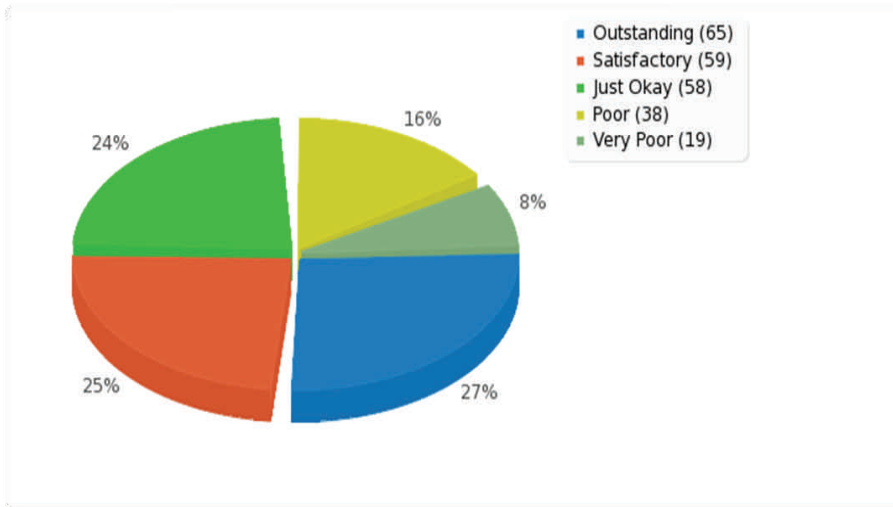
How would you rate bus frequency?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Outstanding (A1)	67	28.03%
Satisfactory (A2)	58	24.27%
Just Okay (A3)	53	22.18%
Poor (A4)	41	17.15%
Very Poor (A5)	20	8.37%



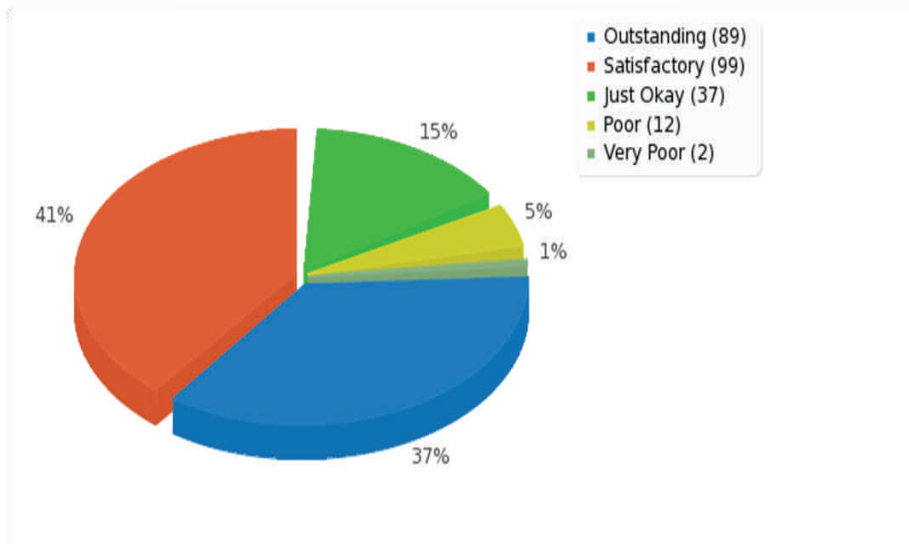
How would you rate bus reliability including on time performance (runs to timetable)?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Outstanding (A1)	65	27.20%
Satisfactory (A2)	59	24.69%
Just Okay (A3)	58	24.27%
Poor (A4)	38	15.90%
Very Poor (A5)	19	7.95%



How would you rate bus comfort, including ease of use and accessibility?

