

Public transport could save Australian commuters up to \$10,000 a year

A national review of annual commuter costs has found that Australians could save an average of \$9973 every year, simply by travelling to work with public transport instead of owning and driving a car or purchasing a second household car.



Credit: Gareth Edwards/Wikimedia Commons under [CC BY-SA 3.0 licence](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/)

‘[The Costs of Commuting: An Analysis of Potential Commuter Savings](#)’, prepared by the Australasian Railway Association (ARA), identifies the annual cost to commute by car and then uses two scenarios to quantify the potential savings a public transport commuter could make by not driving a private vehicle.

The scenarios estimate potential savings for those who use public transport and do not own a car or have not purchased a second household car and those who own a car but opt to leave it at home.

‘This report highlights just how costly it can be to drive your car to work five days a week and in doing so provides a practical solution for many Aussies looking to kick off 2015 saving their hard earned money,’ said ARA CEO, Bryan Nye OAM.

‘A lot of people are unaware of the significant savings that can be made by selling their car or simply not purchasing a second household car and switching to public transport. A driver of a larger vehicle, like a Holden Commodore, could save more than \$12,600 annually while the driver of a smaller vehicle, like a Mazda 2, could save about \$6400.

‘Even commuters who choose to own a car but leave it at home and take public transport can still save,’ he said.

Conservative calculations have been used to identify the car commuter costs. Non-compulsory car insurance has not

been costed while only \$1000 for a whole year of parking has been included.

‘The potential savings are obviously dependent on individual circumstances but when you consider that Australian CBD parking costs can range from \$180 to \$750 a month or \$2160 to \$9000 per year, the savings that can be made by jumping on a train or bus are significant,’ Mr Nye continued.

‘Of the 9.8 million Australians in the workforce, 60 per cent drive to work, causing road congestion in our cities that increases carbon emissions and accidents, and is also set to cost the Australian economy \$20.4 billion annually by 2020.

‘An added benefit of commuting by public transport is the productive use of time that public transport offers, allowing commuters to spend time on their laptop, mobile, iPod and so on whilst in transit,’ Mr Nye concluded.

The report found that Brisbane and Melbourne commuters have the highest costs to own and commute to work by car compared with those in other capital cities. The reason for this is attributed to higher registration, fuel and servicing prices.

This also means that commuters in these two cities can save the most amount of money by not owning a car and taking public transport instead, saving an average of \$10,375 and \$10,778 each year, respectively.

Source: ARA

From ECOS online <http://www.ecomagazine.com/?paper=EC14331>