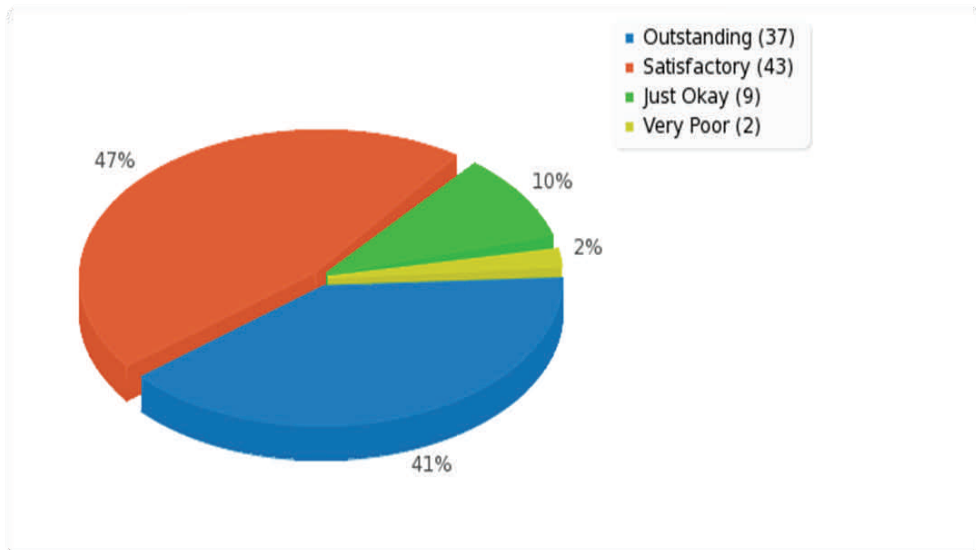
Answer	Count	Percentage
Outstanding (A1)	89	37.24%
Satisfactory (A2)	99	41.42%
Just Okay (A3)	37	15.48%
Poor (A4)	12	5.02%
Very Poor (A5)	2	0.84%



2012 Public Transport Passenger Survey - Ferry

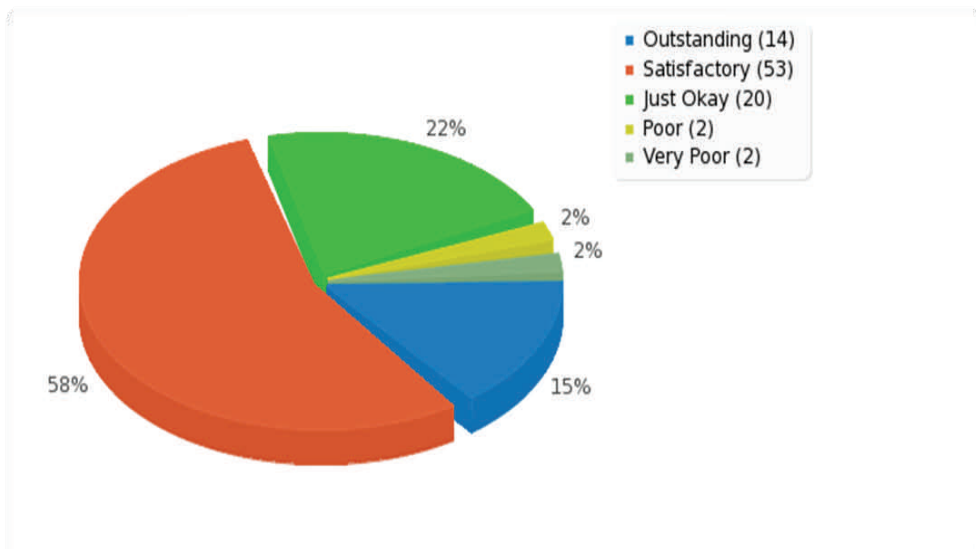
How would you rate ferry/CityCat overall?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Outstanding (A1)	37	40.66%
Satisfactory (A2)	43	47.25%
Just Okay (A3)	9	9.89%
Poor (A4)	0	0.00%
Very Poor (A5)	2	2.20%



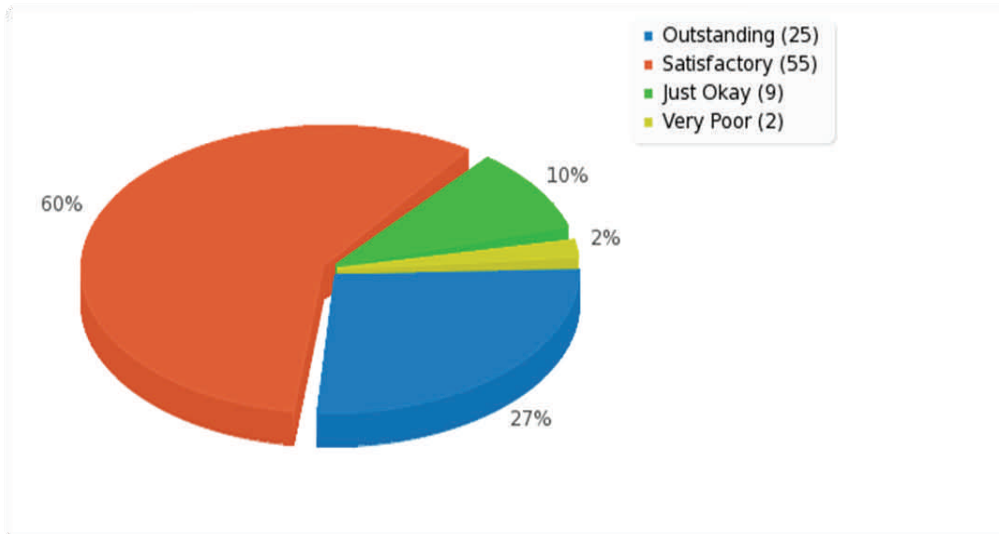
How would you rate ferry/CityCat frequency?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Outstanding (A1)	14	15.38%
Satisfactory (A2)	53	58.24%
Just Okay (A3)	20	21.98%
Poor (A4)	2	2.20%
Very Poor (A5)	2	2.20%



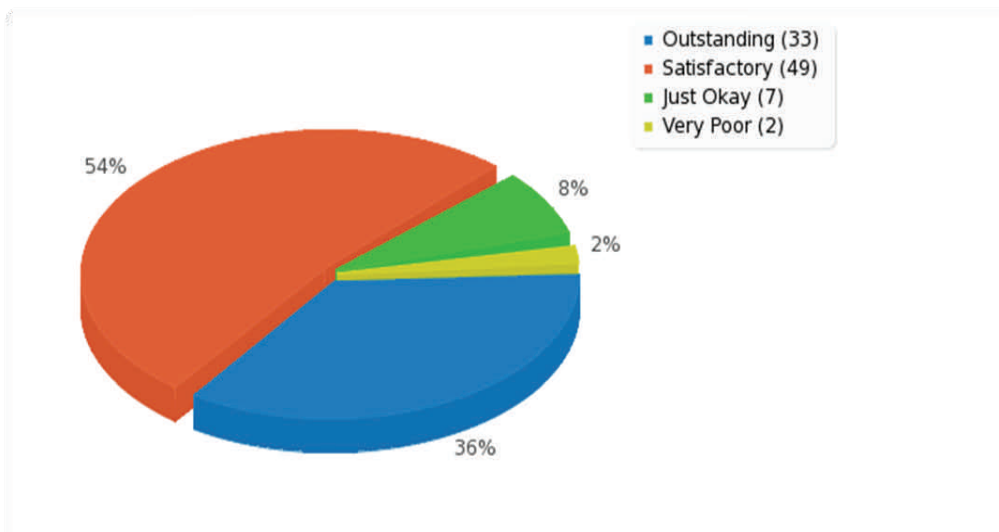
How would you rate ferry/CityCat reliability including on time performance (runs to timetable)?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Outstanding (A1)	25	27.47%
Satisfactory (A2)	55	60.44%
Just Okay (A3)	9	9.89%
Poor (A4)	0	0.00%
Very Poor (A5)	2	2.20%



How would you rate ferry/CityCat comfort, including ease of use and accessibility?

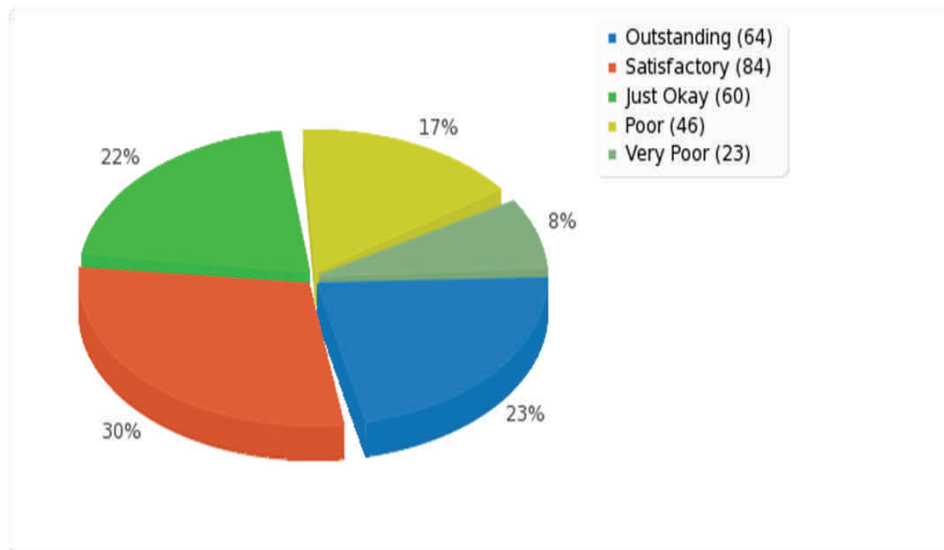
Answer	Count	Percentage
Outstanding (A1)	33	36.26%
Satisfactory (A2)	49	53.85%
Just Okay (A3)	7	7.69%
Poor (A4)	0	0.00%
Very Poor (A5)	2	2.20%



2012 Public Transport Passenger Survey - Rail

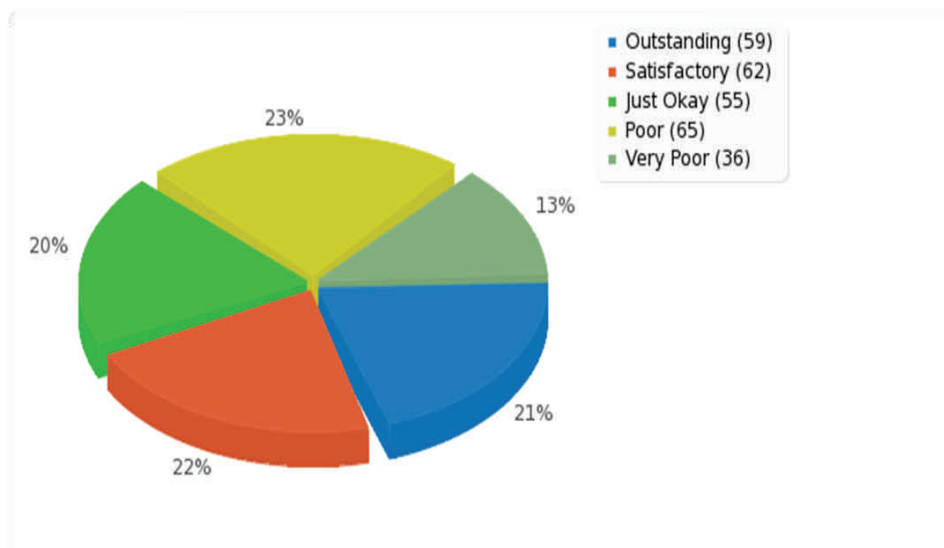
How would you rate rail overall?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Outstanding (A1)	64	23.10%
Satisfactory (A2)	84	30.32%
Just Okay (A3)	60	21.66%
Poor (A4)	46	16.61%
Very Poor (A5)	23	8.30%



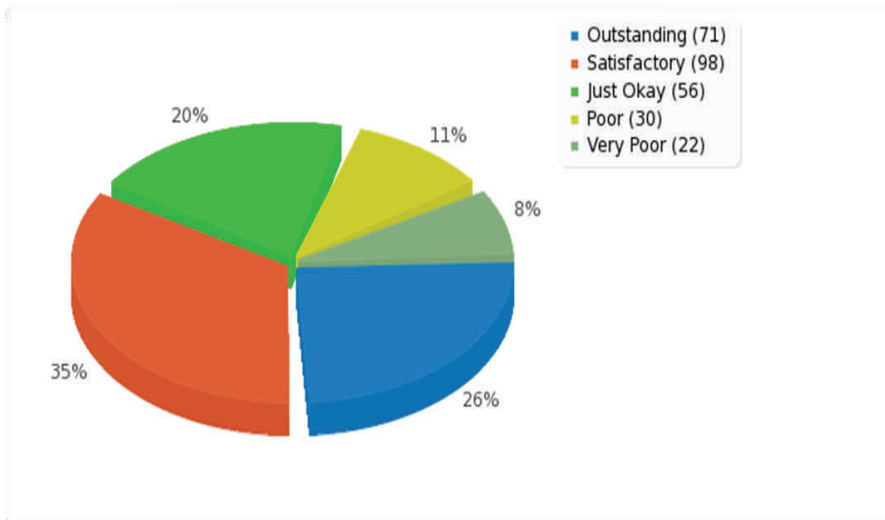
How would you rate rail frequency?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Outstanding (A1)	59	21.30%
Satisfactory (A2)	62	22.38%
Just Okay (A3)	55	19.86%
Poor (A4)	65	23.47%
Very Poor (A5)	36	13.00%



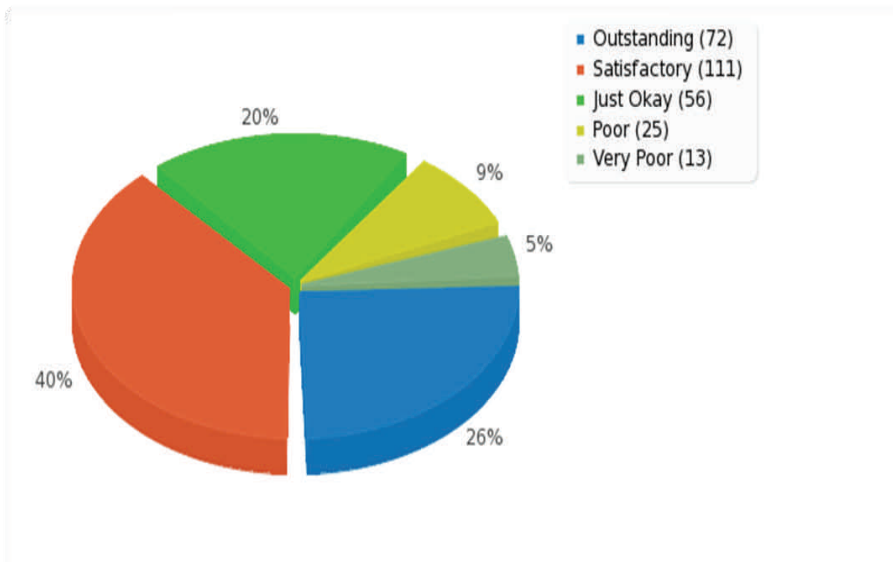
How would you rate rail reliability including on time performance (runs to timetable)?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Outstanding (A1)	71	25.63%
Satisfactory (A2)	98	35.38%
Just Okay (A3)	56	20.22%
Poor (A4)	30	10.83%
Very Poor (A5)	22	7.94%



How would you rate rail comfort, including ease of use and accessibility?

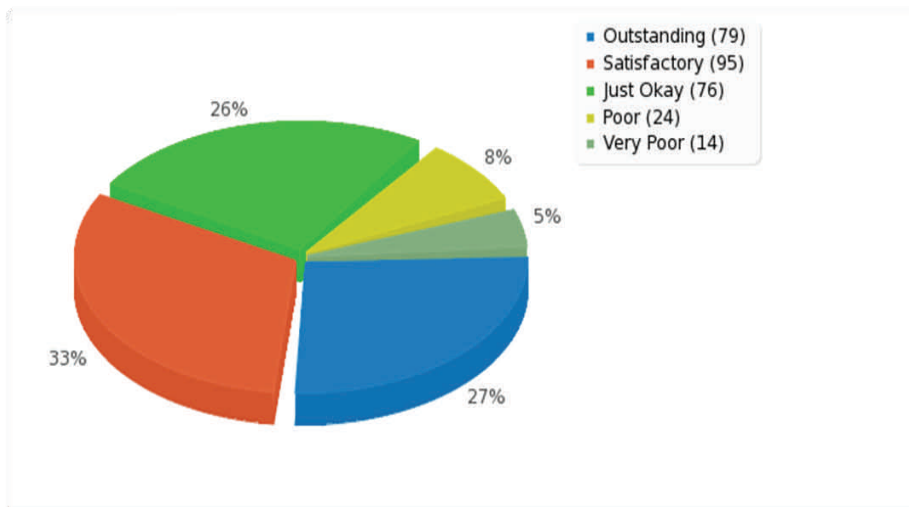
Answer	Count	Percentage
Outstanding (A1)	72	25.99%
Satisfactory (A2)	111	40.07%
Just Okay (A3)	56	20.22%
Poor (A4)	25	9.03%
Very Poor (A5)	13	4.69%



2012 Public Transport Passenger Survey - go card

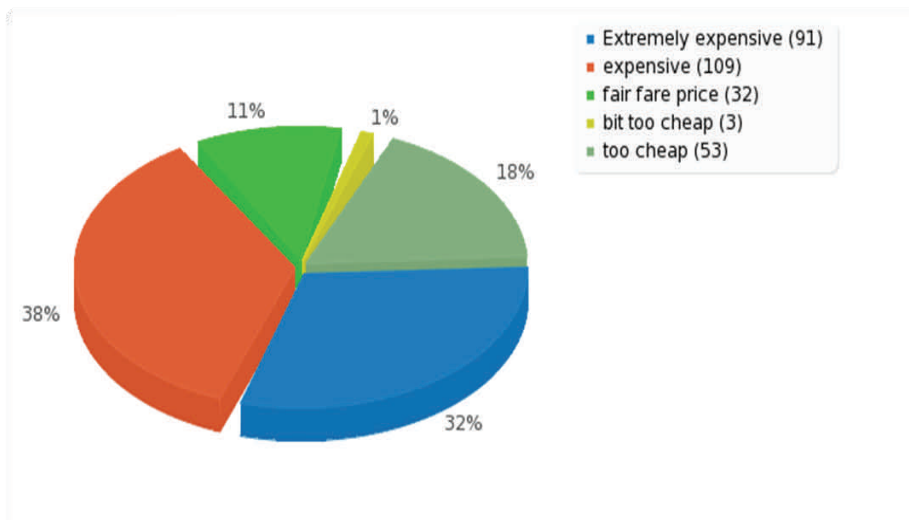
How would you rate go card overall?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Outstanding (A1)	79	27.43%
Satisfactory (A2)	95	32.99%
Just Okay (A3)	76	26.39%
Poor (A4)	24	8.33%
Very Poor (A5)	14	4.86%



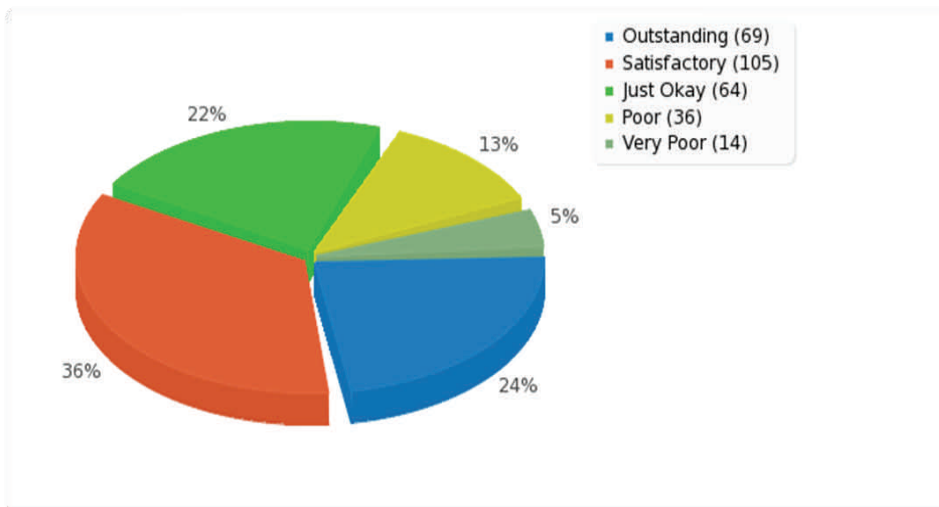
How would you rate go card fares?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Extremely expensive (A1)	91	31.60%
expensive (A2)	109	37.85%
fair fare price (A3)	32	11.11%
bit too cheap (A4)	3	1.04%
too cheap (A5)	53	18.40%



How would you rate go card reliability and ease of use of the overall go card system?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Outstanding (A1)	69	23.96%
Satisfactory (A2)	105	36.46%
Just Okay (A3)	64	22.22%
Poor (A4)	36	12.50%
Very Poor (A5)	14	4.86%



2012 Public Transport Passenger Survey - Summary

Background

How often do you use public transport?




Answer	Count	Percentage
Occasionally	22	8.8
Once to twice a month	19	7.6
Once to three times a week	45	17.9
Nearly every day	165	65.7

Do you normally use a go card?




Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes	246	98
No	5	2

Public Transport Modes

How would you rate Bus/Ferry/Rail overall?




Answer	 Bus		 Ferry		 Rail	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Out-standing	65	27.2	37	40.7	64	23.1
Satisfactory	82	34.3	43	47.3	84	30.3
Just Okay	59	24.7	9	9.9	60	21.7
Poor	25	10.5	0	0	46	16.6
Very poor	8	3.4	2	2.2	23	8.3

How would you rate Bus/Ferry/Rail frequency?




Answer	 Bus		 Ferry		 Rail	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Out-standing	67	28.0	14	15.4	59	21.3
Satisfactory	58	24.3	53	58.2	62	22.4
Just Okay	53	22.2	20	22.0	55	19.9
Poor	41	17.2	2	2.2	65	23.5
Very poor	20	8.4	2	2.2	36	13.0

2012 Public Transport Passenger Survey - Summary (continued)

How would you rate Bus/Ferry/Rail reliability including on time performance (runs to timetable)?

	 Bus		 Ferry		 Rail	
Answer	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Out-standing	65	27.2	25	27.5	71	25.6
Satisfactory	59	24.7	55	60.4	98	35.4
Just Okay	58	24.3	9	9.9	56	20.2
Poor	38	15.9	0	0	30	10.8
Very poor	19	8.0	2	2.2	22	7.9

How would you rate Bus/Ferry/Rail comfort, including ease of use and accessibility?

	 Bus		 Ferry		 Rail	
Answer	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Out-standing	89	37.2	33	36.3	72	26.0
Satisfactory	99	41.4	49	53.9	111	40.1
Just Okay	37	15.5	7	7.7	56	20.2
Poor	12	5.0	0	0	25	9.0
Very poor	2	0.8	2	2.2	13	4.7



Go card readers Goodna railway station, with passenger alert for a track closure.

2012 Public Transport Passenger Survey - Summary (continued)

Go card

How would you rate go card overall?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Outstanding	79	27.4
Satisfactory	95	33.0
Just Okay	76	26.4
Poor	24	8.3
Very poor	14	4.9

How would you rate go card fares?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Extremely Expensive	91	31.6
Expensive	109	37.9
Fair fare price	32	11.11
Bit too cheap	3	1.04
Too cheap	53	18.40

How would you rate go card reliability and ease of use of the overall go card system?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Outstanding	69	24.0
Satisfactory	105	36.5
Just Okay	64	22.2
Poor	36	12.5
Very poor	14	4.9

Survey participants' comments can be viewed at:

<http://rallbotforum.org/mbs/index.php?topic=9243.0>

Information from this survey can be freely published providing correct source acknowledged.

Gallery



Rail bus at Corinda during track works



Brisbane Airport—Domestic terminal Airtrain